THE HOME OF THE BISON:

An Ethnographic and Ethnohistorical Study
of Traditional Cultural Affiliations
to Wind Cave National Park

VOLUME ONE

By

Patricia C. Albers

September 29, 2003

With the Assistance of

Anna Bendickson
Christina Berndt
Elizabeth Brown
Yvonne Kelly

Vanessa Kittelson
Kim Rossina
Stacy Schlegel
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Submitted in fulfillment of Cooperative Agreement #CA606899103
between the U.S. National Park Service &
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DISCLAIMER

Nothing written in this report should be construed as representing the views of the U.S. Park Service or the federal government of the United States. All of the information contained in this report and its interpretations reflect the position of the author, Patricia C. Albers.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When Wind Cave National Park celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary in 1953, a Lakota delegation from the Pine Ridge Reservation was invited to attend the festivities. As a way of honoring the event, the Lakotas adopted the park's superintendent, Earl M. Semingsen and named him Tatanka Tokahe [First Bison Bull]. Two things are significant about this name. On the one hand, it associates the park with bison, a culturally important connection for the Lakotas, who have long believed that Wind Cave is the home of the Buffalo Nation; and on the other, it refers to the name of the first human to emerge from the subterranean depths of the Black Hills through the portal that many Lakotas identify as Wind Cave. Much of the landscape of Wind Cave National Park, both above and below ground, is sacred to the Lakotas because it is a site of genesis and because it holds important teachings at the foundation of the way Lakotas have come to identify themselves as a people. The same holds true for the Cheyennes who hold the geological depression known as the Race Track in high regard and associate it with important cosmological precepts and the origins of their Sun Dance. The Lakotas identify the Race Track with an important spiritual pilgrimage their ancestors followed and that some have tried to recreate in modern times. In the traditions of both tribal nations, the story of the Great Race tells how the nature of relationships between humans and animals was established and how various topographic features of the Black Hills came into being.

It is not an exaggeration to say that Wind Cave National Park (hereafter referred to as WCNP) is one of the most sacred and culturally significant areas of the Black Hills to the Lakotas and Cheyennes. It is also a location associated with a complex and changing history of human occupancy, which extends back to prehistoric times. In the historic era, roughly 1742 to 1877, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were among many tribal nations who lived and traveled within reach of WCNP. For a brief period of time, circa-1880 to 1930, it was home to a small group of European American homesteaders. The history of the lands on which WCNP now sits form a diverse and deeply layered cultural tapestry. The ways in which its diverse populations adapted to the park's lands and assigned unique cultural meanings to them offer rich textual narratives. At least above ground, the park has never been a pristine landscape, but an area where the imprint of human activity is visibly marked on the landscape. Indeed, some of the most provocative interpretive questions about the park are not how it has existed as a pristine and isolated island of nature, but rather how its lands and resources have dynamically changed in the course of a history with different waves of human occupation.

In this executive summary, only some aspects of the park's culture history are highlighted. Specifically, attention is given to features of the park that can be identified as traditional cultural properties. A traditional cultural property represents a significant feature of the lived-in cultural practices and beliefs of an extant community, rooted in that community's history, and necessary to its survivance, identity, and well-being as a living community (Parker and King 1990). Wind Cave National Park contains many different landforms, landscapes, animals, plants, waters, soils, and minerals that meet this definition for contemporary tribes who are members of the Lakota and Cheyenne nations and very likely, the Arapaho nation too.
I. Current and Historic Cultural Affiliations to Wind Cave National Park

The Lakotas (pp. 24, 46-49, 72-81, 93-95, 107-109; 154-160, 172-184, 247-248, 251-252) and Cheyennes (pp. 23-24, 39-42, 67-72, 93, 108, 155, 157, 252) have had the most well-documented and uninterrupted historical relationship to the Black Hills over the past two centuries. Both of these tribal nations have also had important legal relationships to the area as established under the treaty law of the United States. Here, they are joined by a third tribal nation the Arapaho who were also connected to the Hills under U.S. treaty law (pp. 90-91; 100-102). The Arapahos (pp. 23-24, 36-38, 67-72, 93, 108, 252) arrived in the Hills sometime in the early half of the eighteenth century and maintained a continuing presence in and around the Hills until the United States illegally seized them in 1877 (pp. 126-129, 252-253; 254-265). Unlike the Lakotas and Cheyennes, there is nothing in the published literature that describes their continuing cultural relationship to WCNP, although a number of sources mention their ties to other sites in and around the Hills. The cultural resource staffs of the Arapaho tribes (p. 631) claim a cultural interest in the area, however, as do the staffs of all present-day Cheyenne (p. 630) and Lakota (p. 629) tribes. The federally-recognized tribes with the most important historical and cultural relations to the lands that make up WCNP include: The Northern Arapaho Tribe of Wyoming, The Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma, The Northern Cheyenne and the Fort Peck Assiniboine/Sioux tribes of Montana, the Oglala Sioux, Rosebud Sioux, Lower Brule Sioux, Cheyenne River Sioux, and Standing Rock Sioux tribes of South Dakota.

There are many other tribes who have important cultural, historical, and/or legal relationships to the Black Hills. First and foremost among these are the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe of South Dakota and the Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska (p. 632). Both of these tribes were parties to treaties and agreements with the United States governing the Black Hills. Although neither of these tribes had any kind of long-term residential connection to the area of the Black Hills, they need to be included among the federally recognized tribes with whom WCNP consults. Like other Dakota-speaking tribes, who were not parties to treaties dealing with the Black Hills, the Crow Creek and Santee Dakota have a long history of intermarriage with Lakota tribes who do have important historical ties to the Hills (p. 95). They also share in the cultural patrimony of the entire Sioux nation, and many of their present-day members adhere to beliefs and practices where the Black Hills occupy a significant place (p. 631). Dakota tribes who were not parties to the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 either expressed no interest in being involved in consultations, or else, they deferred to the Lakota people for responsibility on matters pertaining to Wind Cave National Park (p. 631).

The remaining tribal nations have no relationship to WCNP under U. S. treaty law, although many of them have important historical connections to the area and some may have cultural ones as well. These tribes include the Arikaras, Comanches, Crows, Hidatsas, Kiowas, Mandans, Plains Apaches, and Poncas. Three of these populations the Mandans, Hidatsas, and Crows (pp. 21-22, 38-39, 45-46, 65-66) occupied and used areas on the northern side of the Hills in early historic times, but there is little evidence of any large or extended presence in the area of WCNP other than occasional trading and military forays. The Crows expressed no interest in further consultation with WCNP (p. 635). The Poncas (pp. 22, 42-43, 66, 95) and Comanches (pp. 23, 31-33, 64-65) are reported to have occupied areas in and around the southern Black Hills in the

1 These and all future numbers refer to pages in the body of the text where further information and details are provided. In Part One of this report, there is a summary of historical material for different eras at the end of each chapter. Also, in Chapter Fifteen (pp. 587-616), there is a comprehensive review of the history of the park region from the early eighteenth century to the present.
eighteenth century, and the Poncas even retained a name for Wind Cave in their language (pp. 504-505). The cultural resource officer of the Comanche Tribe of Oklahoma deferred to the Lakotas for advisory responsibilities on WCNP (p. 635). The Northern Ponca Tribe of Nebraska expressed no interest in further consultation, while the Southern Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma indicated an historical interest in the area (p. 634). Of the tribal nations with known historical affiliations to the Hills, the Apaches (pp. 22-23, 33-35, 64-66) and the Arikaras (pp. 22, 43-45, 66, 95) have the earliest documented ties to the WCNP area, extending back at least to 1500 A.D. Both of these tribes traveled and camped at locations in and around the southeastern Black Hills until the end of the eighteenth century, after which time they are no longer reported in the area. Both of them also have important cultural connections to the Black Hills and retain stories of sacred significance about the area (pp. 503, 515-516, 528). Most of the sites where these stories unfold, however, refer to locations farther north. There is nothing specific that can be linked to Wind Cave and its surroundings. On historic grounds, the Plains Apache tribe of Oklahoma and the Fort Berthold Tribe of North Dakota (which includes the Arikaras, Mandans, and Hidatsas) expressed an interest in being consulted on matters pertaining to the park (p. 633). These tribes need to be included in any decisions that come under the guidelines of NAGPRA (p. 272) and that deal with funerary remains in the area between 1500 and 1800. The final tribal nation, the Kiowas (pp. 23, 35-36, 64-67) stayed along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River for approximately forty years in the mid-eighteenth century. Like the Apaches and the Arikaras, they hold many important stories of religious significance that refer to the Black Hills, but again, these cover sites on the northern side of the Hills (pp. 496, 497, 499, 505, 515). Kiowa cultural resource staff asked to remain on an advisory list until further consultations could be conducted with their tribal elders (p. 633).

Over the past three centuries, American Indian people of many different origins have had varying degrees of affiliation, historical as well as cultural, with areas of the Black Hills in and around WCNP, but only some of them, notably the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and possibly the Arapahos, have retained an on-going association with the area that conforms to the definition of a traditional cultural property. Before summarizing the cultural properties of importance to these tribal nations, a few words need to be said about European American historical and cultural attachments to the area of WCNP. For half a century between the 1880s and 1930s, a small number of European Americans homesteaded some of the land that would eventually become park property (pp. 121-125, 137-154, 234-236). Their history is part of the cultural heritage of many residents who live in communities bordering the park. Clearly, the lifestyles of European American ranch families and their adaptations to park lands represent an important chapter in any historical narrative that deals with the park (p. 624). The relationship of early settlers and other European Americans to park lands does not constitute, however, a traditional cultural property in the strict sense of its meaning. Certainly the park draws the interest of European Americans, locals as well as tourists, but it does so largely as a geological curiosity and an important zoological attraction (pp. 153-154, 166-169, 240-241). Since the park began 100 years ago, it has been influenced primarily by the modern cultures of tourism and natural history study, neither of which stand at the foundation of any contemporary European American community's identity or cultural belief and practice. They certainly are not necessary for the cultural survivance of any European American group (pp. 170-172, 441-442, 606-611).

This stands in marked contrast to the Lakotas and Cheyennes (and probably the Arapahos), where the park holds properties that stand at the foundation of some of their contemporary cultural beliefs and practices, and by extension, at the heart of their identities as Lakota and Cheyenne people. These tribal nations need to be consulted pursuant to a variety of different traditional cultural properties. In the remaining part of this overview, some of the cultural foundations behind the Cheyennes and the Lakotas continuing attachment to WCNP are
reviewed here. In addition, culturally significant landscapes, sites, and resources (animals, plants, minerals, and soils) on park properties are identified with consideration given to their protection and also to the conditions of accessing them for religious observances and other traditional cultural practices. Finally, attention is given to establishing consultative relations with these tribes and incorporating their perspectives into the park’s interpretive programs.

II- The Cultural Foundations of Tribal Affiliations to WCNP

The cultural significance of the region where WCNP now stands to the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribal nations is frequently diminished and trivialized in European American accounts. Their stories about the area are often labeled as tales, lore or legends, implying that none of them need to be taken seriously. This is unfortunate because Lakota and Cheyenne understandings of this area, its landscapes, landforms, geological activity, astronomical phenomena, plant habitats, and animal life, involve complex, richly textured, and systematized bodies of knowledge. The ontological premises of their knowledge systems certainly differ from the ones to which European Americans conventionally subscribe, but they still generate sophisticated interpretations of the region in which WCNP is located. This knowledge needs to be taken seriously and treated as a different but no less compelling way of thinking about the park in particular and the Black Hills more generally. The Black Hills are a powerful teacher, as the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos have long known, and it is important, where it is culturally appropriate and permissible to do so, to include some of their teachings in park interpretive programming (pp. 283-286, 578-593, 649).

From historic times to the present, the Lakotas have referred to the Hills euphemistically as a meat pack, a safe, or a supermarket, a place that contains all of the resources necessary for the well-being of the life forms they once depended on (pp. 281-282). In the historic era, roughly 1742 to 1877, the Black Hills represented a veritable storehouse of animals, plants, minerals, soils, and waters of value to local tribes. Tribes drew on these resources in different ways and degrees, but one thing is clear: the Black Hills were well known as an important and highly esteemed location for various kinds of resource procurement. Although one important species, the bison, abandoned the Hills after the 1860s, others remained abundant enough to provision the bands who stayed in the area or accessed it from a distance on a regular and recurring basis. Even after tribal title to the Hills was extinguished in 1877, Lakotas and Cheyennes continued to return to the region to hunt and find plants, stones, and other resources important to their daily needs and spiritual well-being, and they continue to do so to the present day (pp. 315-32, 392-400).

The Black Hills unique and diverse natural landscapes did not go unnoticed by the tribal nations who once lived and traveled in their reach. In most tribal perspectives, the abundance, uniqueness, and diversity of the Hills life forms were a telling testimony of their importance and sacredness. Indeed, the two went together in the sense that the region’s geological/biological complexity was embedded in, constituted by, created for, and a sign of their spiritual power. Indeed, the Lakotas and Cheyennes have long believed that the Black Hills are part of a complex and integrated ecosystem with important relationships to the surrounding prairies and sagebrush steppes. In his testimony before the Allison Commission, Red Cloud referred to the Black Hills as the Chief of the Land (pp. 522, 578-579, 595). Just as leaders do with their followers, the Hills guided, nurtured, and provisioned the lands within their shadows. As early as 1804, Lewis and Clark learned from the Arikaras that the winter home of the animals was located in the Black Hills (p. 476). In the early nineteenth century, bighorn, elk, pronghorn, and bison were reported to seek shelter during the winter months in the lower elevation recesses of the Black Hills. The annual cycle of ungulate movement between the Black Hills and the surrounding grasslands was
well-known to the Lakotas and Cheyennes, and it was also described by scores of European
American writers who traveled the Hills before several native species were extirpated (pp. 309-
315; 578-579).

The Lakotas and Cheyennes believe the Black Hills contain all the tiers, directions, and/or
elements of the universe and that the spiritual forces which govern them have their homes in the
Hills and their outlier formations (Inyan Kara Mountain, Bear Lodge Butte, and Bear Butte).
Some of these homes are associated with caves. The Lakotas, for example, link Wind Cave to the
spiritual force that governs the wind-power responsible for the breath of life (pp. 294-295, 305,
498, 499, 553). The Lakotas and Cheyennes, along with the Arapahos and Arikaras, also believe
the spirits of animals reside in caves, and even more specifically, that they inhabit the vast cavern
formations underneath the Black Hills. Cave openings are seen as portals to the animals
subterranean homes, places where they exist in a spiritualized state awaiting the time of their
materialization and emergence on the earth's surface (pp. 309, 311-312, 579-588).

In many different ways, the Black Hills are envisioned as a gigantic fertility or reproductive
structure, often represented in the form of a bison. In historic times, winter was the time when
animals returned to their underground homes. It was the season of gestation when new life was
incubated inside the womb of ungulate species and by extension inside the earth and the caves in
the Black Hills. In spring, when new generations of animals were born and received the breath of
life, they were nursed at locations along the Race Track. The thermal waters at Hot Springs, for
example, are described as the milk of the earth. Eventually, the animals made their way to the
surrounding grasslands through the Hills various gateway canyons or birth canals, including the
most famous one, the Buffalo Gap. After a summer season of feeding and growth, they returned
in the late fall to the Race Track and then to the underworld to undergo a new cycle of rebirth and
regeneration (pp. 455-456, 532-533, 564-565, 578).

In Lakota traditions, the spirit homes of bison are typically located in stone structures
underneath the earth and usually inside eminences, such as mountains or hills (pp. 296-298, 340,
447, 544). In one Lakota story, the ice-like crystals of this subterranean world were the material
out of which the Creator formed the first members of the Pte Oyate (Buffalo Nation), the
ancestors of humans (p. 297). Gypsum (selenite), an important mineral in cave formation, was
used in healing, in locating and calling animals, and in marking ceremonial altars (pp. 429, 433).
In fact, the ribbon-like formations of gypsum that follow the Race Track have important symbolic
meanings in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions and religious observances (pp. 340, 433-434, 557,
560, 566, 573, 592). Stone is one of the most important spiritual entities in Lakota cosmology,
constituting the foundation of all subsequent forms of creation. It is strongly equated with the
earth and the bison (p. 594).

The spiritualized essence of the earth is usually represented in the figure of a bison woman
whose home of origin is a cave or a spring. In Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, she appears either
as an elderly woman or a young female who gifts humans with the plentiful supplies of bison that
emerge from her subterranean home (pp. 299-300, 338-339, 447-449). The notion that the Black
Hills embody a feminine generative presence is widespread in tribal traditions and documented
not only for the Lakotas and Cheyennes, but also the Kiowas (pp. 499-500). Beneficent female
bison spirits appear in a number of stories associated with Wind Cave (pp. 537-540).

Like stone and earth, water that comes from the depths of the earth is believed to have
regenerative properties. And like caves, springs are seen as sites of emergence. In fact, several
Cheyenne stories speak about bison coming to the earth's surface through springs rather than
caves (pp. 303-304, 453-454). Springs and caves are related, insofar as both are connected to the
subterranean home of the bison and their guardian, the Earth. Both are also associated with Little
People, who in some traditions are the Earth’s helpers, assisting in the generative processes that
she controls. Little People appear in several stories linked to the Wind Cave-Hot Springs area
(pp. 454-455, 561-562).

Many Lakotas believe they are descended from the Pte Oyate (Buffalo Nation), and like their
forbearers, they came into existence in the subterranean world and reached the earth’s surface
through a cave opening. The Lakota genesis story of Tokahe is widely associated with Wind
Cave, and in fact, today, this is the one most commonly told in relation to this cave (pp. 540-542).

Once bison emerge on the earth’s surface, their movement is linked to the wind and the sun.
In early Lakota traditions, the North Wind, Waziyata, or his grandfather, Waziya (Winter Man
and/or the First Buffalo Man), were equated with the North or Nadir of the earth, the direction
from which the bison come. The home of these two figures is a cave. Some stories about Wind
Cave are associated with the North Wind and/or the Old Man of Winter, and one of the Lakota
names for this cave identifies it as the home of the wind, suggesting it has a connection to Tate,
the Wind and his five sons, the Four Winds and the Whirlwind (pp. 302, 340-341, 449-452, 549-
555). In Lakota thought, the North Wind represents the material manifestation of ni, the breath of
life (pp. 292, 302, 447). On cold winter days, bison were easily located by their clouds of frozen
breath. Similarly, the openings to caves were made visible by the condensation they emitted. The
Lakotas formed a synergistic connection between the two. Caves came to symbolize not only the
place where bison came from but also where the breath of life or the wind originated (pp. 451,
452, 586). Because of its forceful airflows, Wind Cave came to represent the penultimate
expression of this process, and some modern Lakota identify it very specifically with the spiritual
force that governs breath (p. 545).

Historically, the North Wind and his grandfather, the Winter Man, maintained a paradoxical
relationship with humans and bison because they created conditions that were life-giving as well
as life-taking. Winters with enough cold and snow coverage to force bison into their usual
patterns of movement were believed to be necessary for strong health and the renewal of life.
Yet, under extreme conditions, winter could also bring death by driving game away and causing
starvation (pp. 580-583). Indeed, one of the episodes in the highly regarded Falling Star cycles of
the Cheyennes and Lakotas tell how the hero killed the Winter Man so people could hunt the
bison he was hoarding. This story may have been associated with Wind Cave (pp. 556-557).

The connection of bison to the North Wind appears to have been part of an older Lakota
tradition, widely recorded in the writings of nineteenth century observers who frequently mention
the Black Hills in association with a giant who lived in a cave and controlled the movement of
animals (pp. 449-450, 478, 587-588). This connection was confirmed in later years by Lakotas,
who suggested that the lofty position of the North Wind was replaced by the figure of Tatanka,
often represented as a white bison bull (pp. 337, 538). In fact, this cosmological shift may very
well have followed a change in the seasons bison were typically hunted. Prior to the widespread
adoption of horses and the commercial marketing of their robes, bison were usually hunted in the
late fall and early winter through driving techniques at locations with natural enclosures or
precipices (pp. 322-323, 581). In fact, just south of park properties is the Sanson Buffalo Jump,
where bison were hunted in this manner during prehistoric times. By the nineteenth century, the
customary time of the year to hunt bison was the late summer and early fall when the herds
congregated on the open plains at locations outside the Black Hills (p. 323).
Tatanka remains a central figure in all major Lakota religious observances, including the most important of all, the Sun Dance (pp. 337-338). The bison bull is important to the Cheyennes as well, but he is not described in any detail in the ethnographic literature (p. 338). Among the Lakotas, the bison bull is sometimes linked to caves, and a few stories about Wind Cave and the general subterranean cavernous structure underneath the Black Hills mention white bison bulls or crazy bulls (pp. 542-543, 545-547). More typically, Tatanka is connected to the surface of the earth, including lands along the Race Track near the Buffalo Gap that are known in the Lakota language as Tatanka makalhpaya [The Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull]. One important traditional Lakota story tells how a bison bull transformed himself into a human at this location (pp. 533-534).

In his various manifestations, Tatanka appears to be most closely associated with the sun, another major cosmic force in Lakota and Cheyenne cosmologies. The two are companions, and at night, when the sun sets, it stays underneath the earth in the bison's subterranean home (pp. 300-302, 452). In Cheyenne cosmology, the Sun is associated with the Southeast Wind (Hesenota or Esseneta he) (p. 287). There are many tantalizing bits of information, albeit circumstantial, that suggest the Buffalo Gap area may have been associated in older Cheyenne traditions with the home or pillar of this wind. In Lakota beliefs, the sun is connected either to the South (Itokagata) or the East (Wiiyap) Wind (pp. 290-291). In the worldviews of both tribes, there is a dynamic tension between the north (nadir-earth) and south (zenith-sun) that is played out every spring, when the sun begins its return movement north (pp. 300-301). According to the Lakotas, as the sun gets stronger, it drives the North Wind away and signals the bison to emerge from their subterranean homes to follow the sun's path. In historic times, this seasonal shift was associated with the general area of the Buffalo Gap and the annual cycle movement of bison to the grasslands beyond the Hills (pp. 300-302, 340, 452, 583-585).

The interaction of water, stone, and fire leads to the creation of breath, and bison symbolize this process because they carry the ton or force of the four superior spiritual elements in Lakota cosmology, namely, Stone, Earth, Sun, and Sky (and Wind) (p. 713). The sweatlodge, which is an important cultural practice among the Lakotas and Cheyennes, mimics a process that takes place on a grand scale in the region of Wind Cave National Park where the forces of the sun intersect with water (springs) and stone (caves), creating the conditions that spark the breath of life for new generations of bison (pp. 462-463, 585-586). When the southeastern reaches of the Black Hills still teemed with bison, the movement of certain herds between their winter homes along the Race Track and their summer grazing grounds on the prairies as far south as Alliance, Nebraska was well known to the Cheyennes and Lakotas who traveled and lived in this area (p. 579). Even after bison were extirpated from the region in the 1860s, their relationship to the Black Hills and the Wind Cave-Buffalo Gap area remained inscribed in tribal memory. When bison were reintroduced in the area during the early twentieth century, this event probably did not go unnoticed, nor would it have been unexpected. After all, Wind Cave was a major portal to and from their underworld home, and so logically, this would be the place they would first reappear. This event was certainly consistent with tribal beliefs, and it may have even reaffirmed the Lakotas' conviction that Wind Cave is the origin home of the bison.

Once life is incubated within the depths of the Black Hills and emerges on the earth's surface through various cave openings, its various manifestations need to be ordered to insure its survivance. The process of this ordering is what the famous story of the Race Track is about. There are many different versions of this story among the Cheyennes and Lakotas, but many focus on how the race ordered the relationships between different animals and humans, thereby establishing certain basic categorical and cosmological distinctions in the universe (pp. 563-568).
In some Cheyenne traditions, the origins of the Sun Dance are connected to the story of the Great Race, and the area of the Buffalo Gap is believed to be the location where the bison first performed the dance and turned its teachings over to humans. The Sun Dance remains one of the most important religious observances of the Cheyennes and Lakotas, and much of its symbolism, at least among the Cheyennes, is directly tied to the Race Track and the story of the Great Race. Although many Lakotas and Cheyennes believe that the first Sun Dance conducted by humans took place in the Sun Dance Mountains near Bear Lodge Butte, its ultimate origin is still associated with the Wind Cave-Buffalo Gap area (pp. 472-475, 569, 572-573, 595-596).

The Lakotas also connect the Race Track to a circular constellation comprised of stars whose movements were coordinated with various landforms in the Black Hills (pp. 506-511, 569-570, 593-596). These alignments marked events in a ceremonial pilgrimage that started in the early spring with a pipe ceremony near the Buffalo Gap, moved to the interiors near Harney Peak and the Central Prairies, traveled to Inyan Kara Mountain and Bear Lodge Butte, and ended up at Bear Butte. One of the routes on this pilgrimage apparently followed the Race Track across WCNP properties to trails that led to the higher elevation regions of the Hills (p. 583).

While the Black Hills are unquestionably associated with the life cycle and movement of local animal populations, they are also distinguished by their plant life, which includes many species that never die over the winter months. The year-round greenery of the Hills—abundant and concentrated stands of lodgepole pines, ponderosas, cedars, sages, spruces, and kinnikinick—must have underscored the idea that this region had powers to perpetually renew and regenerate life (pp. 430, 589). Kinnikinick or bearberry, the gift of a spirit wolf, comes from the same direction as the North Wind and the bison, and it remains a vital ingredient in the tobacco mixtures that local tribes use when smoking a pipe to carry their messages to the spirits and Wakan Tanka or Ma heo (pp. 436-437). The notion that the Hills embody immortal forces and spirits is a long-standing one that, at least in terms of the written record, extends back to the mid-nineteenth century (pp. 513-514). This idea imbued the Black Hills with their reputation for providing tribal people with the natural resources necessary for maintaining and regenerating their own health, and it is probably the principal reason why the Hills remain a preferred site for the collection of many plant resources used in tribal healing and ceremonial observances today (pp. 393-395).

It needs to be emphasized that there are many different beliefs and practices associated with Black Hills in general and Wind Cave and the Race Track in particular. There is no right story nor has there ever been a single overarching narrative about either of these landforms in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions. Notwithstanding the variation, there are certain common themes that tie the different beliefs about these sites together, that link them to other locations in the Black Hills, and that reveal a more encompassing and shared sense of meaning about the relationships between the land, its animals, plants, and minerals, and the sky, its birds, winds, and stars. What the Lakotas and Cheyennes shared were certain cultural assumptions about the relationships between caves, springs, breath as a life-giving force, bison, and the spiritual forces, the Winds, the Earth, the Stone, and the Sun, that governed them. The cosmological precepts they shared were woven together in a range of tapestry-like storytellings that made sense in relation to the unique topography and landscape of the southeastern Hills. Most of the stories about Wind Cave, the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and the Hot Springs address fundamental and widely shared cosmological tenets about the nature of life and the workings of the universe. When they do so, they evoke the sacred knowledge and spiritual understandings that are at the heart of the way the Lakotas and Cheyennes see themselves and interpret their presence in this world (pp. 573-575).
Over time, some of the beliefs associated with the area of WCNP have changed. Yet, there is a remarkable continuity in the fundamental cosmological precepts that these traditions address. There is very little in modern Lakota and Cheyenne understandings of this area that does not have some historical precedent. Contrary to certain critics, who argue that contemporary Lakota beliefs about the sacredness of the Black Hills were invented in the twentieth century, either in response to tourism or the political movements of the 1970s, this report has gone to great lengths to demonstrate how modern beliefs and practices relating to the Hills and the region of WCNP have deep historical roots (pp. 476-577).

The region of WCNP not only occupies a significant place in Lakota and Cheyenne cosmologies and religious practice, but it also has importance for other reasons. Historically, this was an area some bands customarily established their winter camps. Locations along the Race Track, including those in the area of Wind Cave National Park, were highly valued because they were common winter haunts of the bison, and if bison failed to return, there was an abundance of other game. The season from late fall to early winter was the primary time of the year to hunt elk and mule deer, which commonly inhabited the Race Track and the rocky recesses of the Hogback. It is not fortuitous that most of the Lakota stories associated with the Wind Cave area take place during the late fall or winter months, the time of year the tate [small hunting parties] pursued elk and deer. Whether Lakota and Cheyenne winter camps were in the park at locations along the Race Track, at nearby sites along Beaver Creek and the Fall River, or outside the Hills along the Cheyenne and White rivers and even as far away as the Platte or Missouri rivers, it is clear that the region of Wind Cave National Park was one of areas small groups of hunters came to find game during the late fall and early winter months. The lands that make up most of the park’s properties were clearly understood as a game reserve. They were a favorite winter hunting ground for the Lakotas and Cheyennes, an area that once held large numbers of bison. Even after this animal disappeared from the region, it was still rich in other sorts of large and small game, including several different species of birds commonly taken for food (pp. 106-109, 210-211, 214-215, 216, 218-210, 222, 223,316-317, 319, 379-380).

Bands that wintered outside the Hills usually camped in the area during other seasons. Around the time of the vernal equinox and before the thunders arrived, the Wind Cave-Buffalo Gap region was a place to gather dogwood and kinnikinick for tobacco mixtures (p. 509). As the summer solstice approached, bands began to move to locations in the higher elevation regions of the Hills (p. 399, 437-438). In doing so, they followed the Race Track to reach the well-established trails that took them into the interiors. At least two of these trails crossed park properties: one entered the Hills by way of the Buffalo Gap and followed Beaver Creek and its tributaries into the interiors; and the second skirted the western edge of the park near the water supply area by way of Red and Shirttail canyons and the Beaver Valley (pp. 586-587).

In the late spring and early summer, local bands focused their activity on the procural of plants used as food, medicine, and in manufacturing and ceremony. This was the time of the year the Lakotas and Cheyennes gathered lodgepoles, sought out medicinal plants not found on the surrounding prairies, and gathered food plants which were abundant in the Hills at this time of the year. Eastern facing locations along the Race Track and Hogback, for example, were popular sites to gather prairie turnip in the month of June (pp. 197, 208, 211, 220, 222, 223, 242, 393, 399, 583-584, 586-587).

Some local bands also traveled these trails in the fall and winter months to trap animals whose peltries and hides were at their prime during this time of the year. This would have been particularly true for the Lakotas and Cheyennes whose immediate families were linked by
marriage to European American traders and trappers (pp. 227-229). In fact, some early European American observers described how blazes were set in the trees of the Hills interiors to mark trails when these were covered by snow. Again, the familiar route that crosses Wind Cave National Park along Beaver Creek and its tributaries may have been used for this purpose (pp. 210-211, 228-229). Some bands also returned to the area in the fall rather than the spring to procure their lodgepoles (p. 399).

No matter what season groups were in the Hills, they clearly sought out local springs in the area either for drinking water or for healing. The thermal waters just south of WCNP at Hot Springs were widely used by the Cheyennes and the Lakotas. There is abundant archaeological evidence of campsites in the vicinity of these springs, and this is one area where Lakotas and Cheyennes were reported to return on a continuing and recurring basis after 1877. While their reverence for and use of these thermal waters is the best documented, other springs have cultural significance too. Springs that emerge out of bluffs and rock outcroppings are commonly associated with the spiritual homes of Little People and also with the Double-Woman of the Lakotas, who is an important figure associated with excellence in quillwork. Any site of this order is bound to have spiritual significance and use, and, it would not be surprising to learn of such places inside the boundaries of WCNP (pp. 295, 304, 453-454; 485-487, 590-591).

Prior to the acquisition of trade metal and European-made tools, the Black Hills were a prime location to acquire rock and mineral suitable for manufacturing and ceremonial use. Two sites near WCNP, Battle Mountain and Flint Hill, were important areas to quarry flint used in the making of arrowpoints, and several archaeological sites on park properties also reveal quarrying activity. The gypsum and red clay deposits found along the Red Valley, for example, are explained in Cheyenne and Lakota traditions as originating in the Great Race, and both play a significant role in their ceremonial observances, including the Sun Dance. Even after the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were removed from the area, some of them returned to procure minerals, clays, and soil, especially those used for healing and religious observances (pp. 397-398, 433-434, 591-592).

In the years prior to 1877, Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho bands maintained a complex, varied, and changing relationship to the Black Hills. As described in great detail in Chapter Seven (pp. 199-225), some of them regularly wintered along the Race Track and the lower elevation recesses of the Hogback, including locations in and around WCNP. Others wintered outside the Hills but at locations within easy reach; most of these bands generally camped in the Hills for shorter periods, especially during the spring and early summer. There were also bands who wintered at locations near the Missouri, Platte, and Powder rivers and who accessed the Hills on a recurring but less frequent basis. And finally, there were bands who hardly ever came to the Hills or who once lived near them but rarely returned after they moved to distant locations beyond the Hills. Looked at another way, the size and composition of the populations who stayed near the Hills varied over time. When bison were still abundant on the grasslands east of the Hills, the area was probably densely populated over much of the year by bands that accessed the area at different times and in different ways. After the 1840s, when larger numbers of Arapahos, Lakotas, and Cheyennes moved to locations south and west of the Hills to find more productive bison hunting territories or better grazing lands for their horses, the populations who wintered or summered in the Hills probably declined. Yet, in some years during the 1850s and 1860s, the Hills were heavily populated when bands took sanctuary in their reaches to escape U.S. military forces (p. 224). There were also times, especially during the summers of 1874 and 1875, when the Hills were abandoned because of a large military presence there (p. 224). As far back as the prehistoric record, the Black Hills were used by populations who came to the area from diverse
locations, who approached them in different seasons, and who stayed within their reach for varying lengths of time (pp. 17-25, 197-224).

However the Black Hills were used, they were an integral part of the territorial range of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos from the late eighteenth century until 1877 when they were illegally seized by the U.S. government. The Hills were also a common ground, a region these tribal nations jointly occupied and defended against outside encroachment. It was an area where they shared access to the region’s rich resources, and where they built a sense of community through intermarriage and collaboration in subsistence, ceremony, and trade. In the process, they not only developed certain common understandings about the area, but they also shared access to the sacred sites that revealed the centrality of the Black Hills in their lives and cosmologies (pp. 50-57, 93, 96, 100, 196-198, 248-249, 526-530). The loss of the Black Hills was deeply felt by all of these tribal nations. Their inability to come together in the twentieth century to reclaim the Hills has engendered some bitterness. Yet, overriding some of their political differences is a profound and mutual sense of anger and frustration at being denied access to the Black Hills, particularly the public lands on which some of their most sacred sites rest (pp. 252, 257).

When today’s Lakotas claim an ancestral connection to the Black Hills that stretches back to time immemorial, they are correct if we view their past in the light of a complex history of intertribal marriage and alliance and the cultural amalgamation that this history created. Certainly the Lakotas’ entrance into the Hills entailed conflict and competition, but it also came about through marriage and cooperation. As pointed out in many parts of the report, contemporary Lakotas are not the same people as the Lakotas of the seventeenth century. The people who make up the population of today’s Oglala Lakota (Sioux) Tribe, for example, share strong and well-documented genealogical ties with the Arikaras, Poncas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes, all of whom lived and traveled in the Black Hills before the main body of Lakotas arrived and took up residence in the area during the early nineteenth century. Before the Lakotas’ arrival, Arikaras, Poncas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes shared ancestries with the Apaches who lived here probably as early as the sixteenth century. Decades, indeed centuries, of intermarriage created strong and tight social networks within which sharing, cooperation, and collaboration were not only possible but also encouraged across tribal boundaries. Although punctuated by short periods of conflict, the Lakotas’ relations with the Arapahos and Cheyennes were especially strong and enduring. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, these three tribes lived together in peace and jointly defended the Hills against the incursions of other tribes, notably the Crows and Pawnees, and together, they attempted to thwart the advance of European Americans. Before these three tribes dominated the Hills, they were co-occupied by Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Comanches, and Crows who tried to keep the Lakotas and Shoshones at bay, and before them Poncas and Arikaras as well as various Apachean and Numic-speaking populations frequented the area (pp. 50-57, 67, 70, 79, 95, 131, 526-530).

After American troops, prospectors, and settlers invaded the Black Hills illegally in 1874, the Lakotas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes joined forces in launching raids against the interlopers. Most of this raiding took place near the Hills’ various canyon gateways and along the Race Track. Some of the most intense fighting occurred at locations that followed the Red Canyon and Buffalo Gap trails into the interiors (pp. 124, 125-126, 157). Some early settlers reported that the southeastern region of the Hills, where WCNP is now located, was one of the areas that local tribes were least willing to relinquish (p. 106). This was the area where the Sicangu Lakota leader Spotted Tail wanted to establish an agency for his followers (pp. 114, 132). When deliberations took place between the federal government and representatives of these three tribes over the sale of the Black Hills, the lands between the outer edge of the limestone plateau and the Cheyenne River, which included the Race Track, were the ones these tribes did not want to
abandon. In fact, Red Cloud was very emphatic about not including the Race Track in any sale or lease (pp. 127, 128, 132).

In the last half of the nineteenth century, WCNP and its surrounding environs, including the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs, remained an ideal location for settlement and use. The area was now within easy reach of government agencies on the upper reaches of the White River, where many Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos drew their treaty annuities. Although bison had largely disappeared from the area, it still remained a location rich in other game, notably, elk, deer, and pronghorn. The region also offered other necessary amenities, including access to good shelter, wood, fresh water, and even forage for small herds of horses. It contained a rich and diverse range of plant communities, which tribes relied upon for food and medicine and in manufacturing and ceremony; it also included minerals and soils important in their daily life and in the conduct of their religious observances. Some of the same reasons this area was so important to local tribes made it attractive to incoming European Americans. The newcomers also recognized the advantages of its milder winter climate, fine grasses, mineral waters, accessible supplies of timber, and abundant game. They homesteaded along the Fall River and along Beaver and Highland creeks, and they ran their cattle and horses on lands that covered park properties until this use was prohibited in the twentieth century (pp. 116-118, 150-153, 234-237). They also gathered timber and plant foods in the area and hunted here, and it is probably not a coincidence that many of their stories about Wind Cave and its discovery also involve hunters and hunting (pp. 146-147).

After 1877 when tribal title to the area was extinguished, Lakotas and Cheyennes from the nearby Pine Ridge Reservation gradually returned to the southeastern Black Hills. Once the military’s policy of reservation confinement was relaxed, small groups began to enter the Hills with the permission of their government agents. In the late 1870s, the Hot Springs area was settled by a small group of non-Indian men (and men of mixed ancestry) with their Lakota wives and descendants. In the following decades, even at the height of the Indian Scare between 1889-1900, Lakotas were reported in the area bathing at the thermal waters of Minnekahta, trading with local merchants and ranchers, visiting friends, and even camping in the town over the entire summer. There are also references to them picking berries, digging turnips, and collecting medicinal herbs in the area. The Lakotas and Cheyennes of Pine Ridge also visited Wind Cave, camped on park properties, and traveled through the park en route to the locations where they cut their lodgepoles (pp.154-161, 224-226, 242, 393).

In contrast to the late decades of the nineteenth century, when Lakotas and Cheyennes from Pine Ridge returned to the Hills to carry on many traditional subsistence pursuits, their activity in later decades was focused less on procurement, other than the collection of berries and medicinal plants, and more on making a living through performance or employment. In the early decades of the twentieth century, they became actively involved in the round of summer celebration activities sponsored by local white communities, and some became associated with permanent tourist attractions too. In these years, some Lakotas continued to use the park as a camping location en route to areas in the Hills interiors. In the 1930s, WCNP sponsored an encampment where Lakotas held dances and demonstrated bison butchering and cooking techniques. In these years, the Black Hills continued to be thought of as a source of sustenance, a place that provided people with a means of livelihood. Even though much of their presence in the Hills between 1920 and 1960 took place in settings of tourism, it can be suggested that this experience gave them a concrete context for retelling many traditional stories about the importance of the Hills and its various sacred sites, and this is certainly evident from the recollections of Nicholas Black Elk’s grandchildren. Spending time in the Hills may have opened opportunities to visit isolated locations to conduct important but unobtrusive religious observances connected with fasting and
other prayerful devotions and also to the collection of plants and stones used in healing and ceremony.

Lakotas and Cheyennes from Pine Ridge and other reservations in South Dakota regularly traveled to the Hills to visit places of sacred significance. After 1930, Cheyennes from Oklahoma and Montana also began to travel to the Hills again for the same purpose. Throughout the twentieth century, the Black Hills were a place of return, an area that reminded tribal peoples of their culture, a landscape that continued to reveal and teach them some of the basic tenets of their worldviews and that rekindled and indeed became integrally tied to their own sense of identity as Indian people and members of particular tribal nations. The essential point is that the Lakotas and Cheyennes never abandoned the Black Hills. They continued to assert their relationship to the area, even if, at times, it was on the terms of the people who had stolen this land from them (pp. 172-179, 475-516).

After the 1970s, the Lakotas, the Cheyennes, and the Arapahos, began to reestablish a relationship to the Hills on their own terms (pp. 180-185, 269-274). Guided by provisions in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 and newly established federal laws, especially the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, they sought access to the Hills for the purpose of conducting some of their traditional religious observances. Some participated in political occupations and takeovers, including one at WCNP, to publicize their legal rights, and others tried to get congressional legislation passed that would return most of the public lands in the Black Hills to tribal ownership, including again the area of WCNP. Although much of this political activity has subsided in recent years, Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos still struggle to advance their interests on public lands in the Black Hills. They continue to lobby for the protection of their sacred sites, for accommodations to conduct ceremonies and solitary religious observances on these lands and for considerations to access various traditional cultural properties. Equally significant, although less publicized, is the fact that since World War II increasing numbers of Lakotas have returned to the Hills to live and work. In 2000, according to the statistics of the U. S. Census Bureau, nearly five percent of the Hills population represented people who identified themselves as American Indian (p. 179).

As explained in greater detail in Chapter Seven (pp. 227-239), much of the land area that makes up the Black Hills and its outlier formations is under the jurisdiction of federal or state agencies. It is part of a vast public commons to which multiple interest groups have had varying degrees and kinds of access. Until the early decades of the twentieth century, much of area was open access land where local settlers hunted, grazed their animals, supplied their timber needs, and gathered wild plant foods with little or no restriction. Even the lands that became part of WCNP permitted certain extractive activities, including grazing, well into the twentieth century. For many years, tribal people also retained some limited access to the land for certain traditional purposes until laws and policies were enacted that seriously restricted the taking of faunal, floral, and mineral resources for domestic use. The passage of these laws not only affected tribal people but European American settlers as well. The extractive activities of both groups were restricted in the face of corporate timber and mining interests, but even more significantly, they were outlawed to meet the needs of an emerging travel and recreational industry.

When tourism and recreation started to flourish in the Hills after World War I, a new set of users entered the region with very different sensibilities about land-use and resource extraction. Over time, more public land came under a restricted status and off-limits to many traditional users, European Americans and American Indians (pp.165-169, 172-178, 224-226, 237-239). Competition and conflict between different user groups has defined much of the twentieth century history of the public commons in the Black Hills. Leaving aside for the moment their larger,
treaty-based interest in the Hills (pp. 245-268), Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho access to the area’s public lands has been compromised, in part, as a result of changing attitudes towards land-use in the Black Hills, a shift that has affected many local whites as well and pitted their interests against those of tourists and recreationists. Although tribal interests in the Hills ironically share certain features in common with local white settlers, they remain quite distinct and separate in other ways. One feature that distinguishes tribal interests is their underlying religious character. In contrast to European Americans, whose religiosity is not tied to the land, the religious traditions of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos are integrally connected to the land and very specifically to the land that makes up the Black Hills (pp. 441-454, 531-596). Tribal interests in the Hills have always had economic components, underpinnings and motivations, but these have been defined and energized by worldviews where the material appearance of things is inseparable from its spiritual foundation. As explained in the text of this report (pp. 282-304, 325-354, 389-391), the material and immaterial dimensions of existence are intertwined in ways that make it difficult to separate the practical from the spiritual or the profane from the sacred in tribal worldviews. Nonetheless, there are certain times and places where the sacredness of life in its varied and complex manifestation is especially apparent and strong, where cosmic forces converge and reveal themselves in extraordinary and wondrous ways. One of these locations includes the environs where WCNP now sits.

III-The Character of Contemporary Cultural Affiliations to WCNP

Today the area that makes up WCNP remains important to the Lakotas and Cheyennes not only because of its historical connections through decades of occupation and use, but also because it speaks to important events in cosmological time that address fundamental teachings about the workings of the universe that led to the origin of significant religious observances. Many of these traditional teachings and observances still hold currency in contemporary tribal beliefs and practices, and this is well-documented in the writings and oral narratives of contemporary Lakotas and Cheyennes. It is also evident in the curriculums they teach in their K-12 schools and tribal universities (pp. 391-397, 475-516, 531-573).

A. Landscapes and Landforms: Issues of Protection and Access

The ways in which the Lakotas and Cheyennes have talked about and conceptualized the Black Hills and their various landscapes, including those identified with the region of WCNP, make it difficult to single out a series of discrete sites that can be identified, segregated, and ranked for purposes of cultural protection and management (pp. 641-643). The importance of Wind Cave, the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and the Hot Springs is not about these sites as single landforms, separated from each other and isolated from the living world of which they are a part. Instead, their significance resides in their relationships to each other and to the wider area that constitutes the entire Black Hills (pp. 454-455, 576-577, 637, 640-642). This is an integrated landscape but only part of it comes under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. Wind Cave and a portion of the Race Track are located on park properties, but the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs are situated outside boundaries of the park.

All of the Lakota and Cheyenne cultural resource personnel with whom we spoke singled out the Race Track as a culturally significant traditional property (pp. 635-636). For many different reasons already described here and in the text of the report, it is considered a sacred site (pp. 483-482, 562-573). Much of the Race Track, however, has been disturbed, opened to settlement and development since 1877. Large portions of it are also in the hands of private property owners. Only a few areas of this geological depression remain on public lands and retain any semblance
of their original state. One of the places where the track is still relatively isolated and pristine sits on park properties. All of the Lakota and Cheyenne resources officers we interviewed concurred that this area of the Race Track requires special protection, and two even suggested that it should be nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places to protect it from any further development. Given its importance in the history, cosmology, and current religious practices of these two tribes, we agree that it should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. Indeed, we would argue that the entire region encompassing the lands between the Buffalo Gap and Wind Cave should be designated as part of an historic district rather than an historic site. Since it is an integrated landscape, not just a small self-contained location that is significant, we recommend that the entire region be included under some kind of protected land status. Outside the Hogback, the town of Buffalo Gap is already part of a NRHP historic district and this designation should be extended to include the landscape in and around the natural landform known as the Buffalo Gap, a place that is also vitally important to the Lakotas and Cheyennes.

The Lakota cultural resource officers we interviewed identified Wind Cave and the mountain in which it is nested as sacred and culturally significant traditional properties (pp. 636-637, see also, pp. 446-451, 487-490, 532-562). The cave is already protected and so are some of the human-made structures that surround it. Both carry a NRHP designation. The mountain in which the cave is nested also carries a degree of protection because much of it sits on NPS land, but the restrictions on its use are probably not as rigorous as those that hold a NRHP status. Further protection, as described momentarily, might be handled in other ways.

Many other landforms or sites of traditional cultural significance probably exist on park properties that have not been referenced in the published or archival literatures we studied (pp. 638-639). None of the tribal cultural resource staff with whom we spoke volunteered information on other sites. Since all of the Cheyenne, Lakota, and Arapaho people we interviewed indicated that the park continues to be used for fasting and prayer, observances that typically take place in areas of spiritual significance, there are bound to be other places that can be regarded as traditional cultural properties or sacred sites. Some of the types of places that might require special consideration in the future include:

1) **Rock Art:** All rock art in the Black Hills is believed to be sacred, representing one of the ways that spirits communicate with humans (pp. 453, 638). Wind Cave National Park, however, is not in an area where heavy concentrations of rock art are known to exist. Hidden and unidentified petroglyphs and pictographs might still be located on park properties. One of the Lakota cultural resource people we spoke to indicated that there was rock art on the mountain above the cave, although he did not specify its exact location. All rock art is protected under federal laws governing prehistoric remains, and special efforts need to be made to locate and protect those that may be situated inside the park.

2) **Other Cave Openings and Springs:** All springs and cave openings have sacred significance in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions because they are the portals between the earth’s surface and the subterranean world where some spirits keep their homes (pp. 446-452, 638). While these sites may not have any tribal-wide traditions associated with them, as exist in relation to Wind Cave and the Race Track, some of them may be a part of traditional and culturally significant beliefs and practices of smaller circles of people, including families, communities, and associations of religious practitioners. As indicated previously, these sorts of locations are often tied to Little People, the Double-Woman, and a host of different animal spirits in Lakota and/or Cheyenne traditions (pp. 561-562).
3) **Unusual Topographic Formations:** Standing stones with unusual shapes might be known to have extraordinary properties and origins (pp. 453, 639). One location marked on old GLO map as Giant's Thumb could be one of these (p.560). Distinctive landforms, such as Rankin's Ridge, are often identified as the backbone of an animal spirit and therefore hold special interest. Canyons or rock outcroppings in which gypsum or other crystalline mineral formations are located are also likely to have significance, especially if they exist in locations with unusual concentrations of certain plants (e.g. chokecherries) or in areas animals are known to frequent and feed. Again, traditional cultural knowledge about these kinds of locations is probably restricted to certain circles of people.

4) **Burial Sites and Remains:** Burial areas are especially sacred, and in historic times, it was not uncommon for the Lakotas and Cheyennes to bury their dead near caves and in rock crevices. One of the primary reasons many modern day Lakotas and Cheyennes consider the Hills sacred is because they hold the burial grounds of some of their ancestors. In fact, one Lakota identified an area just above Wind Cave as the location for the burial of his grandfather's sister (pp. 451, 513, 639). Since this type of burial took place in the Hills before 1877, the locations of specific interment sites may not be known. If burials happen to be uncovered by accident in the course of routine park maintenance or improvements, they need to be left alone. If they have to be moved to protect them, their approximate age needs to be identified in order to determine which tribal nation(s) should be consulted. As a general rule of thumb, any remains found in the park that date between 1500 and 1700 probably have Apache or Arikara affinities, between 1700 and 1750, the situation becomes more complicated and the tribes involved also include Arapahos, Comanches, Kiowas, Poncas, and Cheyennes. After 1750, the Lakotas need to be added to the list, and between 1800 and 1877, the relevant tribes are the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos.

The identification of other traditional and culturally significant sites on park properties requires additional in depth and on-site consultations with tribes who have vested and continuing cultural interests in the park, namely, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. Even if knowledgeable tribal educators, elders, cultural resource personnel, and spiritual leaders from each of these tribes are invited individually or as groups to tour the area and identify sites, many of them may still not come to light. The sites may remain unidentified because only some individuals and families know about them, or because there are cultural reasons for not divulging information about their whereabouts (pp. 639-641).

As argued in greater detail in Chapter Sixteen (p. 641), each tribal nation and even each of its constituent communities probably has a different map of the sacred sites on park properties, and it would be an enormous undertaking to attempt to locate all of them. Since most areas of the park are left alone and not in any danger of being disturbed, it may not be necessary on a practical level to know these places in advance. Park staff and visitors, especially hikers and backpackers, may come across them from time to time because of the presence of offerings and other evidence of spiritual activity. If they do so, the sites need to be left alone and the prayer ties and banners associated with them untouched. One tribal cultural resource officer suggested that park staff and visitors be advised not to disturb these offerings when they are found (pp. 459-461).

Even if the park does not attempt to locate all the sites of cultural importance and/or sacred significance, it is absolutely imperative that such locations be identified whenever the park undertakes any form of development or pursues other actions that will alter the landscape. This includes such things as improving or expanding trail systems and carrying out prescribed burns. It is true that burns often reveal archaeological sites not readily visible in dense stands of vegetation, but this kind of activity can have devastating consequences if it takes place in locations where people customarily fast and pray or where spirits, such as Little People, are
known to frequent. Any type of action that is likely to disturb or alter a location demands on-site consultations with interested tribes, and it is often under these circumstances that information otherwise kept secret will often be revealed to protect a spiritual site from desecration.

The park also has important connections to the conduct of a variety of religious observances (pp. 459-474). All cultural resource officers of the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes indicated that the park is a site for the conduct of certain solitary religious observances involving fasting and prayer (pp. 459-460, 63-464, 643-644). It is also mentioned in relation to small group observances such as sweatlodges and pipe ceremonies (pp. 462-643). Even larger events, most notably Sun Dances, are known to have taken place on park properties in recent times (pp. 467-474). Some of the Lakota cultural resource staff admitted that the frequency of group spiritual observances at the park has declined in the last decade, but they also observed that more private devotions continue to be held here. Many contemporary religious practices of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos do not take place in a set place. Sites are chosen for such purposes on the basis of the instructions religious practitioners receive from their spirit helpers, the solitude they offer, and/or their association with a specific spiritual presence (p. 474). Whatever the motivation for holding religious observances on park property in the past, it appears most of them were conducted at locations away from the heavily trafficked areas of the park. This will likely remain the case in the future, although one Lakota cultural officer indicated that some spiritually knowledgeable people want special access to the cave’s interiors to hear what the spirits are saying. In order to accommodate such a request, special provisions and policies would need to be developed to permit religious observances inside the cave. As discussed elsewhere, granting such requests should be determined on the basis of a neutral standard that evaluates the activity’s relative impact on the cave and its fragile boxwork formations, not on the grounds that the activity fails to conform to current policies governing the present-day access of spectators and spelunkers (pp. 642-645). In general, allowances need to be considered and made for certain kinds of traditional religious activity that do not fall under the urbanized, tourist and recreational models that typically manage human relationships to the natural world under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. It is also important to note that many sacred sites may not have any religious observances attached to them. They are left alone out of respect and regard for the spiritual presence that resides there (pp. 455, 640).

The most recent Executive Order on sacred sites, 13007 defines the parties whose interests need to be taken into consideration in terms of identifying and accessing sacred sites on federal lands. First, the person(s) must come from a federally-recognized tribe with established religious and ceremonial affiliations to the area; and two, the person(s) must be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion. The second determination can be tricky, as discussed elsewhere, because there is not always widespread agreement on who constitutes a legitimate religious practitioner (p. 651). Among some tribes, such as the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, there is a formally-organized association of medicine men and women, which makes their identification fairly easy. In most other tribes, the identification is more informally based. Even though there might be disagreement on the worth of particular practitioners, there is a general consensus on the identity of these people. Thus, at Pine Ridge, Rich Two Dogs and Wilmer Mesteth are widely respected religious practitioners and very knowledgeable about the park and its environs. While this law has merit in eliminating the fakes and wanabees, its restricted wording could potentially exclude people who come to the park for private devotions, if religious practitioner is narrowly construed to mean people otherwise identified as spiritual leaders or medicine men and women (pp. 457-458). Adherents and practitioners of tribal religions who would not be classified as a religious specialist or leader undertake much of the religious activity that takes place on park properties. Most private religious observances are unobtrusive and have impacts on the land that are no more invasive than a hiker or backpacker,
and therefore, they are not likely to require any kind of elaborate policy-making decisions. The conduct of sweatlodges, pipe ceremonies, Sun Dances, and other comparable group observances, however, require more consideration and accommodation.

Generally speaking, most forms of religious observance will not require a great deal of intervention or management on the part of park staff when it comes to finding suitable locations that are isolated enough to give individuals and small parties the solitude they need. Only some of the larger observances, notably the Sun Dance, raise management issues that involve, among other things, providing road access and sanitation and minimizing impacts on the land. Where conflicts of interest are most likely to emerge, and where management policies are most needed, pertain to issues of resource extraction, including requests from religious practitioners for soils, minerals, and plants used in the conduct of their observances. It should be pointed out that most of this kind extraction is limited in scope. In the case of plants, only berries, shells, and nuts can be legally collected on park property. Other takings are illegal, but if exceptions were to be made to allow limited harvesting for traditional religious purposes, much of it could be carried out in ways that do not damage or destroy a plant. Except for roots and bulbs, barks, leaves and branches can be harvested without removing a plant from its habitat (pp. 645-646). Indeed, we would recommend that the park service consider the possibility of allowing limited forms of extraction for religious purposes that do not destroy the resource and/or its habitat.

In this regard it must be pointed out that most Cheyenne, Lakota, and Arapaho religious observances require a ceremonial altar and fire, the smoking of a pipe, and smudging (pp. 459-462). This is not a matter of choice; it is absolutely imperative in the conduct of virtually all religious observances. Propane-fueled fires or carbide lamps cannot serve as functional replacements. Most ceremonial fires require specific types of wood to produce the coals that light the pipes or the smudges that carry prayers and messages to the spirit world. Here the use of certain resources, such as box elder or cottonwood for fire, cedar for smudge, and kinnikinick for tobacco, is prescribed and absolutely necessary to insure a successful and effective outcome (p. 460). In the case of subsurface spaces, fires might be built on the outside and the coals carried in containers to light pipes and smudges in a cave interior. On the surface, open fires always pose a danger during dry periods and times of drought. Since most religious observances on park land are likely to take place from March 21 to August 1st during seasons of low fire danger, this is not likely to be a major concern. When fire danger is high, however, other kinds of accommodations might be made in consultation with tribes to determine how to contain and monitor open fires so they do not pose a risk.

B. Resources and Their Protection

There are many floral, faunal, and mineral resources on park lands that constitute traditional cultural properties. On lands under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, these resources are already guaranteed a high measure of protection. The concerns that tribes have expressed include the protection of these resources from the potentially destructive forces of development, such as new trails and roads, or the casual, and often illegal, takings of park visitors and local residents. Tribes also have a legitimate, traditional cultural interest in gaining limited access to some of these resources for use in healing and the conduct of any of a variety of religious observances, and again, we recommend that the NPS consider the possibility of allowing limited extractive activity. In discussing the types of traditional cultural properties at Wind Cave National Park, it must be emphasized that the information presented here and in the body of the report and its appendices represents only a portion of the knowledge that the Cheyenne, Lakota, and Arapaho retain on animals, plants, minerals, and soils. Much of this knowledge remains unrecorded and unpublished and is transmitted orally in traditional contexts. Some of it,
particularly that which pertains to healing and ceremonial use, is privileged information, held by
traditional religious practitioners and not widely known. Therefore, nothing contained in this
summary or the report should be construed as exhaustive of the possible uses and meanings
associated with natural resources that conform to the designation of a traditional cultural property.

1) Animals: Wind Cave National Park’s cultural identity and spiritual significance in the eyes of
Lakota and Cheyenne people is closely tied to its animals, especially the bison. Historically, the
these tribes had a twofold relationship to the area; first, it was a highly regarded hunting ground,
and second, it was a spiritual place, a location spirits frequented and one where important
transformative processes took place that gave animals and humans the breath of life. Since
hunting is outlawed on park lands, this activity no longer takes place here. However, since 1937,
when House Resolution 8773 was passed, authorizing the park to donate its surplus game meat to
local tribes, it has remained an important and highly valued source of food for local tribes (pp.
177-178). Bison and other game animals that inhabit park properties are seen as particularly
significant because they live in proximity to their underworld spiritual homes and because they
feed on the grounds where the Great Race took place, where humans first emerged on the earth’s
surface, or where Falling Star traveled in his various quests to save the people. Some may even
believe that the meat of animals grazed on park land has greater health-giving properties (p.173).
Besides meat, there are many other animal parts, including hides, bones, skulls, teeth, shells,
cartilage, bones, blood, and organs that have traditional cultural uses and purposes. Tribal
members might legitimately request any of these when local herds are culled. The following list
summarizes the animals whose body parts have been customarily used as food, in manufacturing,
in healing and in various religious observances. A more detailed discussion of these uses is found
in Appendix A (pp. 698-807) and also in Chapter Ten (pp. 356-381).

TABLE A: Summary of Faunal Cultural Properties Historically
Associated with Wind Cave National Park and Used By
the Lakotas and Cheyennes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FOOD</th>
<th>MANUFACTURE</th>
<th>HEALING &amp; CEREMONY</th>
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<td>Mule Deer</td>
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<td>Pronghorn</td>
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<td>Whitetail Deer</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CARNIVORES</strong></td>
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<td>Coyote</td>
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<td>Fox</td>
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<td>Wolf</td>
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<td>Mountain Lion</td>
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<td>Weasel, Ferret</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SMALL HERBIVORES</strong></td>
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<td>Gopher</td>
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xix
2) Plants  -- The Black Hills have long been associated with plant collection (pp. 391-397). Indeed, the plants that grow in this area are believed to have more potency because of their association with the spiritual forces that live in the Hills and that govern the tiers, directions, and/or elements of the universe. Wind Cave National Park contains a host of plants important as food and medicine, in veterinary practice and in manufacturing, and with spiritual and symbolic significance. Again, although most of the plants that grow on park properties can be found at other locations in the Black Hills and on the surrounding prairies, their association with Wind Cave and the Race Track makes them especially potent and powerful.

The cultural resource officers with whom we spoke to singled out kinnikinick and sage as especially important (pp. 394, 645). Both of these plants are important traditional cultural properties, and they occupy a central place in the healing and ceremonial traditions of the Cheyennes, Arapahos, and Lakotas (pp. 392, 394, 408-419, 428-429, 436-437, 821-823, 906-907, 917-918). Leaves from both plants can be taken without destroying the resource. Other plants have importance too, but these may be difficult to identify in association with the park for two
reasons. First, in general terms, tribal healers are reluctant to talk about and identify the sources of their medicine. This is considered privileged information, which is not even shared with fellow tribal members. Second, people are hesitant to talk about the locations where they gather plants for fear that divulging such information will lead to restrictions on future access, especially in areas like national parks where most forms of plant collection area prohibited (pp. 398-399). This is an area of consultation that will require special sensitivity and forbearance. Listed below are some of the plants inside park boundaries that are associated with traditional cultural uses and meanings. Again, more detailed descriptions on these and other plants are found in Appendix B and Chapter Eleven (pp. 400-439).

Table B. Summary of Faunal Cultural Properties Historically Associated with Wind Cave National Park and Used By the Lakotas and Cheyennes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Medicinal &amp; Hygienic</th>
<th>Veterinary</th>
<th>Symbolic &amp; Ceremonial</th>
<th>Art &amp; Manufacture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flowering Forbs</strong></td>
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<td>American Licorice</td>
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<td>Beardtongue</td>
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<td>Blazingstar</td>
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<td>Blue Vervain</td>
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<td>Breadroot Scurfpea</td>
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<td>Cattail</td>
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<td>Cleavers</td>
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<td>Fetid Marigold</td>
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<td>Nannyberry</td>
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<td>Skunkbush</td>
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<td><strong>Grasses, Rushes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulrush</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big bluestem</td>
<td>x x</td>
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3. Minerals - The Southeastern Hills is famous for its rich flint quarries, and WCNP is associated with a number of sites that give evidence of the extraction of chalcedony and other minerals. Much of this quarrying activity took place in prehistoric times, and there is little evidence of any active mining during the historic period. A limited degree of mineral extraction probably took place here for religious purposes, and some local stones were no doubt quarried to make axeheads, hammers, and grinders. Certain minerals and clays used in religious practice are still secured in the Black Hills, and some, like gypsum, are found on park properties. Certainly requests might be made for certain stones. As is the case with plants, it may be difficult to determine whether the park is used to secure any minerals, and if it is, where the mineral extraction takes place (pp. 297, 397, 428, 432-433, 645, 939-944).

Soils brought up to the earth’s surface by badgers, prairie dogs, and voles, especially at locations linked to bison, have considerable cultural significance. These soils are believed to hold the purifying properties of the deep earth, and they are closely associated with ideas of regeneration and renewal, especially as they relate to the emergence of corn, bison, and people from the underworld. Lakotas and Cheyennes view prairie dogs as cultivators, animals whose actions set the stage for the growth of plants humans and bison depend upon (pp. 299, 432, 592, 645). In the past, Lakotas have requested some of these soils, and they will likely do so in the near and distant future.

Table C. Summary of Minerals and Soils at Wind Cave National Park and Used by the Lakotas and Cheyennes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Veterinary</th>
<th>Healing &amp; Ceremony</th>
<th>Art &amp; Manufacture</th>
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<td>Table B, cont.</td>
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<td><strong>Soil, Clay</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grama</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>June grass</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Little bluestem</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Porcupine grass</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prairie cordgrass</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prairie sandreed</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wild rye</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lichens, Fungi</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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Table C, cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Veterinary</th>
<th>Healing &amp; Ceremony</th>
<th>Art &amp; Manufacture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soil unearthed By burrowing animals</td>
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C. Tribal Perspectives on the Park

Every year busloads of children come from school districts on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations to tour Wind Cave, and many other Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos join the regularly scheduled tours as individuals and families. At some level, they must experience a certain degree of dissonance between what they hear and see in official park interpretive programming and what they’ve been taught in their schools, by their elders and spiritual leaders. Many Lakotas we have spoken with are chagrined that the park gives only passing notice to the history of their presence in the area, much less any indication of its importance in their cultural traditions. (pp. 646-650).

The park is part of a public commons with responsibilities to all of its visitors including peoples with a very different understanding and sense of entitlement to the park and its properties. The Lakotas and Cheyennes have deep historical associations with this place, and they have compelling stories about its origins and meaning. They also possess incredibly rich bodies knowledge about the area’s plants, animals, minerals, soils, and waters. Most of the tribal cultural resource people we spoke with indicated that some of this knowledge could be shared, and they approved efforts to create programming that would give the public a better understanding of the importance of this place in their lives. Yet, at the same time, most of them argued that a tribal input and perspective is imperative for this kind of programming (pp.647-648).

There are many opportunities here for the park to work with local educational institutions to create informative learning experiences for the public who visit the park. For example, there is a collaborative research project between the American Indian Studies and Biology programs at Black Hills State University to learn more about tribal relationships to the flora of the Black Hills. Jace Decory, Mark Gabel, and Charlie Lamb, three of the people involved in this program, might be contacted to create internships for Lakota students to work on interpretive materials for the park that could be posted along trails or displayed in the park’s visitor center. Highly respected tribal educators in Lakota Language and Culture Studies programs, such as Albert White Hat and Victor Douville at Sinte Gleska Tribal University and Karen Lone Hill of Oglala Tribal University, might be consulted on how to best approach and build collaborative interpretive efforts.

However tribal input and perspectives are acquired, they should not be sequestered and treated as if they exist outside the park’s authorized programming (pp. 647-648). All tribal history needs to be included at every stage in the chronology of the park from early historic times to the present. Tribal natural history perspectives need to be treated respectfully along side Western approaches. They need to be seen as vital and informative worldviews, not as relics of some bygone era or as frivolous legends. Also, we recommend that greater attention needs to be paid to the fact that local tribes knew of the cave before European Americans arrived. We may not know the exact date it was first discovered, but we can presume its discovery preceded the coming of European Americans by many decades if not centuries. Judging by the history the Poncas recorded in the early twentieth century, knowledge of the cave extends back to at least the early decades of the eighteenth century. Earlier dates might be determined from archaeological
remains near the cave's opening, but unfortunately, most of these were destroyed when the
elevator was built.

D. Consultations and Further Study

Consulting work with tribes on sacred sites, traditional cultural properties, or any other issue
of mutual interest will not be easy. The Black Hills, including the area of Wind Cave National
Park, remain part of a long political struggle over who has legitimate ownership of these lands,
and who has the right to steward them and define their cultural meaning. Since these lands are
not likely to be relinquished to the Sioux Nation or any other interested tribal group in the near or
foreseeable future, they will continue to be a sites of contestation.

In whatever consultation it pursues, the park service is bound by federal directives to work
with tribes on a government-to-government basis (Executive Order 13084). This means that
consultations must be arranged and worked out with the standing governments of the tribes who
have a cultural interest in the park. Initially, this might entail individual in-person meetings
between park staff and the culture resource offices of the 10 tribes with the most significant
ongoing and vested cultural, historical, and legal interests in the area. These meetings might
address areas of mutual policy interest with respect to: 1) identifying sites and resources; 2)
defining patterns of access; 3) discussing the inclusion of tribal perspectives in park interpretive
programming; and 4) determining the most appropriate mechanisms for seeking input and
soliciting advice on matters of mutual interest. It is absolutely imperative that these meetings
take place directly with park service personnel, the people who are empowered to make
management decisions on the protection of sites and properties and the nature of tribal access to
them. Hiring temporary consultants to do this sort of work will have little influence or effect
because these people do not have the authority to act upon or accommodate tribal interests vis-
v-vis the park. In fact, some tribal offices were reluctant to speak with us because we were not NPS
staff.

WCNP might also want to consider the possibility of developing separate advisory boards for
each tribal nation, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos (pp. 632, 651-652). These boards
might include tribal government officers who represent each tribe's cultural resource interests,
knowledgeable tribal elders, spiritual leaders, and educators who teach tribal language and culture
curriculums in secondary and higher educational institutions. In the case of the Lakotas, this
would entail a fairly large group of 20 to 30 people, but it could be smaller if those who serve on
the board represent people with demonstrated knowledge of the park, its uses, and history.
Advisory boards of this order are invaluable in offering useful advice around management
policies, site identification, access issues, and further consultation. They can also minimize
accusations of favoritism and bias. However, if boards of this kind are developed, their input
needs to be taken seriously and acted on in concrete and visible ways. The regional district
office of the U.S. Forest Service in Custer, SD has already initiated this kind of process and is
presently formalizing an official agreement with local tribes for consulting purposes.

In securing advice from tribes on matters of traditional cultural property identification,
protection, and access, a few things need to take place at the outset. First of all, park staff and
tribal advisors need to reach some agreement on the culturally proper ways to acquire, handle,
and protect highly sensitive information about sites and other traditional cultural properties on
park lands. Executive Order 13007 contains a very important provision, under Section 1. Part (a)
it reads: Where appropriate, agencies shall maintain the confidentiality of a site. Consensus
also needs to be reached on who can represent tribal interests beyond the offices of tribal
government, and on the culturally appropriate mechanisms for contacting spiritual leaders,
educators, and other knowledgeable people for further, more indepth and/or on-site consultations regarding any of a variety of matters relating to sacred sites, traditional cultural properties, and the conduct of religious observances. Mutually agreeable policies need to be developed around the protocol of consultation before the park or its representatives can move forward to inquire about more specific and sensitive concerns.

In making these recommendations, we are mindful of the fact that existing park service personnel are already overworked and overburdened with responsibilities and have little background experience, time, much less funding, to devote to these kinds of efforts. The park service might consider retaining staff entrusted with the responsibility of building and maintaining consulting relations with interested tribes. This is especially important at NPS properties, such as Wind Cave, the Badlands, and Devil's Tower, where there are many culturally sensitive issues that need to be addressed on an on-going basis. Currently, there is no end to the misunderstandings, suspicions, and resentments that have built up around the Park Service, especially in light of recent events at the Stronghold in Badlands National Park. While it might not be practical to hire someone for each site, it might be possible to create a liaison position that oversees this work in relation to a group of park properties, especially when these involve consultations with many of the same tribes. Although each park certainly has its own special management needs and issues, there are many areas of overlap including acceptable protocol for handling privileged information and the identification of culturally appropriate and knowledgeable tribal consultants. It needs to be emphasized, however, that some of this varies from one tribal nation (for example, Lakota as opposed to Cheyenne) to another, and as a result, it may be necessary to develop different protocols on a tribe-by-tribe basis.

There is clearly a need for more on-going research on the history of the park and its cultural uses from the perspectives of local American Indian and European American communities. More oral history on the recollections of people whose forbearers lived on park lands for extended periods, camped and crossed park properties temporarily on a seasonal basis, or who visited the area for various kinds of resource procurement or religious observance would greatly add to our knowledge of the area and give it a fuller texture and greater chronological depth. In regards to tribal historical relationships to the area, the most fruitful efforts will involve collaborations with tribal educational institutions. Developing joint research projects and/or offering students internships could provide meaningful alliances with direct benefit to tribes and the park.

**III-Beginning a New Cycle**

Wind Cave National Park is located on land that has important and unique geological, zoological, and botanical features, but it also has significant historical and cultural properties. Much of the purpose of this report is to document American Indian historical and cultural affiliations to the park, but it also includes materials on European Americans who settled on or visited the lands that now make up the park. In the conclusion to the report, Chapter Sixteen (pp. 623-653), additional recommendations are made on how the park might to take further steps to acknowledge, and where appropriate, accommodate the various cultural interests that surround it.

It must be emphasized that the following report offers a broad overview of the park's human history and its significant cultural properties. It represents a work in progress towards a much richer and more detailed representation of the park's cultural importance. Much more work needs to be done to respectfully engage and involve local tribes in protecting the cultural properties that are so important to them and in establishing guidelines for access to them. Also, a much greater effort needs to be given towards creating a more comprehensive storyline for the park's interpretive programming, one that acknowledges and includes the perspectives of the tribal nations.
with long-standing and continuing interests in the park and the lands that surround it. These efforts can only enrich the park and help build an appreciation for all of its visitors, including the many American Indian people who visit it each year.

Finally, nothing contained in this report should be construed as a complete or exhaustive picture of the subjects it covers. Some of the tribal knowledge about the park is privileged information and can never be included in public documents such as this one. In building a more culturally comprehensive and diverse understanding of the park, its landforms, landscapes, natural resources, and history, a delicate line must always be maintained between what is confidential and restricted and what is open and accessible to wider public audiences. Moving in the direction of a more inclusive storyline for the park will not be easy, but it's well worth the effort because of the compelling nature of the cultural history that surrounds this area. As the park celebrates its first century, it will hopefully use this milestone as an opportunity to think about ways it can include and accommodate the knowledge and interests of all its constituents, including the peoples who were its original inhabitants and users.
This report is a work in progress. The interpretations and conclusions are limited by the published and unpublished materials we reviewed and by the information the staff of various tribal cultural preservation offices shared with us. We are cognizant of the fact that some of what is written here might need to be clarified or changed through a more lengthy and involved consultation process with the tribal nations who have continuing and vested cultural interests in Wind Cave National Park.

We decided not to interview other members of each tribe because we believed that, as a matter of fairness, we needed to give equal consideration in our research effort to all of the tribal nations with a known history of occupancy in the area. Had we done so, it would have been an enormous undertaking and impossible within the time constraints of our contract.

We diligently searched the published historical and ethnographic record on each nation to ascertain the character and chronology of their affiliation to the Black Hills in general and Wind Cave National Park in particular. The bibliography to this work reveals only part of this effort: most of the references cited include only the ones actually cited in the report. Many others were studied, but they did not offer material that shed light on tribal relationships to the Hills.

As becomes apparent in the report, the bulk of the cultural material relating to the Wind Cave National Park region of the Black Hills comes from the Lakotas and Cheyennes. This reflects the fact that they are the only two tribal nations on whom concrete beliefs and practices associated with the park were found.

Many of the beliefs and practices that both of these tribal nations attach to the area of Wind Cave National Park touch on the realm of the sacred. We have at all times approached this material with the respect it deserves, but we are aware that our understandings and interpretations only touch the surface of the rich and complex worldviews of the Lakotas and Cheyennes. We ask those much more knowledgeable than us to understand that we approached our studies in a heartfelt way and to take pity on our efforts if they do not reveal the full picture or misinterpret the meaning of certain stories and concepts.

Many people assisted in the production of this report, and all of them need to be acknowledged individually. Several undergraduate student majors in American Indian Studies, and two graduate students from the American Studies Department at the University of Minnesota worked on this report. Stacey Schlegel from American Indian Studies surveyed and reported on much of the historical and ethnographic literature relating to the Lakotas, Kiowas, Arikaras, Mandans, Hidatsas, Plains Apaches, Poncas, and Crows and she assisted in the writing of Chapters Twelve and Thirteen. Christine Berndt, a graduate student from American Studies, researched the historic and ethnographic writings on the Cheyennes and Arapahos. Both of these students and Kim Rossina, also a graduate student in American Studies and now an instructor of Dakota culture and history in American Indian Studies, assisted in archival research at the South Dakota State Historical Society in Pierre, South Dakota. Finally, Andrea Yardley from American Indian Studies and now a student in the Law School at the University of Minnesota, gathered materials...
on Lakota cultural traditions relating to animals and also some of the information on the legal status of the lands that make up the Black Hills.

Yvonne Kelly and Elizabeth Brown of the American Indian Studies Department contributed to the report’s editing. Yvonne Kelly, the department’s Program Associate, also translated texts and words in Lakota with the assistance of the department’s Dakota language instructor, Neil McKay, and with advice from native speakers, Glen Wasicuna and Jerry Dearly. Vanessa Kittelson, an undergraduate major in American Indian Studies and now a Research Assistant in the department and a graduate student in the School of Public Health, helped in conducting phone interviews with the staff of tribal cultural preservation offices. Finally, Anna Bendickson, a member of the department’s office staff, assisted in the design of the cover page.

Dr. David Wilkins, Professor of American Indian Studies, Political Science, and the School of Law at the University of Minnesota, contributed his considerable expertise in reviewing and commenting on materials dealing with treaties and claims cases. Dr. David Martinez, who received his doctorate in philosophy and is now an Assistant Professor in American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota, read parts of the manuscript and gave us helpful comments on the sections that deal with cosmology and spirituality.

We have been in continuous communication with Dr. Linea Sundstrom, an archaeologist and a well known expert on the Black Hills. She assisted us in immeasurable ways and took the time to read drafts of some of the chapters, providing us with constructive advice on their contents. She has been a true colleague, sharing with good grace and humor her considerable knowledge about the area.

Also Drs. John Moore, Loretta Fowler, and Jeffery Anderson also need to be acknowledged for their helpful advice on the published and archival literatures dealing with the Cheyennes and Arapahos. Dr. Lawrence Loendorf also needs acknowledgement for his helpful advice on conducting the research for this sort of study.

Helen Kopietz and Theresa Derner, staff members of the Department of American Indian Studies and the College of Liberal Arts, lent their technical support to the project in innumerable ways.

Michelle Watson, Mike Evans, Ruthann Knudson, Ron Terry, and Tom Farrell of the National Park Service also need to be acknowledged for their assistance at various stages in the research and writing of this report.

Finally, we wish to thank the many people we interviewed from tribal cultural preservation and resources offices (listed in Appendix D) for their assistance and thoughtful answers to our questions about the nature of their tribal nation’s cultural affiliations to Wind Cave National Park.
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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION:
A PASSAGeway TO THE ISLAND HILLS

The Black Hills rise like an island from an ocean of grass-covered and treeless plains, watered by occasional and scanty supplies of rain; and the winds in passing over these plains gather some moisture which they part with as rain on being chilled by contact with the colder and more elevated region of the central portion of the hills. The result of this is the prevalence of frequent though not heavy rain-falls, giving to the hills a most peculiar climate (Jenney 1875:181).

The figurative use of the term island, as in forested islands in a grassland sea (Froiland 1978:1), has become a popular way for European American writers to metaphorically represent the Black Hills (Raventon 1994). The striking topography of the Hills, rising 4000 feet above the surrounding plains, the abundance and diversity of their minerals, fauna, and flora as compared to the neighboring grasslands and sagebrush steppes made them seem, as Lt. Richard I. Dodge (1965:149) put it, like a true oasis in a wide and weary desert. Long before the arrival of European Americans in the region, Island hills or Witapaha ¹ was an old name the Lakotas used for the Black Hills, and alternatively an ascription for peoples who lived in the Hills, including the Kiowas and possibly a division of the Cheyennes (Vestal 1934:264; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:314; LaPointe 1976:17).

Like the Black Hills, the nation’s national parks are described in a similar language, as islands under siege or islands of hope (Keller and Turek 1998:29). In his quote appearing on the cover jacket to Philip Burnham’s recent book (2000), Indian Country, God’s Country: Native Americans and the National Parks, Colin Meine elaborates on this metaphor when he writes:

Americans tend to view national parks as concretated islands of nature, isolated both in time and space. We have recently begun to see that parks are embedded within larger, ever-changing landscapes, and that we must pay greater attention to the context if we hope to retain their natural features. But we are only beginning to understand that parks are also embedded within human histories and cultures, and that we need to know and understand that larger story as well.

The popular but false idea that national parks were once isolated and pristine enclaves is associated with many of the nation’s most famous parks, including Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Glacier (Spence 1999). Situated in remote stretches of country, explored by European Americans only in recent historic times, these and other national parks carried an aura of pristine wilderness devoid of human habitation except, perhaps, in some long ago and now forgotten past. But few parks, if any, in the national park system ever stood outside the flows of human occupancy and use.

¹ The Cheyennes (Petter 1913-15:582; Mooney 1979:150-151) and Arikaras (Parks 2001b:970) also used derivations of this name for the Kiowas. In fact, Petter (Ibid.) claims the Cheyennes adopted this name from the Lakotas.
Certainly the Black Hills, no less than the area presently held by Wind Cave National Park, were not without human inhabitants. From prehistoric to modern times, the lands in and around this park served as significant crossroads in the history of human occupancy in the Black Hills. Yet, little more than thirty years ago, the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park in particular were believed to hold landscapes largely without human inhabitants until European Americans took up residence in the area during the 1870s. Relying on the reports of mid-nineteenth century European American observers with limited experience in the area, some twentieth century writers (Palais 1941:3; Parker 1966:5-6) perpetuated the idea that the Hills lacked a history of significant human occupancy. As recently as 1978, Sven G. Froiland (p. 1) in his now classic book, *Natural History of the Black Hills*, argued:

Historical Indians considered the region as a holy ground, rarely encroached upon. At least, the assertion is made that the Indians seldom or never lived in the Hills. Although they hunted here, probably because of the abundance and diversity of game, there is no evidence to indicate that they spent much time in the Hills. On the contrary, numerous Indian reports, legends and traditions support the observation that they carefully avoided the area except on special occasions. They kept it more or less as a sanctuary for particular religious or ceremonial rites, or for hunting purposes. This seems well established among the Lakota but whether it was true of their predecessors, the Kiowa and the Cheyenne, is probably less certain.

A decade later, Helen Rezatto (1989:17) wrote in reference to the Lakotas:

...the Sioux did not actually live within the Hills -- and the white man makes that assertion more often than the Indian does. Usually Indians camped within sight of the enchanted mountains in the sheltered and watered valleys around the edge of the Hills. They did most of their hunting in the wide-open plains and foothills where game was most plentiful. Occasionally, they ventured into the dense forests of the rock-bound Hills to cut lodgepoles from the tall pines. But the Sioux never stayed long.

While Rezatto acknowledges the Lakotas’ common use of the foothills and less frequent occupation of the Hills interiors, she perpetuates the widely held but false notion that it was not a part of the space within which they lived.

More recently, the Black Hills have become associated with a long and complex chronology of human settlement. Archaeologists have discovered Archaic sites, such as Beaver Creek Rock Shelter in Wind Cave National Park (Martin, Alex, and Benton 1988; Alex, L. 1991; Galindo 2000, 2001), and they have uncovered scores of other prehistoric remains, which reveal that multiple groups with contrasting adaptive strategies and different artifact assemblages used the region for many millennia (Tratebas 1986; Sundstrom, L. 1989, 1990). Historical sources document a veritable succession of American Indian people in the Black Hills, beginning with the Mandans, Hidatsas, Arikaras, Poncas, Kiowas, Plains Apaches (Naishan Dene), Crows, and Comanches and ending with the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas. All of these tribal nations

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2 *Lakota* means allies, and it is the preferred term of identification for the people commonly labeled as *Sioux* in historical sources. While *Sioux* was widely used in the past, its use has been discontinued in most modern writings. *Sioux* is also a term that collectively refers to the Dakota and Lakota-speaking peoples who comprised the Seven Council Fires, *Oceti Sakowin*, of the Dakota/Lakota (or Sioux) nation. In recent years, the Yankton and Yanktonnai divisions of the Seven Council Fires have been included linguistically with the Sioux who use the *D* or Dakota dialect, and Nakota has been reserved for speakers of the Assiniboine language. The Lakota Sioux, also known as the Teton or Western Sioux, were the westernmost nation within the council. After 1830, most of them lived west of the Missouri River. They are also the Sioux with the longest and strongest attachment to the Black Hills.
were known to have lived or traveled in and around the Hills during the historic era, and many of them stayed in the area of Wind Cave National Park for varying lengths of time.

Europeans entered the Black Hills, probably in the early decades of the eighteenth century, as itinerant Spanish traders from the Southwest. By the end of the same century, French traders and trappers, working for the Spanish and later the French, were reported in the Black Hills. Some of them likely worked the creek near Wind Cave that carries the name of their most sought after animal, the beaver. None of these men left a written record of their travels, although a few of them, including Jon Vall and Jean Baptiste Le Paige, shared some of their general knowledge of the Hills with the trader, Antoine Pierre Tabeau, and the explorers, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark during the first decade of the nineteenth century. Nor did any of the later traders and trappers, who worked for American companies, leave much of a written record of their presence either. Only one trapper, James Clyman, who traveled with Jedediah Smith, wrote a very brief account of his passage across the southern Black Hills in 1823.

Beginning in the 1850s, several government-sponsored explorations left extensive records of their travels in the Black Hills. These include the reports of Lt. Gouverneur K. Warren, who accompanied expeditions under the leadership of General W. F. Harney in 1855, 1856, and 1857, and those from W. F. Raynolds explorations in 1859. None of these groups entered the southern regions of the Hills. Later expeditions, including General George Custer and Samuel Hinman’s reconnaissances of the Hills in 1874 penetrated their southern reaches, but they still skirted much of the area of Wind Cave National Park. A year later, Colonel Richard I. Dodge was the military commander of another expedition, led by geologists Walter P. Jenney and Henry Newton, that explored the Black Hills interiors. While some of the party traveled Beaver Creek (known then as Amphibious Creek) to the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs areas, probably passing across park property near Wind Cave, they wrote little about the area other than its geological features. By 1875, throngs of gold seekers had streamed into the Black Hills, building camps in the interiors at places like French Creek near present day Custer. Although many of the miners and early settlers traveled Indian trails through the southern Black Hills to reach the mineral rich interiors, including one that came through the Buffalo Gap and followed Beaver Creek or its tributaries inside the present day boundaries of Wind Cave National Park, few of them wrote about the area or remained to settle.

Under treaties negotiated between the United States and the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes in 1868, the Black Hills became part of a vast territory known as the Great Sioux Reservation and off limits to non-Indians. The subsequent failure of the U.S. government to enforce its own treaty laws and to keep non-Indians out of this land contributed, in large part, to the hostilities that led up to the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876. This battle, combined with the discovery of the Hills’ vast mineral resources, prompted the United States to illegally extinguish Lakota sovereignty over the Hills in 1877. Despite strenuous Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho opposition, the Black Hills were seized by the U.S. government with the passage of a congressional agreement in 1877 and officially opened to non-Indian settlement. In a short period of time, Americans of varied interests and backgrounds took up residence in the Hills. In the area of Wind Cave, they staked mineral claims and homesteaded ranches. Within a decade, outside entrepreneurs began to develop the region for its recreational and tourist potential. Today, ranching and tourism remain the economic backbone of human settlement in the Wind Cave region of the Black Hills.

In many ways, the region where Wind Cave National Park is situated represents a micro-cosmos of the Hills’ natural diversity and its complex cultural history. The area inside the Buffalo Gap, the well-known southern gateway into the Blacks Hills, was a location for tribal winter
camps and the site of important trails leading to the Hills' higher reaches. It was an area renowned for the richness of its game and the medicinal values of its waters and plants. It was also a region where prehistoric peoples mined outcroppings of chalcedony, quartzite, and gypsum in the park and/or at nearby Battle Mountain. The park itself stands on the site of the famous Race Track, where a race among the animals determined human fate in a time before history, and it sits at the location of a cavernous opening to the subterranean world from which, according to Lakota traditions, humans and bison emerged to populate the world.

**I. THE PLACE**

Geographically, Wind Cave National Park sits at the southeastern edge of the Black Hills heavily forested, island-like habitat. The Black Hills represent a domal uplift of great age, existing well before the formation of the Rocky Mountains (Froiland 1978:19-24). Since the 1920s, the Black Hills proper have been described as consisting of four physiographic zones: 1) a central core of igneous and metamorphic rock, surrounded by 2) a high elevation plateau of limestone, sandstone, and dolomitic shale, followed by 3) a low elevation depression that nearly encircles the Hills, known as the Red Valley or the Race Track, and finally, 4) an exterior Hogback zone made up predominately of sandstone interspersed with limestone and shales (Darton and Paige 1925; Froiland 1978:11-17). More recently, another zone has been added to this division, and it consists of the tablelands and foothills separating the Red Valley from the interior plateau, and, in the southern Black Hills, this region is known as the Minnekahta Plains (Froiland 1978:18). Part of Wind Cave National Park sits astride the Race Track or Red Valley, nestled between the outer sandstone escarpments of the Hogback and the limestone plateau of the interior. The northwest corner of the park reaches into the crystalline central core, and, as a result, the park encompasses the major geological zones that make up the Black Hills.

Wind Cave National Park is also located in a transitional biotic zone, a region where mixed-grass prairies meet the higher elevation ponderosa forests, and where important watersheds, such as Beaver and Highland creeks, form their own distinctive riparian and woodlands-like environments, connecting the upland grasslands and forests to the lowland prairies and woodlands outside the Hogback. With the possible exception of the northern coniferous biome, dominated by spruce forests and grassy meadows, most of the major vegetation biomes associated with the Black Hills are represented at Wind Cave National Park. These are: 1) the Rocky Mountain complex of ponderosa pine, intermingled with stands of red cedar that covers much of the higher elevation interiors and the inner slopes of the Hogback; 2) the grassland biome, which combines features of the arid short-grass and sage-brush steppes to the west and the more humid mixed to tall grass prairies of the east and follows the Foothills, Red Valley, and the outer edge of the Hogback, and 3) a deciduous forest biome of oaks, elms, and cottonwoods that hugs many of the lower elevation waterways from the Foothills to the valley of the Cheyenne River (Froiland 1978:81-96; Sundstrom, L. 1990:57-59; Larson & Johnson 1999:7-25).

Near the park, the thermal springs to the south create their own specialized habitat, and even though they are outside the boundaries of the park itself, they are an integral part of the broader upland mixed-grass prairie that makes up much of the park's landscape. Many other features of the area that adjoin the park, especially the Buffalo Gap, are closely connected to Wind Cave and the Race Track. Indeed, they are inseparable in many tribal conceptualizations of this part of the Black Hills. Together they form a geographic area that is distinct environmentally from other areas of the Hills, but at the same time, integrally connected to the region as a whole.
Climatically, the Black Hills embraces mountain and semi-arid continental types with the latter dominating the weather patterns in the southern reaches of the Hills. Wind Cave is located inside the Hogback in the warmer and more arid parts of the Hills, euphemistically called the banana belt. Overall, the climate in this region is milder in the winter than the surrounding plains and steppes. Not only are the winds more moderate, but the temperature is warmer. The southern region is typically protected from the arctic air masses that swing over the northern edge of the Hills, and it also receives warm Chinook winds from the south that keep the area snow free throughout much of the winter. Although the southern Hills receive more rainfall than the surrounding open plains, they are much drier than the higher elevation areas to the north. But like the rest of the Black Hills, the heaviest precipitation falls in the form of snow during the late winter and spring months. During the summer, intermittent and sometimes heavy thundershowers frequent the area. In suitable and well-watered soil locations, many areas inside the Hogback sustain an average of 142 frost-free days each year, a season long enough to support corn and other cultigens (Johnson 1949; Froiland 1978:34-39; Sundstrom, L. 1990:56-57).

Hydrologically, the Black Hills are part of the Missouri River drainage system. Many of the region’s continuously flowing streams drain into the Cheyenne River, whose two forks nearly encircle the Hills. In the southern Hills, the waterways of French, Beaver, Cascade, Hayward, Stockade-Beaver creeks and the Fall River empty into the South Fork of the Cheyenne River, while the waterways of the central Hills, Elk, Box Elder, Rapid, and Battle Creeks, flow east and empty into the Cheyenne near its forks. The waterways of the northern hills, Sand, Spearfish, Whitewood, and Bear Butte creeks, drain in a northeasterly direction and feed the North Fork of the Cheyenne, otherwise known as the Belle Fourche River. Beaver Creek and its major tributaries cross Wind Cave National Park and form an important drainage system that cuts through the Hogback at the Buffalo Gap (Froiland 1978:28-32; Sundstrom, L. 1990:54-56).

The park is named after the cave whose labyrinth of passageways occupy some of the subsurface on the park’s western slopes. Formed by the porous limestones that comprise part of the Black Hills’ interior landscape, Wind Cave is one of many caves in the park that are part of a wider cavernous structure surrounding the Hills’ central crystalline core and that may very well interconnect and extend like fingertips to other subsurface locations on the surrounding prairies (Rezzatto 1989:180). Whether or not the cavernous structure underneath Wind Cave National Park is linked to other cave formations in the Hills and beyond, it is clear that the life forms that make up its surface area are integrally connected to surrounding landscapes. The Buffalo Gap, southeast of the park, is a famous passageway, where in earlier times bison and other game entered the Hills to seek shelter along the Red Valley and where they returned to the surrounding prairies to feed on the luxuriant grasses at locations as far south as central Nebraska. From its headwaters on the higher elevation limestone plateau north of Pringle, South Dakota, Beaver Creek winds its way to the Cheyenne River, passing near Wind Cave and cutting through the Buffalo Gap. This creek and its tributaries were important trails that animals and humans followed in moving from the lowland prairies to the upland forest regions of the Hills. Generally speaking the area where Wind Cave National Park stands has been an important geographic connecting point, a crossroads linking the mountains to the plains. Besides its vertical connectedness from highland to lowland, the park covers an important part of the unique geological depression, known as the “Red Valley” or “Race Track,” which encircles the Hills interior, and this makes it integrally linked, at least from a tribal perspective, to other parts of the Black Hills as well.
II. THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Technically, the purpose of this report is to provide information to the National Park Service pursuant to understanding the human history of Wind Cave National Park and the cultural affiliations that various groups have maintained to its natural and human-made resources. Since there are many different cultural histories, traditions, and cosmologies that bear upon Wind Cave National Park, it is necessary to adjust our lens to many different settings. We need to see the park in terms of the people it witnessed, the events it marked, the cultural resources it held, the uses it supported, and the stories it embraced. In order to do this properly, we need to discover its place in the larger scheme of the Black Hills, and we also need to understand its position in the wider web of relationships that linked the Hills to the peopling of the surrounding grasslands of South Dakota, Wyoming, and Nebraska. There are four major bodies of substantive evidence that this report covers, and that provide a passageway into the park’s complex and ever changing cultural history.

1) The first body of evidence identifies the communities of people with known historical affiliations to the area of Wind Cave National Park and the different groups of observers who reported on their associations. It describes the migrations of people to and away from this area at different moments in history, the uses they made of the area while living in its reach, and some of the conditions behind their arrivals and departures.

2) The second group of data consider how different peoples adapted to the area. In particular, it focuses on the specific nature of their social, political, and economic relationships to the park and its surrounding environs. It examines the kinds of procurement activities associated with this area, and how these are related to broader productive orientations and territorial movements. It analyzes the varying and culturally specific conceptualizations of land-use that have been associated with park lands, and it discusses how the park has stood paradoxically as both a common ground and a contested terrain. In doing so, it traces the long, protracted, and continuing struggles between the United States and the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho nations over ownership of the Black Hills, including areas within the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park. Pursuant to this, it gives special attention to the nineteenth-century treaties and agreements these tribal nations negotiated with the federal government and the relevant Black Hills claims cases they pursued (or attempted to move) against the government in the twentieth century.

3) The report also gives detailed attention to the various faunal, floral, and mineral resources on park properties. It describes the cultural meanings attached to them and the uses to which they were put by some of the different peoples who occupied the area. It considers the continuing importance of some of these resources in the cultural practices of the two tribal nations with the longest continuing association to the area in historic times, namely, the Lakotas and Cheyennes.

4) Considerable attention is devoted in this report to the cultural significance of the park’s landscape, both above and below ground. Like the Black Hills of which it is a part, Wind Cave has long held sacred significance to the Lakotas and Cheyennes, and perhaps other tribal nations as well. The report describes and interprets why park lands occupy such an important place in tribal cosmologies, and why these continue to draw local tribes to the area for the conduct of some of their most important religious observances.
All of these different but related bodies of substantive evidence form the basis for identifying what kinds of cultural interests and properties are linked to the park and for discussing how these relate to park management plans and actions. These cover three separate but related topics.

1) The report considers issues relating to the identification and preservation of sites and resources for purposes of special recognition and protection in relation to traditional cultural properties. Four pieces of federal legislation are relevant here: the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act of 1990, and the various amendments to some of these acts through 2000. Also important are two recent Executive Orders, 13007 and 13084, enacted into law in 1996 and 1998 respectively. All of these are described in greater detail in Chapter Eight, Section IV.

2) It deals with issues of access, particularly, the need for tribal peoples to use park lands to conduct any of a variety of religious activities, and also their need to extract certain resources for these purposes. Given the spiritual significance that this area holds for them, it commands special sensitivity in relation to the continuance of certain traditional cultural practices.

3) It looks at questions of representation and interpretation, particularly what kinds of cultural narratives are told about the area, by whom, and under what sets of circumstances. Some of the central cultural issues that affect the park and its properties are not simply about ownership and access to the land and its resources, but also about how their very definition gets privileged and conveyed in public discourse. In this regard, the report deals with issues of tribal intellectual property rights, and it also considers how topics of value for interpretive and educational programming might be developed in ways that reveal and reflect the importance of the area to the various communities the park serves.

III. THE SOURCE MATERIAL

The search for cultural information about Wind Cave National Park has presented special challenges. It is an area about which little was directly written until the late nineteenth century in sources based on the oral traditions and writings of either American Indians or European Americans. Therefore, a very general approach must be followed that takes in the entire Black Hills and the surrounding grasslands in order to get some perspective on what was happening in the particular area where Wind Cave National Park is located. The specific records we studied for this report are described in greater depth in the bodies of subsequent chapters, but here we focus on the types of materials gathered for presentation and analysis.

The first body of material includes a wide variety of culture history sources, both primary and secondary, which helped us to chronicle the population movements, cultural uses, and historical events relating to park lands. Before the 1740s, the evidence is derived from the archaeological record. For the historic era, the sources cover the accounts of European Americans who reported on the area from afar as well as those who traveled and/or settled in the region, including the writings and oral traditions of traders, travelers, missionaries, settlers, government officials, military personnel, and newspaper correspondents. They also cover the accounts of American Indians who lived and traveled in the area and whose knowledge was recorded in their own writings, winter counts, and oral traditions.
The second body of information comes from the ethnographic record, which contains some of the material described above but focuses more broadly on the knowledges, beliefs, and activities that constitute what is conventionally called a culture or way of life. Here, primary and secondary sources were examined as well. In relation to the various tribal nations reported to have lived and/or traveled in the area of Wind Cave National Park, an enormous amount of ethnographic material was surveyed. Sources were examined for the Apaches, Arapahos, Arikaras, Cheyennes, Comanches, Crows, Hidatsas, Kiowas, Lakotas, Mandans, Omahas, Pawnees, and Poncas. Although all of these tribes had known connections to the Hills at different points in history, some more than others, only the Cheyennes and Lakotas, were found to have had any prolonged association with the southeastern Black Hills that continued beyond the 1877 Agreement, which led the United States to take exclusive title to the land. They are also the only two tribes whose cultural attachments to the area of Wind Cave National Park and its immediate environs have been documented in the published and archival sources we studied for this report. The Lakotas (along with the Cheyennes remaining in their midst) who lived and/or who were enrolled on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations east of the park, and whose descendents now make up the Oglala Sioux and Rosebud Sioux tribes are the ones who have had the most active on-site associations with the park in the twentieth century. Therefore, these are tribal nations who receive the most attention in this report, although other tribes are recognized in various degrees and ways as well.

The Plains Apaches, Kiowas, Crows, Arikaras, Hidatsas, and Mandans, for example, preserved memories of the Black Hills in their oral traditions, but the regions to which they attached a special and continuing cultural importance were largely on the northern side of the Hills. The Poncas also retained memories of having lived near the Hills, and they even have a name for Wind Cave in their language, but there is little evidence in published ethnographic sources for any continuing and active link to the region. Also, none of these tribal nations were legally identified with the Black Hills in treaties and agreements with the United States. The Arapahos were parties to treaties and agreements involving the Black Hills; however, little has been recorded in the ethnographic literature about their cultural connections to the area. Most of the material we uncovered associates the Arapahos with the western side of the Hills and with Bear Butte or Bear Lodge Butte (a.k.a. Devil’s Tower). Nothing is recorded in the ethnographic literature about any cultural attachments to Wind Cave National Park or its immediate environs. Other than what might be deduced from the general nature of their historic patterns of residency and cultural adaptations to the area, we have not been able to identify, based on what has been recorded in the published literature, any specific cultural attachments to this area for tribal nations other than the Cheyennes and Lakotas.

A lack of information in the ethnographic and historic record, however, should never be construed as definitive of the possible presence or absence of any tribe’s cultural affiliations with Wind Cave National Park. Interviews with tribal cultural resource officers from many different federally-recognized tribes (see Appendix D) indicate that all of the Sioux tribes who were party to the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 have definite, and, for some, very specific cultural attachments to park properties. It also indicates that the Northern/Southern Cheyennes and the Northern/Southern Arapahos have continuing cultural affiliations to the region where the park is located. The Three Affiliated Tribes (Arikaras-Mandans-Hidatsas), the Plains Apaches, and the Kiowas also expressed cultural interest in the area. It is important to note that the interviews with various tribal cultural preservation officers support, for the most part, what is de-

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3 This is true only in terms of the archival sources and published material we studied for this report. It is very possible that any one or more of these other groups may have some kind of continuing cultural relation to the area that has not been documented in the sources we reviewed.
duced from published sources where the firsthand accounts of tribal people, including their speeches, oral narratives, written documents, and winter counts were extensively used in reconstructing the history of tribal cultural connections to the area of Wind Cave National Park.

Much of the cultural qua ethnographic information presented in this report focuses on the tribal nations who lived in and around the Black Hills, but some of it also touches on the European American communities who settled in the area. As explained in forthcoming discussions, while Wind Cave National Park played an important role in the history and local economy of the southeastern Hills, particularly the communities of Hot Springs, Pringle, and Buffalo Gap, there is no evidence that local European Americans ever attached any special cultural meanings to it other than those associated with its presence as a geological curiosity and an important tourist attraction. In the years before the park was established, and for some years thereafter, it was a hunting area, an open range for grazing cattle, and a location for homesteading.

Another body of material examined for this report includes a wide variety of sources on the area’s natural history, both primary documents based on the firsthand observations of European Americans who traveled and/or lived in the area in the last half of the nineteenth century as well as more contemporary descriptions of species habitats in the Black Hills. This information was critical in reaching some understanding of the historic and continuing uses to which park lands were put by the Cheyennes and Lakotas and also to the meanings they ascribed to the area and its resources.

Finally, a number of different treaty records, congressional documents, and court dockets are reviewed here, especially those that pertain to treaties, agreements, claims, and other kinds of congressional legislation that bear upon Wind Cave National Park. Although some attempt is made to address and interpret this legal history, none of those who worked on this project have the necessary expertise to interpret some of the dense and, at times, arcane legal rulings and readings that surround the litigious history of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Sioux’s Black Hills claims and their more recent battles over traditional cultural property rights and access to sacred sites in and around the Black Hills.

Looking for information specific to Wind Cave National Park and the area where it is situated was like searching for the proverbial needle in the haystack. Many isolated bits and pieces of information were collected that did not appear very significant at first sight. However, when these were assembled and analyzed together, and compared against information for other areas of the Black Hills, a number of distinct and recurring themes emerged that could be traced across materials on diverse sets of phenomena. The data reveal that a number of cultural themes are associated with this area. The cultural expressions of some of them are not only long-standing, reaching back at least to middle of the nineteenth century, but many are also shared among the three tribes, Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, who occupied the Black Hills when they were seized in 1877.

There is a compelling story here, one that is rooted not only in the history of American Indian understandings and uses of the area where Wind Cave National Park now sits, but one that also carries curious traces in European American conceptualizations of and adaptations to the area. Yet, none of these meanings or usages can be fully understood without some appreciation of the larger region that makes up the Black Hills, its waves of human occupation, the diverse adaptations humans made to them, and above all the habits and habitats of the animals, plants and other life forms so important to the way in which this region has been treated by the people who came here to visit or live.
IV. THE INTERPRETIVE PERSPECTIVES

Given the wide range of substantive materials covered here, from studies of plant distributions to texts of tribal origin stories, several different research strategies and methodologies were followed in interpreting and making sense of the vast body of material available on Wind Cave National Park specifically and the Black Hills region as a whole. These include standard historiographic approaches for examining and interpreting the chronology of population movements, settlements, and intergroup relationships in the area. They also involve the use of cultural ecological or materialist perspectives for analyzing some of the diverse ways local groups adapted to the area, used its resources, and formed relationships to the land, based on cooperation as well as competition. Finally, they employ interpretive techniques, following the work of anthropologists such as Keith Basso (1996), to understand some of the cultural meanings behind the sacred narratives and observances that have been associated with the area by historic and modern tribal peoples. In telling the story of Wind Cave National Park and its environs, this report is divided into four sections, each of which focuses on different facets of the complex cultural relations that various American Indian and European American people have had to the area.

The first section looks at how the Black Hills functioned as a crossroads and a gathering place where people of diverse backgrounds came together in several successive waves of occupation, and it considers how the area of Wind Cave National Park fits into these larger patterns of movement and settlement. Not only does it identify the groups who occupied the Hills at various moments in time, but, equally important, it describes how different groups stood in relationship to each other. Before 1877, when the United States claimed title to the region, the Black Hills were a location where tribal nations of diverse backgrounds met, traded, intermarried, and formed political alliances. Although tribes competed and fought with each other to gain access to and assert control over the area, the more common pattern involved multiracial parties jointly occupying the region, sharing access to its resources, and holding the area as allied forces. In historic times, at least, the Hills were never the exclusive domain of any single tribal nation. In the 1870s, the Lakotas were the dominant population in the Black Hills, but there were significant numbers of Cheyennes and Arapahos in the area too.

While the Hills remained a major gathering place for tribal nations, it was a peripheral area for European Americans, who came here in small numbers, largely as trader/trappers and incorporated themselves into the social networks of local tribes. After the 1850s, the area became the focus of several government-sponsored explorations, but it was not until the gold rush of 1874 that thousands of European Americans flocked to the area, making it one of the most densely populated and rapidly developing locations in the northern plains. After European Americans arrived, the cast of people who occupied the Hills dramatically changed. The tribal nations who once controlled it were forcibly removed to make way for the ethnically diverse groups of Americans who came to dominate its landscape. From 1874 until 1903, the year when Wind Cave National Park was established, the report summarizes the chronology of events and conditions that contributed to new kinds of population movements and settlements in and around the Hills, focusing primarily on their southeastern reaches. It gives attention to the ways incoming European Americans occupied and used this area, and also how American Indian people, especially the Lakotas, maintained a continuing, albeit changed, relationship to the area. After 1903, it considers how the peopling and use of the southeastern Hills continued to undergo change, and it discusses what impacts this had on the park’s relationships with its neighbors, Indians and whites alike.
The second section of the report covers the diverse ways in which populations socially defined their relations to the Black Hills, and, in the process, how they adapted their economies and systems of land tenure to the Hills' distinct environments. From prehistoric to modern times, the utilization of the Hills, including the lands now occupied by Wind Cave National Park, not only involved populations with very different kinds of productive orientations but also people who approached the Hills from widespread locations both near and far. Not unlike the situation today, where the Hills have their local residents and their tourists from distant locales, they were utilized in the past by peoples who stayed within their reach or who approached them from far off locations on a regular and recurring basis.

A consistent theme that runs throughout this section is that the Black Hills in general and the region of Wind Cave National Park in particular served paradoxically as a common ground, settled and utilized by many different groups who shared access to the same lands but often on different terms. At the same time, they acted as a contested terrain, where people fought to retain or gain access to the commons on behalf of distinct and sometimes competing sets of interests. Before 1877, bands of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos all lived in and around the Hills under a general umbrella of peace. A century earlier, however, the area was bitterly contested as these three tribes gradually wrested control of the area from many of its older residents, notably Plains Apaches, Comanches, Kiowas, and Crows. But even these fights were not always neatly divided because at certain points in history some Cheyennes were on the Kiowa side of the battlefield, while others stood with the Lakotas.

It was the battles of the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas with invading miners and with the U.S. military that would define much of the late nineteenth-century history of the Black Hills. In the twentieth century, the fighting continued, but now the war was waged in the courts, on protest lines, and in the media. Beginning with the protracted and still unsettled history of the Sioux's Black Hills Claim and continuing to more recent lawsuits over traditional cultural property rights and religious freedoms, a complex and unresolved set of legal issues hangs over the Black Hills, its lands, resources, and people. The modern conflict surrounding the Black Hills is not simply a contestation over *de facto* versus *de jure* property rights. It also represents a fundamental schism over very different perceptions of what this place means, and how it is situated in a larger cosmological scheme of things. It is ultimately a fight over sovereignty, over who has the right to name and define the meaning of this place, and directly following, who ought to be the rightful steward of its manifold and complex resources. Wind Cave National Park sits in the middle of this maelstrom, and as a result, its management policies and actions are influenced in subtle as well as obvious ways by the politics and legal battles that surround it. Therefore, tracing the history of treaties, claims litigation, and congressional legislation that pertain to the Hills is a necessary part of this report. Much of the legal side of this contested history is covered in Chapter Eight of Section Two.

The Black Hills has also been a crossroads and meeting ground for numerous species of fauna and flora. It contains complex habitats with hundreds of different fauna and over one thousand varieties of plants, many of which are unique to the Hills and not located in the surrounding grasslands. The Hills contain a wealth of minerals and clays, springs and sources of fresh water. The geological and biological diversity of the region acted like a magnet, attracting diverse tribal nations to its edges and interiors to draw on the wealth of its resources for general and/or particular purposes. For many of the tribes who lived in or around the Hills, they were seen as a vast repository of resources, envisioned in the image of a cache or safe. Later, they drew European Americans to their mineral wealth, their rich grasses, and their abundant stands of timber. Many of the newcomers came and left with the boom and bust of the gold rush, but others stayed
on to develop the paying mines, timber stands, and arable lands. Over time, the region drew on its recreational potential and the reputation of its scenic beauty and unique wildlife.

The natural diversity of the Hills, especially the region of Wind Cave National Park, is the subject of Section Three. Chapters Nine through Eleven describe the vertible panoply of resources that make up the park. Drawing on a wide range of botanical, zoological, and geological source material, it matches resources known to exist on park lands with information on their uses and meanings among the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribes as well. Although some attention is given to the historic interests of European Americans in park resources, the predominant focus in these chapters is placed on traditional tribal interests. It seeks to identify resources that might be identified as traditional cultural properties and to explain why these were important historically and why they remain so in contemporary contexts.

One of the points that is emphasized time and again in this report is that tribal relationships to this area are totalistic, not easily disaggregated into a series of discrete landforms and natural resources that can be isolated and inventoried. Although many of the resources discussed here are organized in terms of standard, empirically-based systems of classification, these do not follow the logic by which either the Cheyennes or the Lakotas order their worlds. For reasons that become apparent in later discussions, Cheyenne and Lakota conceptualizations of Wind Cave National Park and the Black Hills as a whole are synergistic, weaving together diverse phenomena in a unified scheme where, for example, breath, winter, bison, caves, and gypsum are interchangeable manifestations of one another. The significance of the park and its surrounding environs is not about a specific landscape feature, a cave qua cave, or the presence of a particular resource with empirically established uses and properties. Rather, it is about the integrated placement of a sequence of sites and resources in relationship to each other. It is also about their relation to the larger whole -- that is, the Black Hills.

Section Four attempts to give some sense of the importance and centrality of the Wind Cave National Park area in Cheyenne and Lakota beliefs as revealed not only in the texts of various stories about the area but also in the performance of significant ceremonies, which are believed by some Cheyennes and Lakotas to have originated in this region. It also attempts to explain how this area, its landforms and resources, constitute an integrated whole that is understood as distinct but related to other equally significant areas of the Black Hills. In doing so, it describes many of the cosmological precepts and spiritual practices that have a direct bearing on the cultural significance of sites in and around Wind Cave National Park. The lands of Wind Cave National Park, both below and above ground, embrace significant cultural sites with complex meanings and symbolic relationships. Two major origin places, Wind Cave itself and the Race Track, are located on park properties, and at least one major ceremony, the Sun Dance, is associated in some cultural traditions with the park. Because the sanctity of this area and other locations in the Black Hills have been called into question in recent years by several scholars and journalists who argue that beliefs about its sacredness are a fabrication of modern tribal activists to reclaim possession of the Hills, considerable pains are taken in this report to trace the historical depth of modern beliefs associated with the park and also to show how these are consistent with a wider body of cosmological tenets well established in the religious discourse of the Cheyennes and the Lakotas.

In many ways, Wind Cave National Park reflects the wider history of the Hills and their associated cultural traditions. Both its history and cultural meanings are contested, like the larger region of which it is a part. Indeed, it can be safely said that this park and others in the Black Hills under the management of the National Park Service occupy some of the most embattled lands in the national park system. The cultural wars and controversy that surround the area
cannot be avoided. Ignoring these would be intellectually dishonest and an obstacle to making sound recommendations on how park management policies and actions impact the public they serve, which includes peoples with a very different sense of entitlement to and interest in park properties.

This is a large report that contains an enormous body of information, owing in large part to the cultural diversity and complexity of the region’s human occupation, not to mention the ongoing controversies that continue to surround it. Given the vast amount of material presented here, it may seem hard to see the park from the Hills. Much of the material does not pertain to Wind Cave National Park directly; nonetheless, it is indispensable for understanding the particular role the park has played in the cultural histories of American Indians and European Americans. The Table of Contents, of course, offers a road map to steer the reader through the dense body of material that comprises the report. Throughout most of the report, park specific information is embedded in discussions of a wider body of information that gives meaning and/or context to its landscape. The reader is advised, however, that at the end of each chapter, from Two through Thirteen, there is a synopsis, which summarizes and focuses the evidence on the particular case of Wind Cave National Park. Two chapters, Fourteen and Fifteen, concentrate much of their attention on the park’s landscape and its resources. Chapter Fourteen discusses the religious significance of the park and its environs to the Lakotas and Cheyennes. Chapter Fifteen ties much of the varied information found in earlier chapters together in a single unifying narrative, part of which serves to review and interpret the information previously presented. The final chapter and conclusion, Chapter Sixteen, provides specific recommendations on further tribal consultations. It also offers suggestions on park management policies and actions relevant to the protection of resources and sites, on special requests for access to park properties, and, finally, on the development of interpretive programming that incorporates some of the distinctive cultural histories and traditions associated with the park.
Part 1
Part One

THE NATIONS THAT LIVED AMONG THE HILLS

You know, in our language, the Black Hills are called Paha Sapa or H’e Sapa, which means ‘the hills appear to be black.’ They are also known among the old ones as O’onakozin, which means ‘a place to take shelter.’ Another name by which they are sometimes called is Wamakaognaka E’cante, which means ‘the heart of everything that is.’ The area surrounding the Black Hills is called Cha’Gliska This means ‘sacred hoop.’ So you have a center and a sacred hoop encircling it. There are many places within the Black Hills that have special significance, such as the hot springs. Years ago our medicine men would meet there and share stories and medicines. They would sit within the warmth of Mother Earth. Now the place is an amusement park. There is another place called the Red Lodge Canyon, where our picture-writings are on the walls. These writings have been vandalized. An awful toll has been taken on them. Within the rock writings are the Seven Commandments of the Indian religion. These coincide with the seven rites of the Lakotas. We still go there to fast, to vision quest, to gather sage or herbs, we always have to get permission! (Kenny Good Eagle in Little Eagle, L. 2000: 212-213).

The eastern most outlier range of the Rockies Mountains, which straddles the border of Wyoming and South Dakota, was called by many tribal nations in the region with a name that translates into English as Black Hills. The Shoshones, who along with their Comanche relatives had early connections to the Black Hills, knew them as E’n gakwe hen garnda yaBi, which translates as Red-fir(?)-its place, its-mountain range (Shimkin 1947:250). The Poncas, who resided for a time on the southeastern edge of the Hills in the mid-eighteenth century, called them Pahe cabe [Black Hills] (Howard 1965a:7), the same name given to them by their close relatives, the Omahas (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1972:1:102). The Arikaras, who often traveled to the Hills to hunt and trade in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, named them waakat tkAt [Black Hills] (Morsette in Parks 1991:2:499, 507). The Kiowas, who lived and traveled in the region during the last half of the eighteenth century, knew them as Ts ouukhou k oup [Black Rock Mountains] (Harrington 1939:168) or Sa daikani k op,1 which refers to the tripe from a buffalo cow (Mooney 1979:419). By the dawn of the nineteenth century, the Black Hills were located at the center of Cheyenne territory. Besides their common names, Moxtavhohon, literally translated Black Hills and Witapaht Island hills, the Cheyennes also addressed them by two esoteric appellations, Hohonecedonil [the People who Live among the Hills] and Kamicubsdiisnla [the People who Move Camp among their Mountains]. These two names designate not only the Hills but also the Cheyennes themselves, and they are used only in ceremonial settings (Petter 1913-16:582; Moore, J. 1981:14). By the end of the 1830s, the Black Hills were at the heart of the Lakota’s territorial range. The Lakotas also knew them as Paha Sapa [Black Hills], He Sapa [Black Ridge], or Witapaha [Island Hill]. Euphemistically, they called them their meat pack, Oiyhpeye Talo or spoke of them as a gathering place, O Onakinsin (Hassrick 1964:75,165; Kadlececk and Kadlececk 1981:81; Black Elk, N. in DeMallie

1 Harrington, however, argues that this name actually refers to the Badlands and not the Black Hills (1939:168).
In sacred settings, they variously addressed them as *Wamaka Og naka I Cante* [The Heart of Everything that is], *Hocoka yapi* [The Center], and *Otivita* [The Sanctuary] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:205-206). Most of the common tribal names for the Black Hills are either descriptive of the landscape or particular activities associated with the area, while the sacred names convey something more essential and fundamental about a people’s relationship to the region: they suggest an intimacy born out of a deep knowledge and experience of the Hills, one created by peoples who had lived there and been nourished by their presence.

Although Europeans and later European Americans knew about the Black Hills early on, they remained off the proverbial beaten path of most outsiders until the mid-nineteenth century. When European Americans first arrived in the northern plains, they heard many stories about a mountainous region that tribal peoples called the Black Hills, *Costa Negra* in Spanish or *Les Cotes Noires* in French (Chittenden 1935:2:727). When the Lewis and Clark Expedition explored the valley of the Missouri River, William Clark (in Moulton 1983-87:4:204) wrote about them as follows on May 26, 1805:

> The high Country in which we are at present and have been passing for Some days I take to be a continuation of what the Indians as well as the French Engages call the Black hills. This tract of Country So Called Consists of a Collection of high broken and irregular hills and Short Chains of Mountains, sometimes 100 miles in width and again becoming much narrower, but always much higher than the country on either Side; they commence about the head of the Kanzas river and to the west of that river near the Arkansaw river, from whence they take their Course a little to the west of N. W. approaching the Rocky Mountains obliquely passing the river Platt near the forks, and intercepting the River Rochejhone near the big bend of that river, and passing the Missouri at this place--, and probably Continueing to Swell the Country as far North as the Saskashawan river. tho they are lower here than they are described to the South and may therefore terminate before they reach the Saskashawan. The Black hills in their course northerly appear to approach more nearly the Rocky Mountains.

Like many other writers of the time, Clark applied the name, Black Hills, to a wide range of elevated locations east of the main front of the Rocky Mountains. Indeed, Hiram Chittenden (1935:2:728) notes that in fur-trade times many of the detached spurs and peaks west of the Missouri River were collectively known as the Black Hills. Even as late as 1849, Francis Parkman used this label loosely not only to identify the Black Hills proper but the Laramie Range as well. A decade later, Henry A. Boller (1972:225) was still applying the term to bluffs along the Knife River in North Dakota, even though by this date most writers distinguished the Black Hills proper from other high elevation locations west of the Missouri River.

The history of the area, known today as the Black Hills, is a complex one. Prehistorically, it is marked by the traces of many culturally diverse peoples, and, historically, it is identified with the presence of more than ten different tribal nations. Besides the Cheyennes and Lakotas, the historic nations who regularly lived and/or traveled in this region include the Arapaahos, Arikaras (Pawnees), Comanches (Shoshones and Utes), Crows, Hidatsas, Kiowas, Mandans, Plains Apaches (Padouca and Kiowa), and Poncas. Assinibins, Blackfeet, and even Flatheads who lived in Montana were reported to occasionally trade with tribes who stayed around the Black Hills. Tribes maintained diverse relationships to the Hills for varying lengths of time and at different points in history, and their affiliations were much influenced by the region’s distinct environment.

One of the striking features of the Black Hills is the diversity of their landscapes and life forms. This feature, which is reiterated again and again throughout the report, played a significant
role in influencing not only how American Indian peoples adapted themselves to the area, but also how they thought about it in cosmological terms. Over the past two centuries, the Hills have been home to over one thousand distinct floral species and hundreds of different fauna. A number of species, representing all points of the compass, reach their geographic limits and intermingle in the fastness of the Hills. Tribal nations came to the Hills from all directions as well and brought with them distinct cultural legacies born in settings as different as the woodlands lifestyles of the Northeast, the desert traditions of the Southwest, the agricultural complexes of the Southeast, and the intermontane cultures of the Northwest. Indeed, as will be elaborated upon in later sections of the report, Native peoples understood the Black Hills as a great crossroads, the gathering or meeting place of many different human and animal nations.

The complexity of the region’s human habitation, which in historic times involved more than ten different tribal nations, three European and American states, as well as various communities of mixed American Indian and European, Asian, African, and Hispanic ancestry, covers an enormous body of historical and ethnographic material. It is not a simple task to reconstruct a general picture of the region’s history without doing some disservice to the rich detail of its inhabitants lives and experiences. The following reconstruction, therefore, represents only an overview of major population settlements and movements in and around the Black Hills along with some interpretive discussion of the forces behind them.
Chapter Two

TRACES OF DIVERSITY:
THE PREHISTORIC RECORD

The prehistoric picture of human occupation in and around the Black Hills only started to come into focus in recent years. Current analyses of available site data suggest that over time multiple groups with contrasting adaptive strategies and different artifact assemblages used this area for varying lengths of time (Chevance 1978; Hovde 1982; Cassells, Miller, and Miller 1984; Tratebas 1986; Sundstrom, L. 1989:66, 73, 100; Hannus 1994). Much of this record has been thoroughly reviewed by Linea Sundstrom in two comprehensive monographs *Culture History of the Black Hills with Reference to Adjacent Areas of the Northern Great Plains* (1989) and *Rock Art of the Southern Black Hills* (1990), and it only needs to be summarized here. Also, Jennifer Galindo (2000a, 2000b, 2001) has conducted surveys and excavations at the park. Since her research is still in progress, it is only mentioned in this discussion. The overview that follows directs attention to the various trails of published evidence that might link the prehistoric occupation of the Black Hills to its historic populations and cultural uses.

I. CULTURAL SEQUENCES

The archeological record of the Black Hills is both incomplete and complex. Much of the survey work and excavation in this region has taken place only within the past thirty years, and many regions, including the area where Wind Cave National Park now sits, have not been thoroughly studied. Nearly fifty different indigenous sites are identified within the park in the South Dakota State Archaeological Society’s site index, but only one, the Beaver Creek Rock Shelter, involved extensive below-ground excavation (Alex, L. 1991).1 Despite important surveys and excavations in the larger region of the southeastern Black Hills and at locations along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River, most of the work remains insufficient to establish a local cultural sequence (Sundstrom, L. 1989:3-12). Moreover, the greater portion of excavations in the region focus on Paleoindian (7000-12000 B.P.) and Archaic (0-7000 B.P.) time periods with comparatively little in-depth study of sites and occupancy patterns during more recent Prehistoric and Protohistoric periods. Lacking a local cultural sequence, much of the current reading of site material for the Black Hills is carried on from the perspective of sequences associated with the Northwestern Plains and also the Plains Woodland and Village complexes (Sundstrom L. 1989:11, 1990:64).

A. Paleoindian Times

This period is associated with the hunting of big game, particularly bison. Although Paleoindian remains linked to the Folsom period are located along the southwestern flanks of the Black Hills, it is not until the time of the Plano, roughly 7500 to 10000 B.P., that these sites appear on their southeastern borders (Sundstrom, L. 1989:28-39). Projectile points from this time-period, however, are spread throughout the interiors of the Black Hills, especially near springs and meadows (Sundstrom, L. 1990:67). The Plano period is characterized by the hunting of large

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1 This does not include archaeological work now taking place in the park under the direction of Jennifer Galindo (2000a, 2000b, 2001).
game through a wide range of communal techniques, most of which were deployed at locations in the surrounding plains. Toward the end of this period, however, a much more diversified pattern of subsistence emerged. Not only do faunal assemblages contain a more varied selection of game, but there is also increasing evidence of more specialized patterns of adaptation (Sundstrom, L. 1989:82-88). On the one hand, there was the development of a broad-spectrum pattern focused on mountain environments and concentrated at locations inside the Hogback. On the other hand, there was the persistence of more specialized, open-plains bison hunting patterns on the grasslands surrounding the Hills. Groups following the latter pattern apparently used areas inside the Hogback on a seasonal basis (Sundstrom, L. 1990:67-68, 1990:34-40).

B. Archaic Period

The arrival of the Archaic coincides with a major shift in the region's climate towards warmer and more arid episodes, which Linea Sundstrom (1989:40-42, 1990:68) suggests made many areas in the open plains less desirable for human occupation but opened the interior mountain areas to settlement. One of the few Early Archaic sites found in the Black Hills during this period is Beaver Creek Rock Shelter at Wind Cave National Park (Martin, Alex, and Benton 1988; Alex 1991; Frison 2001:135). Although there is little archaeological data to determine the exact nature of procurement strategies during this period, Sundstrom (1989:42-43, 88-89) hypothesizes that a broad-spectrum subsistence pattern was likely followed at locations inside the Hogback.

At the start of the Middle Archaic, 5000 years ago, the northwestern region of the plains was dramatically reinhabited. In fact, the largest concentrations of sites in the Black Hills are reported for this period. This was a time when a clear separation between mountain and plains adapted populations developed in the Black Hills (Tratebas 1986; Sundstrom, L.1989:48-55; 1990:70-71). Inside the Hogback, there were two different patterns of transhumance movement: one involved an extensive summer use of the high elevation interiors with winter settlement in the Hogback, while the other entailed the winter use of the Hogback with a movement to the open plains in the summer months. This period is also associated with diverse artifact assemblages, suggesting that populations with diverse ethnolinguistic origins used the Hills (Sundstrom, L. 1990:90-93).

The dawn of the Late Archaic phase, 3000 years ago, is associated with a time when cultural traditions of the Northwestern Plains and the Plains Woodlands begin to meet and overlap in the vicinity of the Black Hills (Sundstrom, L. 1989:56-63, 1990:70). Three lithic traditions associated with the Northwestern Plains, the Avonlea, Pelican Lake, and the Besant have been discovered at site locations skirting the Hills. There is not enough site excavation to conclusively link any sites inside the Hogback with any of these traditions, even though lithic scatters associated with them are found throughout the Hills. All three traditions were dependent on bison hunting, although the Besant complex appears to be the most specialized of the three (Sundtrom, L. 1990:71).

The picture of the Late Archaic is further complicated by the arrival of influences from complexes originating in areas east of the Black Hills, including a northeastern variant of the Besant tradition with clear Woodland influences (Sundstrom, L. 1989:93-97). In addition, ceramic material and projectile points associated with remains from the valley of the Missouri River start to appear here, but identifiable sites linked to specific Woodland complexes are rare (Sundstrom, L. 1990:72). Sundstrom (1990:72-73) suggests that while the Northwestern Plains pattern continues to persist in the Black Hills during this period, Woodlands elements overlay its manifestations at locations throughout the region.
This period and the earlier Middle Archaic are closely associated with some of the unique rock art styles found in the southern Black Hills (Sundstrom, L. 1990:221). Most of the rock art in the region is located in the canyons of the Hogback, with the greatest concentrations found in Red, Craven, and Whoop-Up canyons. The earliest style of rock art is called Pecked Realistic, and it is associated with realistic depictions of animals, scenes of hunting with pounds and atlatls or spears as weapons, as well as representations of ritual activity (Sundstrom, L. 1990:228-236). Curiously, most of the animals pictured in this art are cervids and pronghorns, with only a few panels displaying either bison or bighorn. Sundstrom (1990:233-234) suggests that the earliest rock art may have been associated with a specialized form of adaptation largely localized to the southern Hogback and coexisting with other patterns, including the open plains bison-hunting pattern, or it may have represented one kind of procurement practiced by groups with mixed subsistence orientations. Culturally, the closest affinities to the Black Hills unique pecked realistic rock art style are located at sites in western Wyoming, and in areas with a long history of occupation by Numic-speaking peoples, notably the Comanches and Shoshones (Sundstrom, L. 1990:236).

Two other styles of rock art, the pecked geometric and the pecked abstract, developed in the southern Hills sometime during the Late Archaic. Neither of the styles appears to be connected to the earlier pecked realistic tradition. The newer styles date from approximately A.D. 500 to A.D. 1200. Even more so than the pecked realistic style, the others are unique to the Black Hills area. Some of the motifs and designs, however, parallel rock art styles found in the Great Basin and eastern Colorado. Again, these were areas occupied primarily by Numic-speaking peoples. The similarities, however, are not strong enough to suggest any cultural relationship (Sundstrom, L. 1990:236-239).

C. Prehistoric Phase

The introduction of the bow and arrow, largely associated with the Avonlea complex, took place in the Northwestern Plains between 1600 and 1000 B.P. (Sundstrom, L. 1990:73). Their arrival marks an era of incredible diversification in the lithic traditions and cultural complexes associated with the Black Hills (Sundstrom, L. 1989:63-73, 97-100). The area not only witnessed the continuation of the more specialized communal bison-hunting pattern, but it also saw the expansion of a broad spectrum, mixed hunting and foraging pattern in regions south and west of the Hills. Added to these adaptive patterns, various manifestations of semihorticultural complexes associated with the Missouri River valley found expression in the Black Hills and at sites now inundated by the Angostura Reservoir on the South Fork of the Cheyenne River (Sundstrom, L. 1989:66, 67-68).

Unfortunately, only a few sites from the late Prehistoric period have been excavated in the Black Hills, and many of these are located in the southern regions of the Hogback. Much of the archaeological material from southern Hogback sites suggests the emergence of a distinct localized complex, very different in its manifestations from the specialized bison-hunting sites found in the northern Black Hills. Some of it also reveals the utilization of the southern region of the hills by semihorticultural populations from the Missouri River valley (Alex, R. 1981:42-43; Sundstrom, L. 1990:74). In fact, a number of sites give concrete evidence of the seasonal presence of Middle Missouri populations, who came to the Black Hills to procure resources from knappable rock to plants and game (Sundstrom, L. 1989:65, 70, 1990:75-76).

Incised and painted styles of rock art emerge in the late prehistoric era and continue until A.D. 1850. Many of the panels can be easily dated by the presence of horses and equestrian
scenes (Sundstrom, L.1990:239-240; Sundstrom and Keyser 1998). Some of the motifs, including the famous rectangular-bodied and shield-bearing human figures, which are rare in the area, reveal the possible influence of Numic speaking peoples, notably Comanches and Shoshones (Sundstrom, L.1990:266). V-shouledered human figures, which appear at the dawn of the Late Archaic phase, are more common and seem to have had multiple cultural connections (Sundstrom, L. 1990:266-267). Other motifs, such as the knob-head figures, show affiliations with Missouri River village traditions and probably were created after A.D. 1300 (Sundstrom, L. 1990:247). The hoof print and vulva motifs, which are widespread in the area, are strongly associated with Siouan and Algonkian iconographic traditions, although specific tribal affinities have not been determined (Sundstrom, L. 1990:267-268, 2002:109). Sundstrom (1990:270-272) also suggests that a number of panels in the southern Black Hills can be traced to a Southeastern ceremonial tradition linked to the Oneota complex and specifically to Siouan speakers such as the Poncas and Omahas.

Whatever their ethnolinguistic origins, it is clear that the rock art of the southern Black Hills was associated from its very beginnings with religious and ritual traditions. It is worth quoting Linea Sundstrom (1990:337-338) on the matter:

...the canyonlands of the southern Black Hills seem to have had significance beyond food procurement...the key to understanding the distribution of the rock art may lie in the special nature of the Hogback zone itself, as the transition between the interior mountains and the grasslands of the surrounding plains. Passage of water from the higher mountains out onto the plains through the Hogback reinforces this concept of transition. This geographic transition may have been a metaphor for other kinds of transition or passages such as that between the everyday world and the spirit world. From this perspective, use of the Hogback zone in ritual activity is not unexpected.

As revealed in much greater detail in Sections Three and Four, the status of the Hogback as a transition zone was very significant not only to the subsistence practices of local populations but also to their cosmological traditions, which were closely tied to the animals, plants, rocks, and waters of the region. Indeed, the sacred significance of the area of Wind Cave National Park to modern day Lakotas and Cheyennes is a function, in part, of the park’s location in a transitional zone that straddles a portion of the Race Track between the Limestone Plateau and the Hogback.

250 B.P. is linked to the time when local tribes began to adopt the use of horses, and it is also the period when archaeological evidence can be combined with tribal oral traditions regarding the movements of populations in and around the Black Hills. Since this is the era when the records of European traders and explorers begin to shed light on the occupation of the region, it is described in the next chapter.

II. HYPOTHESIZED ETHNOLINGUISTIC CONNECTIONS

In the millennium prior to the arrival of Europeans in North America, the archaeological record reveals that ethnically diverse peoples lived in and/or near the Black Hills. Local populations followed at least three distinct adaptive patterns. In reference to the Late Prehistoric period, Sundstrom (1989:73) summarizes these patterns as follows:

The picture suggested by research done in the area to date does not fit easily into any of the cultural sequences proposed for surrounding areas. The bison jumping dominated subsistence pattern of the open high plains, the mixed hunting-and-foraging pattern of the Wyoming
basins, and the semihorti-cultural, semi-sedentary village pattern of the Missouri and Central Plains all may be represented in the Black Hills.

Each of these patterns was also associated with diverse artifact assemblages, suggesting that the area was occupied by a number of different cultural groupings with stylistically distinct tools. While archeologists are generally confident about the general technologies and adaptive strategies of some of the prehistoric populations who occupied the Black Hills, they are much less certain of their ethnic and language affiliations. Nevertheless, some scholars (Schlesier 1987) have started, albeit in a very speculative way, to assign possible ethnic and linguistic affiliations to archaeological sites associated with the Black Hills and surrounding areas. In recent years, there has been no end to the conjecturing over which historic peoples might be linked to the Black Hills’ prehistoric record (Hannus 1994:197).

**A. Mandan**

There is some degree of tentative agreement on the identity of the area’s prehistoric populations whose adaptive strategies were built around the practice of horticulture. One possible, although highly speculative, connection involves the Mandan. Mandan oral traditions refer to a time when one of their divisions, the *Awigaxa*, occupied settlements and planted crops at the base of hills west of the Missouri River, a location where they also secured their flint (Bowers 1950:158-160). Karl Schlesier (1987:137, 1994:342-344) argues that these hills were the Black Hills and that many late archaic horticultural sites on their eastern slopes, in the neighboring Badlands, and along the Belle Fourche River were inhabited by populations ancestral to the historic Mandan. There are also horticultural sites closer to the area of Wind Cave National Park along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River with storage pits and fortifications (Alex, R. 1981:42-43; Wood 2001:192-193), but whether these sites are Mandan in derivation is open to question. Nevertheless, it is clear that ancestors of the Mandan did occupy sites along the Missouri River from the mouth of the White River to the Little Missouri, circa 950 to 1300 A.D. (Schlesier 1994:342; Wood 2001:192-193). No matter the specific location of their horticultural settlements, it is probable that these village peoples, or others related to them, used the Hills as a procurement area. The remains of their presence are revealed in some of the ceramic material associated with late Prehistoric to Protohistoric hunting sites on the southeastern side of the Hills where Wind Cave National Park is now located (Sundstrom, L. 1989:71).

**B. Hidatsa-Crow**

Around 1200 A.D., a confederation of groups who spoke closely related languages of the Hidatsa-Crow family migrated to the Missouri River from the prairie and parkland regions of northeastern North Dakota and adjoining areas of Manitoba (Wood and Hansen 1986). These groups also practiced horticulture and lived in semisedentary villages. There is good evidence that one of these groups, the Crow, took up settlements near the Black Hills in protohistoric times. Crow-style ceramics have been found along the Little Missouri River and in the northern reaches of the Black Hills, but not in the central or southern Hills (Sundstrom, L. 1989:65,70-71, 1990:75). There is nothing in the archeological or historical record to suggest, as Peter Rosen (1895:3-15) and James Hanson (1983:16) did, that they ever settled in the southeastern Black Hills in any appreciable numbers, although there is historic evidence that small groups

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2 The Mandans also had oral traditions about specific locations in the northern Hills, including Spearfish Canyon and Bear Butte (Rosen 1895).
occasionally traveled to the area to camp with the Kiowas and to conduct raids against the Arikaras and later the Cheyennes and Lakotas.

C. Arikara-Pawnee

After 1300 A.D., another group of horticultural villagers entered the region. These were the ancestors of the Arikaras who moved north from Nebraska to establish themselves on the Missouri at locations from the mouth of the White River to the Cheyenne (Schlesier 1994:346-361). Closely related to the Pawnees and Skidi Pawnees, they represent one of the northern Caddoan speaking populations who occupied much of the central Plains after 50 B.C. By the protohistoric period, these populations were traveling to the upper reaches of the Niobrara, White, and Platte rivers to hunt bison, and there is some evidence of their periodic attempts to establish year-round residency at higher elevation locations (Eighmy 1994; Krause 2001:202, 205). There is also a considerable body of ceramic material and circumstantial evidence to support the seasonal presence of Arikaras in the eastern regions of the Black Hills after they broke away from the Pawnees and moved to the Missouri River (Alex, R. 1981:42-43; Sundstrom, L. 1989:72; Schlesier 1994:339-341). By early historic times, there is also good documentation for them reaching this area of the Hills on their summer bison hunts.

D. Ponca-Omaha

One of the other populations who relied on horticulture, the Poncas, moved towards the Hills in the late protohistoric era. Like other semihorticultural populations who arrived in the region before them, they followed a pattern of seasonal movement where locations near the base of the Hills were used as summer/fall bison hunting grounds. The Poncas are reported to have made periodic attempts to plant near the Hills and to establish long-term residency in the region during the protohistoric era (Howard 1965a:130-133). There is also evidence from rock art sites in the southern Black Hills related to Oneota cultural complexes from which the Poncas are descended (Sundstrom, L. 1990:270-272).

E. Apache

The next population for which there is considerable consensus on their presence in the Black Hills are the Apaches. In the protohistoric period, there was a continuous settlement of proto-Apachean peoples, often identified in early historic records as Padoucas and in the archeological record as the Dismal River people. Their settlements ranged from western Kansas north to the eastern slopes of the Black Hills. Some of their populations were specialized bison hunters, but many appear to have followed broader spectrum foraging strategies and even casual forms of horticulture (Wedel 1959:69-75, Gunnerison 1960, 2001:239-244). Archaeologically, the progenitors of these people are linked to the Avonlea cultural tradition, which had a wide distribution in the prehistoric Plains with sites reported from Saskatchewan to Colorado. One of the major proponents of the Avonlea-Apache (Athapaskan) connection is J. Loring Haskell (1987). Avonlea sites are associated with the use of the bow and arrow, ritualized bison drives, and a heavy exploitation of plant resources (Sundstrom, L. 1989:63-64), and they appear from 100 to 1200 A.D. with many found in regions surrounding the Black Hills (Hannus 1994:188-190). More recently, Karl Schlesier (1994:324-335) has expanded upon Haskell’s theory and argued that most of the protohistoric hunting sites on the eastern edge of the Black Hills are associated with Apachean occupation.
At sites now buried by the Angostura Reservoir, and attributed to the Dismal River people, stone tools were found quarried from material originating at Battle Mountain and other locations inside the southeastern region of the Hogback (Sundstrom, L. 1990:59-60; Wedel and Frison 2001:44-45, 49). Clearly by the time the historic record begins for this area, Apachean peoples were the ones most often located in areas of the Black Hills adjoining Wind Cave National Park.

F. Comanche, Shoshone, and Ute

Another population with hypothetical links to the Black Hills are members of the Numic language family. Adrian Hannus (1994:195) has long argued for their presence in the area from 400 to 1700 A.D. Although no one has refuted Hannus, there are no major archaeological complexes that can be indisputably linked to their presence. There are a number of rock art panels in the southern Hills, however, that show figures bearing a remarkable resemblance to styles found in well-established areas of Numic occupation. Given their well-known history of transhumance movement and their long-standing association with broad-spectrum hunting and plant economies, Numic speakers make good candidates for some of the localized interior populations that Sundstrom (1989:66-68, 99-100, 107) describes for later phases of the Archaic. The historic Shoshones, for example, had a well-established tradition of transhumance adaptations that mirror those described for the Black Hills. In Wyoming and Idaho, they were divided into two major population groups known as the Kutsundika (Buffalo Eaters) and the Tukadika (Meat [Bighorn Sheep] Eaters) or Toyahini (Mountain Dwellers). The latter, specialized hunters of bighorn, lived much of the year in the high elevation recesses of the Sawtooth, Wind River, Gallatin, and Absaroke mountains (Shimkin 1986:308-335; Hannus 1994:195). Some of the mountain-adapted groups may very well have occupied higher elevation locations farther east in the Big Horns, Laramie Mountains, and the Black Hills from the late Archaic to the early Protohistoric period, but this is a subject of some debate (Hughes, S. 2000). Certainly by 1700 the people known as Comanche, an offshoot of the Shoshone, were well established in the region of the Black Hills, being identified with the Apachean Padouca and taking over much of their territory in the eighteenth century.

G. Kiowa

Karl Schlesier (1994:309-316) attributes another widely distributed archeological complex in the region, Pelican Lake, to Tanoan speaking populations, which include the Kiowas. Sites from this complex, which occur from 1500 B.C. to 300 A.D., are located in areas to the north and west of the Hills (Hannus 1994:182). Like Avonlea, Pelican Lake sites cover a large swath of territory that extends from the plateau of British Columbia in the north to the high plains of Colorado in the south. Pelican Lake sites are associated with populations who relied heavily on bison hunting (Sundstrom, L. 1989:59-60). Given the possible connection of Tanoan to the isolate language Kutenai, spoken by people of western Montana and neighboring British Columbia, and given Kiowa oral traditions of their origins in the Montana Rockies, Schlesier has connected the two with the distribution of Pelican Lake sites, which in British Columbia are clearly attributed to the Kutenai. The time depth of Schlesier’s associations, however, make them highly speculative.

H. Arapaho, Cheyenne, Sutaio, and Lakota

Equally controversial are the ethnic affiliations of the archeological sites known as Besant, which were coterminal in the late Prehistoric period with Pelican Lake and Avonlea traditions. The Besant tradition existed in the Plains from 500 B.C. to 800 A.D., and its sites are also
associated with specialized bison-hunting populations. They are common in areas surrounding the Hills, but less frequent than those of Pelican Lake (Sundstrom, L. 1989:61-63; Hannus 1994:184). Besant-style points frequently appear in surface collections from the Black Hills, but their stylistic features are highly variable, complicating questions of their ethnic origins (Hannus 1994:187). Karl Schlesier (1994:316-323) is the proponent of a theory that affiliates the Besant tradition with Algonkian speakers, more specifically with proto-Cheyenne populations. Briefly, his very complex and highly tenuous argument is that ancestors of the Cheyenne were in the Black Hills region in the Late Archaic period but retreated to the Woodland margins of the prairies where they remained until the Protohistoric period before beginning their return migrations to the Plains. Because Besant sites are so variable in the nature of their Woodlands influences, some archeologists have suggested connections to Siouan-speaking populations from regions east of the Missouri, pushing back in time the possible entry of proto-Lakota peoples in the high plains areas of South Dakota (Bad Horse 1979; Michlovic 1985; Sundstrom, L. 1989:75; Gibbon 2003:41-42). Some of the most compelling evidence for a much earlier occupation of the Hills by Cheyenne and Lakota populations comes from rock art styles in the southern Black Hills, but most of these probably do not date before the protohistoric period (Sundstrom, L. 1990:167-268; Sundstrom and Keyser 1998).

Notwithstanding numerous hypotheses on the subject, it is nearly impossible to determine whether a given archeological assemblage is associated with any one ethnonlinguistic group or whether it contains cultural features widely adapted and shared by people of different backgrounds. Except in instances where sites are associated with deep and uninterrupted chronologies that can be traced to the historic era, often the case for horticultural groups with some degree of sedentism, attempts to trace tribal identities become very speculative as one moves back in time beyond the Protohistoric to the Late Archaic period (Hannus 1994:197).

In concluding her monograph on the prehistory of the Black Hills, Linea Sundstrom (1989:108) writes:

Few threads of continuity run throughout Black Hills prehistory. Instead, adaptations and patterns of interaction fluctuated according to a number of ecological and cultural factors. At times, the Black Hills area was part of the mainstream Northwestern Plains cultural developments; at other times, fairly isolated, localized cultures developed, only indirectly influenced by outside cultures. Ethnic and economic diversity also changed over time. If any single conclusion emerges from this discussion of Black Hills prehistory, it is that the way people perceived the area changed as the resources and related technologies fluctuated.

This nicely summarizes what we know about the Black Hills in prehistoric times; that it was a region of immense diversity both in terms of the kinds of adaptive patterns local groups followed and the cultures whose artifacts are now found across the Hills environmentally varied landscapes.

III. WIND CAVE IN LIGHT OF BLACK HILLS PREHISTORY

Except for the remains of sweat lodges [CU0900] built by members of the American Indian Movement three decades ago and a few farmsteads [CU0822, CU0900, CU1284] attributed to late nineteenth century European American settlers, none of the sites in and around Wind Cave National Park area have been definitively affiliated with any historic tribal group. Most of them, including the Beaver Creek Rock Shelter (Martin, Alex, and Benton 1988; Alex 1991), are too old to make any conclusive ethnic identification. Since most of the recorded sites have not been
studied in any depth, much less dated, they have not been linked to any local or regional cultural sequence either.

What little information can be gathered from the site records held by the South Dakota State Archaeological Center permits only the most general observations, one of which is this was an area of human habitation. In and around park properties, sites recorded at Wind Cave Canyon [CU0821], Gobbler Knob [CU0868], and the 7-11 Ranch [CU0004] hold the remains of human occupation. One of the earliest recorded sites [CU0002], the Sanson Buffalo Jump, indicates the presence of a bison pound and a settlement. Several sites in the area [CU0869, CU0870, CU0871, CU0872, CU0873, CU0876, CU1234, CU1235, CU1236, CU1285] reveal the quarrying of chalcedony, rose quartz, or other knappable material used in tool-making. The last three are on park properties. Many more sites [CU0353, CU0358, CU0781, CU0900, CU0912, CU0918, CU0919, CU0920, CU0921, CU1234, CU1237, CU1286, CU1287, CU1288], consisting predominately of artifact scatters, suggest various kinds of hunting activity at diverse locations throughout the park and adjacent lands. There is also one stone alignment dating from the historic period (CU1287). The archeological record clearly reveals that the area in and around Wind Cave National Park was a location for settlement, hunting, and the acquisition of tool-making materials. Beyond this, we can conclude very little other than to say that cultural complexes and adaptive patterns hypothesized for the southeastern region of the Hills as a whole probably hold currency here as well.

In Fall River County, south of Wind Cave National Park, there is considerable evidence that this region was densely inhabited throughout much of the prehistory of the Black Hills (Chevance 1978:28-33). Some of the evidence of habitation inside the Hogback suggests year-round occupancy, but much more of it reveals a regular and recurring pattern of seasonal use. From available archeological research, we can infer fairly confidently that, during the Archaic period, populations with two separate adaptive strategies wintered at locations along the Red Valley: one focused on the summer use of the high elevation interiors and the other the open plains. By the late Prehistoric period, much of the occupation in the high elevation interiors appears to have been more temporary and seasonally based. In addition to the remains of a highly localized cultural complex associated with many settlement sites inside the southeastern stretch of the Hogback, there is evidence that populations who lived most of the year outside the Hills, even at locations as far away as the valley of the Missouri River, visited the area to procure game, plant, and knappable resources.

From the late Prehistoric through the Protohistoric era, we can safely conclude that peoples ancestral to the Plains Apaches were the principal inhabitants of the southern regions of the Hills, and we can also suggest, less confidently, that Numic and Tanoan speaking populations may have resided in the region at this time too. In addition, we can deduce that various semihorticultural populations ancestral to the Mandans, Arikaras, and Poncas made regular forays into the area in conjunction with their summer buffalo hunts, and some probably attempted, as the Cheyennes certainly did in protohistoric times, to establish horticultural sites along major waterways at the base of the Hills. We can even hypothesize, based on studies of the region s rock art that people ancestral to the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and the Lakotas may have been in this region at dates earlier than the historic record would suggest. Finally, we can surmise that other populations, including those ancestral to the Pawnees and the Crow-Hidatsas, traveled in this area too, but there is no evidence of any extended presence or use.

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3 Rufus Pilcher (1964), one of the park s early superintendents, recalled that there were many tipi rings and other evidence of occupation at the mouth of the cave before the area was developed to make room for an elevator and a new visitor s center.
Chapter Three

THE ARRIVAL OF HORSES AND EUROPEAN TRADE: 1742-1806

The dawn of the historic era is a time when written records in conjunction with tribal oral traditions allow us to assign specific ethnic names to the American Indian populations who lived and traveled in the Black Hills. Nations with documented ties to this region in the eighteenth century include the Arapahos (and possibly Atsinas), Arikaras (and probably Pawnees), Cheyennes, Comanches (and the related Shoshones and Utes), Crows, Hidatsas, Kiowas, Lakotas, Mandans, Plains Apaches, and Poncas.

The eighteenth century history of tribal affiliations to the Hills is a complex one, marked by considerable movement and momentous change. One of the most important changes was brought about by the introduction of the horse. Horses arrived in the Black Hills area sometime during the early half of the eighteenth century. In his classic work on the subject, John Ewers (1969:1-14) suggests that horses entered this area by way of two principal routes, both originating in the American Southwest (see Figure 1). In one route, which flanked the eastern edge of the Rockies, horses were introduced to the area by Apachian peoples. In the other, Numic populations, notably the Utes and Comanches, introduced horses to the region through the interior passes and parklands of the Colorado Rockies. By the mid-eighteenth century, horses had become a major item in the well-established trade networks that blanketed the region, connecting the horse-supplying tribes with links to the Spanish Southwest to tribes with access to French and British guns and other European commodities coming from the eastern and northern peripheries of the Plains (Jablow 1951:39-44; Ewers 1954; Albers 1993). The Black Hills became a central hub in this traffic, a place where tribes of many different backgrounds gathered together to trade (Wood 1973).

Once horses were adopted, they transformed the ways local tribes lived (Ewers 1969; Klein 1977). In time, access to horses became a defensive necessity for local tribes whose territorial ranges and very life became threatened without them (Secoy 1953). Tribes jockeyed with each other to gain access to horses, entering into alliances to protect the trade routes of which they were a part against those in neighboring and often competing chains (Jablow 1951; Albers 1993:101-102; Moore, J. 1996:82-93). They also raided one another to steal this most valued possession, which became not only a vital means of defense but also an important means of production and exchange (Albers and James 1985).

As horse ownership became a necessary condition of existence, it encouraged many groups, such as the Crows and Cheyennes, to abandon their horticultural pursuits to become full-fledged pastoralists (Moore, J. 1987:172-174; Albers 1993:108-110). It also forced some of the Apachian and Numic-speaking populations with broad-spectrum hunting and gathering adaptations to pursue more specialized procurement activities resting on pastoralism and the hunting of bison. Once the horse became commonplace in the region, the more specialized bison-hunting complexes of the prehistoric era became the prevalent economic orientation for most of the tribes who stayed around the Hills (Sundstrom, L. 1989:101-102). The adoption of horses, however, brought with it important limiting conditions, including the necessity of finding year-round locations with adequate pasturage (Albers and James 1985, 1991; Moore, J. 1987:126-174). Populations who spent most of their time on the grassland margins of the Hills easily accommodated this
requirement, but it was not well suited to those who may have utilized the interiors on a more sustained basis. Although a decline in the year-round use of the Hills had taken place centuries earlier, the arrival of horses contributed even more to a specialized and seasonal pattern of resource procurement in the Hills higher elevation interiors (Sundstrom, L. 1989:101-102).

When the horse became a fundamental feature of tribal lives, European traders were penetrating deeper into the plains. At the dawn of the eighteenth century, traders had just begun to reach the peripheries of the region, relying on local tribes to carry their trade goods into the heartlands in exchange for hides and peltries. In the Southwest, the Apaches, Utes, and Comanches brought hides, meat, and other resources to exchange for Spanish trade goods which they, in turn, carried to populations as far north as the Black Hills in South Dakota and the Green River in Wyoming. On the eastern and northeastern peripheries, tribes such as the Assiniboins, Cree, and Lakotas brought guns and other European commodities to the agricultural villages on the Missouri to trade for horses, and, in turn, the villagers traded these European goods to tribes west of the Missouri (Jablow 1951:6,12,22-23, 27, 30, 38, 42, 45, 53; Secoy 1953 66-67, 74; Swagerty 1988: 78-79; Albers 1996:100-111). Much of this trade took place at the villages, but some of it also occurred at rendezvous points near the Black Hills, including Bear Butte in the north, the forks of the Cheyenne River and its tributary French Creek in the east, and Horse Creek, a stream along the Platte River, in the south (Wood, 1973; Sundstrom, J.1977:5, 8).

By the end of the eighteenth century, many of the tribes who occupied locations on the peripheries of the Plains and who acted as middlemen in the European trade were by-passed by white traders now setting up their posts in the interiors along major waterways such as the Assiniboine, Saskatchewan, Missouri, and Platte rivers. The movements of traders often interrupted, and even destroyed, the lines of trade that many local tribes controlled and diligently protected (Albers and Kay 1987:73; Albers 1993:105). When Jean Baptiste Truteau and others were waylaid by the Poncas and Lakotas as they ascended the Missouri River, these were not arbitrary acts of hostility but calculated moves to prevent traders from reaching groups in the interior and thereby cutting off their advantageous positions in local trade networks (Parker, D. 1950:61-62; Jablow 1951:35-38; Wood 2003:32, 34).

Until the time of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-1806, most of the traders who entered areas near the Black Hills did so to explore locations best suited for building permanent entrepots, and they remained in the area for brief periods of time. Typically, they situated their trade activities at the villages of the large horticultural tribes, the Arikaras, Mandans, or Hidatsas (Wis- hart 1979:48-79; Wood and Thiessen 1985:5-36). Already well-known and native-controlled trade hubs, whose commerce extended well back into the prehistoric era, the villages soon became major resting and trading spots for a growing population of European traders. Although some traders and engages in their employ ventured away from the villages to trap and carry on their trade, some even taking their commerce to the Black Hills, only a few of them left a record of their travels.
FIGURE 1. Eighteenth-Century Plains Indian Trade Routes

- Routes of Horse Trade Pre-1815
- Routes of European Goods Pre-1815
- Indigenous Trade Centers
- European Trade Locations, 1794-1805
- Location of Wind Cave
I. THE EARLY HISTORIC RECORDS

One group of traders, the La Verendrye brothers, came to the northern Plains to search for an overland route to the Pacific (Burpee 1927:406-432; Smith, H. 1980). They reached the Mandan villages near present day Bismarck, North Dakota in May of 1742. Two months later on July 23, they left the villages, accompanied by two Mandan guides, and traveled overland in a west-southwest direction (Burpee 1927:407; Smith, H. 1980:105). Although the eldest brother, The Chevalier, wrote of their travels, it is impossible to determine with any degree of certainty what routes they followed and which groups they met in their yearlong journey. This has led to no end of scholarly debate on the matter. Beginning with the exchanges of South Dakota historians, Charles Deland and Doane Robinson (1914), scholars continue to debate whether their course took them to the Big Horn Mountains or the Black Hills (Hurt 1974:79-83). One thing is clear: they left a metal plate, discovered in 1916, on a hill directly across the Missouri River from present day Pierre, South Dakota, an act establishing France’s claim to the region (Cassells, Miller, and Miller 1984:135). This discovery has lent some credence to the argument that part of their travels took them through regions directly north of the Hills.

What we learn from the Chevalier’s journal (Burpee 1927:410-429; Smith, H. 1980:105-114) is they encountered populations with eight different names, the Beaux Hommes (Good Men), Petits Renards (Little Foxes), Pioya (probably Kiowa), Gens des Cheaveux (Horse People), Gens des l’Arc (Bow People), Gens de la Belle Rivere (People of the Good River), Gens de la Rivere Cherise (People of the Cherry River), and Gens de la Flesche Collee (Glued Arrow People). Three of the groups, the Little Foxes, Pioya, and Horse People feared another people called the Gens des Serpeant (Snake People). We also know that one of the groups, the Gens des l’Arc (Bow People), did not fear the Snake people. They had large herds of horses and possessed asses and mules, implying that they also had contact with the Spanish Southwest. Indeed, one of their leaders knew some Spanish words and was able to relate a story of a well-known incident where the Pawnee killed a group of Spanish traders in the early eighteenth century. These people also had knowledge of the ocean from slaves taken by the Snakes (Burpee 1927:413-416; Smith, H. 1980:107-108). Other than this, we cannot say much more about these groups and their locations.

Except for the Chevalier’s journal, information about the Black Hills in the early half of the eighteenth century was second hand and written by traders or government officials far removed from the area. Etienne Veniard de Bourgmont claimed to have ascended the Missouri River in 1714 as far as the Arikara villages above the mouth of the Niobrara River, but it is doubtful that he ever traveled much beyond the mouth of the Osage (Hurt 1974:83-84; Norall 1988). Nonetheless, his writings offer a glimpse of a number of tribal locations that remained more or less stable until the appearance of Delisle’s map of 1718 and the writings of the Mallet Brothers in 1739 (Blakeslee 1995). From these sources, we learn that the Pawnees and the Skidi Pawnees were located in villages on the Loup River and along the central reaches of the Platte; the Omahas were situated at the mouth of the Big Sioux River; the Padoucas lived on the upper reaches of the Niobrara, Platte and the Arkansas rivers; the Arikaras inhabited areas above the Big Bend of the Missouri River; and the Lakotas still resided in regions east of the Missouri (Hurt 1974:69-71). After the travels of the La Verendryes and until the arrival of Jean Baptiste Truteau in 1794-1795, historic documents remain sketchy but basically corroborate the tribal locations given at the beginning of the century (Hurt 1974:84-98).

At the turn of the nineteenth century, many more traders entered the region and left a much richer body of documentary evidence, including more precise information about the Black Hills. Jean Baptiste Truteau, a representative of the Spanish Missouri Company in St. Louis, made two
trips up the Missouri between 1794 and 1795, spending one winter among the Poncas and another among the Arikaras (Truteau 1914, 1921; Parker, D. 1950:19-27; Nasatir 1952:279-299). He is credited with providing the first detailed information on tribes residing near the Black Hills. James McKay and John Evans, also in the employ of the Spanish, visited the Mandans in 1787 and set up a post among the Arikaras in 1795 (Nasatir 1952:99, 106). Neither wrote detailed journals, but the documents and maps they left of their journeys provided invaluable information for future explorers traveling the Missouri River, notably, Lewis and Clark (Wood 2003).

On the 1st of October in 1800, the French gained control of the territory known as Louisiana from the Spanish under the Treaty of San Ildefonso. Between 1802 and 1804, Pierre-Antoine Tabeau (in Abel 1939) wrote an extensive narrative of his time on the Missouri River that included specific details about the Black Hills. In 1802, Tabeau accompanied the Loisel Expedition of the Missouri Fur Company and remained with this group at a post on Cedar Island above the Great Bend of the Missouri River, but a year later in 1803, he moved up river to establish his own post among the Arikaras.

1803 was also the year that the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from the French for fifteen million dollars in a ceremony held in New Orleans on the 20th of November. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were the first official representatives of the United States to explore the region. In their travels between 1804 and 1806, they visited Tabeau near the Arikara villages but wintered among the Mandans. Much of what they wrote about the area was learned from local traders, most of whom were located at the tribal villages along the Missouri, although two, Jon Vall and Jean Baptiste Le Paige, wintered in the Black Hills with the Cheyennes (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:133, 226-227). Vall’s employees purportedly traded with local tribes along the Black Hills stream that bears the name French Creek (Sundstrom, J. 1994:15). Vall and his trappers were also reported to live and trade with local tribes at the forks of the Cheyenne River (Tabeau in Abel 1939:86-87). Another trader named Guenneville traveled extensively with the Cheyennes in the neighborhood of the Black Hills during the same period (Tabeau in Abel 1939: 87, 153).1 The information Lewis and Clark (Moulton 1983-87:3:395-440) gathered from these and other traders was contained in their daily journal entries and also in their Statistical Views, which included sketches of all of the tribes they encountered or heard about in their travels, including some of the most detailed information on tribes known to reside in the vicinity of the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park. In 1806, Alexander Henry, the Younger (Coues 1965:1:383-384), a trader with the Northwest Fur Company of Montreal, also visited the Mandan villages where he learned the whereabouts of some of the tribal nations who traded there, including those who lived near the Black Hills, and between 1804 and 1806, another trader, Charles McKenzie (in Woods and Theissen 1985:221-296), recorded his observations about tribes who came to the villages from regions in the direction of the Hills.

II. EARLY TRIBAL OCCUPANCY IN THE BLACK HILLS

Combining the above accounts with evidence from tribal winter counts (Good in Mallery 1893; High Hawk in Curtis 1907-30; Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930; Carloff in Powers, W. 1963; Blue Thunder in Howard, J. 1965b; White Bull in Howard, J. 1968; Swift Dog in Praus 1962; Red Horse Owner in Karol 1969; Howard, J. 1979; No Ears, Short Man, and Iron Crow in Walker 1982: 124-131; American Horse and Cloud-Shield in Mallery 1987) and oral traditions (Bent in Hyde 1968; Grinnell 1972; Mooney 1979) collected from the end of the nineteenth to the early

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1 In the early twentieth century, an elderly Cheyenne man (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:35) confirmed that his people first met white men in the Black Hills.
decades of the twentieth century, we can begin to reconstruct the movements and locations of some of the named tribal nations known to have lived in and around the Black Hills. What we learn from these sources is that the Black Hills were a major crossroads where many different tribal nations came to live, trade, hunt, and war. We also learn about the tragic consequences of European diseases spreading through the region at this time. 1781 marks the year when one of the largest smallpox epidemics swept across the Plains, killing tens of thousands of people, wiping out entire villages along the Missouri River, and destroying large encampments as far north as the central Plains of Montana (Taylor 1977). This epidemic, and probably earlier ones as well, triggered important changes in the ways in which tribal nations were distributed across the region, and they contributed in one degree or another to the subsequent migrations of tribes affiliated with the Black Hills.

A. The Comanches, Shoshones, and Utes

One of the earliest references to the epidemic of 1781 comes from the journals of the Northwest Fur Company trader David Thompson (Coues 1965:2:328-335) during his years of travel on the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan rivers in Canada. In 1787, he related a story from a Cree leader named Saukamapee who told of a time, circa the 1730s, when the joint forces of his tribe and the Blackfeet first saw their enemies, the Shoshones, fight them with horses. He also reported that sometime around 1781, these tribes discovered a Shoshone campsite on the Montana Plains where all the inhabitants had died from smallpox. From this and other fur trade reports of the time as well as the tribal traditions of the Flathead, collected in the early twentieth century by James Teit (1927-28:316-322), we know that Numic-speaking peoples, notably the Shoshones and Bannocks, occupied a vast stretch of territory extending south from the Canadian border through central Montana to the sagebrush steppes west of the Big Horn and Laramie Mountains in Wyoming. When the La Verendrye brothers arrived in the area in 1742, the Snakes (Shoshones) had retreated across the mountains after destroying a camp of Horse People. These mountains were either the Black Hills or the Big Homs (Smith, H. 1980:106). Truteau (in Nasatir 1952:376) wrote that Snakes were not well known where he traded on the Missouri because they occupied areas on the upper reaches of this river beyond the Crows. Gen. George H. V. Collot’s map of 1796, which was based on information he received from Truteau, situated them to the west of the Yellowstone River and the Big Horn Mountains (Hurt 1974:123). A decade later, Lewis and Clark located the Shoshones west of the Big Horn Mountains and wrote that they shared an alliance with the Crows and Mandans with whom they traded horses (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:4:436-437; Shimkin 1986:308-310). Two years earlier, Antoine Laroque (in Wood and Theissen 1985:170) observed a group of Shoshones traveling with the Crows to the Mandan villages. In the early twentieth century, Calico, an Oglala Lakota, told Clark Wissler (1912:78-79) how the Lakotas were taught the Night Dance by the Cheyennes who, in turn, had learned it from the Kiowas. He then went on to say that these two tribes, along with the Arapahos, Utes, and Shoshones, once occupied locations east of the Black Hills.

Tabeau (in Abel 1939:160) linked the Shoshones with two other populations that he called the *Pele* and *Altines*. The ascription *Aliatan* and its variants, according to James Mooney (1979:167) and Frederick Hodge (1907-10:1:1064), was probably another Numic-speaking group, the Utes, although Lewis and Clark used it synonymously with the name Snakes. More recently, Thomas Kavanagh (2001:903) has linked this name to the Comanches too, but this does not necessarily exclude the Utes with whom they had had a long history of intermarriage. Another name, *Ietan*, was applied to a well-known horse-trading population formed through intermarriages between Ute-Comanches and Apaches in southeastern Colorado. This ethnically mixed population was known to travel widely over the high plains region at the base of the Rocky
Mountains. In Lewis and Clark's writings, a probable variant of this name, Staetan, was applied to a population who were closely associated with the Arapahos and lived with them at locations along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:26-27, 423). In later years, the name Ietan was used primarily in reference to the Comanches (Hyde 1959:99, 201; Wedel 1959:76; Mooney 1979:167; Kavanagh 1996: 69, 128).

By the time the La Verendryes arrived in the region, the Comanches had already broken away from the main body of Shoshones and were beginning to migrate east and then south along the eastern flanks of the Colorado Rockies. According to George Hyde (1959:52-91), the Utes first brought the Comanches to Taos in 1707, probably a decade or two after they introduced horses to them, and together, these two tribes regularly raided Spanish settlements and Apache communities in northern New Mexico and western Texas. At the same time, some of the Comanches began to extend their territorial reach to the edge of the Black Hills in the eastern plains of Wyoming. Others, however, moved south, establishing their principal territorial ranges beyond the Arkansas River in Colorado where the vast majority were located by the 1740s. The ability of the Comanches to expand their territorial range beyond the mountain parklands of Colorado and Wyoming was a function, in large part, of what had befallen the Apachian groups, commonly called the Padoucas, who dominated the Plains on the southern edge of the Black Hills before 1725. Whether from epidemic disease or the raiding of tribes equipped with guns and ammunition, the Padoucas lost their hold over territories east and south of the Black Hills, opening the area to Comanche expansion (Wallace and Hoebel 1952:5-9; Hyde 1959:65-92; Kavanagh 1999:63-132).

As late as 1794, the Comanches were reported at locations within easy reach of the Black Hills. Truteau (Nasatir 1952:379) located them on the Platte River, ten days march (sixty to eighty leagues) from the Arikara villages on the Missouri. In the same time period, Francois Marie Perrin du Lac wrote about battles taking place between the Comanches and the Cheyennes at locations east of the Black Hills (Grinnell 1972:1:38). Most probably the Comanches involved in these battles were members of the northernmost branch of the tribe, known as the Yampirika [Wild Carrot Eaters], a name they shared in common with a division of the Utes (also known as the White River band). These were probably the Comanches whose territorial range straddled the two forks of the Platte River and extended north towards the Black Hills (Kavanagh 2001: 887).

It should also be noted that in the oral traditions of the Comanches and Kiowas (Wallace and Hoebel 1952:27-28; Hyde 1959:60-61; Wedel 1959: 75-77; Mooney 1979:162-164), some of the Kwahada Comanches remained far to the north in historic times as well, separated from the main body who, in the time of Lewis and Clark's visit, were located along the Arkansas River in Colorado and as far south as the Canadian River in Texas (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:437-438; Kavanagh 1996:148-158). The Kwahada had close relations with the southern Kiowas when they still lived in the Black Hills, and, in later years, they continued to be intimately associated with them (Hyde 1959:60-61). Farther north, notwithstanding hostilities between Kiowas and Comanches south of the Arkansas, small groups of Comanches and even Shoshones were known to live and travel in some of the larger Kiowa camps after this tribe moved their territories to locations well south of the Black Hills (Mayhall 1971:44-45,52). Regardless of their specific identity, it is clear that some of the Comanches occupied areas on the western and southern margins of the Black Hills into the nineteenth century.

Evidence for the presence of the Comanches in the neighborhood of the Black Hills also comes from other tribal oral traditions. Ponca and Crow traditions indicate that they first learned of and received horses from the Comanches at locations near the Black Hills in the early half of the 18th century (Fletcher & La Flesche 1973:1:79-80; Voget 2001:695). Some Cheyennes also maintained that when they first moved to the Black Hills, they acquired horses from the Coman-
ches and also learned how to dress hides in one piece from them (Bent in Hyde 1968:17-18; Marriott and Rachlin 1975:94-98). Along with the Kiowas, the Comanches were reputed to make the best robes (Bent in Hyde 1968:17-18). The Lakotas also recognized the Comanches’ early presence in the Black Hills (Calico in Wissler 1912:79). Because of their early and widespread association with the introduction of the horse to tribes in the Black Hills’ region, the Comanches make a good candidate for the peoples the La Verendrye’s identified as the Gens des Chevaux.

B. Apaches

Like the Numic-speaking Comanches, Shoshones, and Utes to their west, Apachean-speaking peoples were known to have occupied an enormous swath of territory extending from the eastern plains of Montana through eastern Wyoming and western South Dakota to the plains of western Texas and adjoining areas of New Mexico. This was an internally diverse population, which included groups known as Padouca and also Gattaka (Plains or Kiowa Apaches) (Gunnerson and Gunnerson 1988:11-16).

From prehistoric times to the early historic era, there is overwhelming historic evidence that a region extending from the Bad River in the north to the upper reaches of the Arkansas River in the south was inhabited by a large population of Apachean speaking people known as the Padoucas. Strong archaeological evidence also supports the presence of this population near the Black Hills during protohistoric times. Not only were their settlements situated at locations as close as the South Fork of the Cheyenne River, but there is lithic evidence of their presence inside the Hogback in the southeastern Black Hills as well (Wedel 1959:589-599; Gunnerson 1960, 2001).

In 1719, Jean-Baptiste d'Harpe learned from the Wichitas that the Padoucas had large numbers of horses, which they traded to the Arikaras (Foster and McCullough 2001:927-928). This makes the Padoucas a possible candidate for the tribal nation the La Verendryes identified as the Bow People in 1742. This identification is recommended for two reasons. First, the introduction of the bow and arrow in the northwestern Plains is commonly associated with the prehistoric Avonelea complex, widely reputed to be proto-Apachean in origin. Second, the Bow People were a population who owned large numbers of horses, asses, and mules, and followed a leader who knew Spanish words and historic events that had taken place much farther south (Smith, H. 1980:107-110). Both of these facts suggest a people with continuing access to the Southwest, which at this point in time would have been a group of Apaches, Comanches, or Kiowas, although Douglas Parks (2001b:968) argues that they might have been a division of the Pawnees or Arikaras because of their association with forts, a term most often applied to the palisaded villages of horticultural populations. He also recommends this identification because of other contemporaneous reports of a people named Gens de l'Arc living in four villages near the Arikaras. The association of the Bow People with villages, however, does not eliminate the Padoucas, who, in contrast to some of the other Apaches in the region, were known to have occupied village settlements and followed a more semisedentary existence (Wedel 1959:73,589-599; Gunnerson 1960; Tweedie 1968; Blakeslee 1995:38).

The Padoucas were also among the first Apaches to adopt the use of horses in warfare, and

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2 In Rudolph Petters's dictionary (1913-15:583-584), the Cheyennes had several different names for tribal nations in the Numic language family. Paanaexeo was the term for Bannocks and also Paiutes, while the Shoshones were called Sasone or Moooambetaneo [Grass lodge people], the Utes Mostatavaneo [Black people], and the Comanches Sisinovozhetaneo [Rattlesnake People]. The Lakotas and/or Dakotas had the same of the same names for these groups. The Utes were known as Sapa wicasa [Black men], the Shoshones as Sassuni or Pejiwokeya Oti kin [Grass lodge dweller], and the Comanches were called Sintehla wicasa [Rattlesnake men] (Buechel 1970:733; Williamson 1970:35).
they were well known in the seventeenth century for their equestrian raids against the Pawnees in central Nebraska. By the mid-eighteenth century, their fortunes changed when the Pawnees, and, at times, the Poncas attacked them. Both of these nations were now well armed with guns and ammunition (Hyde 1959:63-92; Fletcher & LaFlesche 1972:1:79-80). As a result of this warfare, and possibly epidemic disease as well, most of the Padoucas eventually abandoned their northern settlements, although some appear to have remained in the area and become absorbed into other tribal bodies (Foster and McCullough 2001:927-928).

In a letter dated December 12, 1785, Estevan Miro, the Governor-General of Louisiana, reported the presence of Padoucas (or Toguibacos) on the headwaters of the Bad River when he wrote:

The Pados were in former times the most numerous nation on the continent but wars other nations made against them have destroyed them to such an extent that at present they form only small groups who go wandering from one side to the other continually (quoted from Hurt 1974:112).

By the time of Lewis and Clark's Expedition in 1804-1806, the Padoucas were reported to have disappeared as a distinct group (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:438-439), and they were identified with a small remnant band, called Dotame, who lived between the two forks of the Cheyenne River west of the Black Hills but ranged as far south as the Loup Fork of the Republican River. They were reported as close allies of the Catakas and the Nemousins (probably Arapahos) and trading partners of the Arikaras (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:425-426, 439). The Dotame were also mentioned by Tabeau (in Abel 1939:132) in 1803. Although various attempts have been made to affiliate the Dotame with other tribal nations in the region, including the Comanches and Cheyennes, none of these connections are very convincing (Parks 2001b:969).

The other Padoucas appear to have either joined forces with Apachean populations in the Southwest and/or to have been absorbed into the ranks of neighboring populations, including some of their erstwhile rivals, the Plains Apaches and Comanches (Hyde 1959:28-92; Wedel 1959:69-75, 77-78; Gunnerson 1960; Gunnerson and Gunnerson 1988:11-16; Foster and McCollough 2001:927-928). As reported by James Mooney (1979:248), one elderly Apache told Captain W. P. Clark that he had been born near the Badlands of South Dakota around 1780. Although the Padouca Apaches disappeared as a distinct tribal body, the name, Padouca, persisted. In later years, this name was commonly applied to the Comanches, who had taken over much of the Apachean Padouca's former territorial range near the Black Hills (Wedel 1959:77-78).

Another group of Plains Apaches located in the region of the Black Hills was first mentioned in the historic record under the name Gattacka by Ren-Robert Chevalier de La Salle. When he visited the Wichita villages in 1681, he described them as a horse-trading people who visited New Mexico in association with the Manrhout, a group that some scholars now identify as the Kiowa (Mayhall 1971:23-25; Foster and McCollough 2001:927; Parks 2001b:966). Years later, they may have been referred to as the Tokiouakos, who traveled with the Arapahos and Kiowas in Truteau's writings (in Nasatir 1952:379). This name has been linked as well to the people known as the Petit Renards in La Verendrye's journal (Parks 2001b:969-970). These Apaches were also

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3 The Poncas and Omahas called the Comanches Padoucas, which suggests that the Comanches may have already overtaken much of the area southeast of the Black Hills by the 1740s, an area once dominated by the Apachean speaking Padoucas (Fletcher & La Flesche 1972:1:79-80). These Padoucas had bows made from elk horn, their horses were covered with an armor of hide, and they carried long shields. The armor and shields, however, suggests Apachean rather than Numic-speaking peoples (see Secoy 1953). Whatever the origins of the Padoucas of Ponca memory, they were a population with whom the Ponca alternately traded and fought (Fletcher & La Flesche 1972:1:79-80).
present in Tabeau’s narrative (in Abel 1939:132, 154) as the Cartarkas and listed among the people who gathered at the foot of the Black Hills to trade with the Cheyennes and Arikaras. Lewis and Clark called them Catakta. They located their settlements on the western side of the Hills between the two forks of the Cheyenne River, but they noted that their territorial range extended farther north towards the Yellowstone River. They also described them as allies of the Kiowas and trading partners of the Arikaras (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:136, 423-424).

In both recorded history and in oral tradition, the Plains Apaches, who call themselves Na-Isha (Foster and McCollough 2001:938) were closely aligned with the Kiowas. They either met the Kiowas when they arrived in the Black Hills or migrated with them from Montana in the middle decades of the eighteenth century (Mooney 1979:254-255). These Apaches also maintained strong ties with another Athapascan-speaking population, the Sarsi, who were closely connected to the Blackfeet of Montana. Despite the distances separating them, the two populations made long-distance trips to visit one another in the nineteenth century. Even the Kiowas, in whose camp circle these Plains Apaches commonly dwelled, had Sarsi ancestors in their genealogies (Mooney 1979:160). An interesting piece of evidence that lends support to the theory that La Verendrye s Horse People might have been Plains (Kiowa) Apache is the Cheyenne tradition that they received some of their first horses from this tribe and knowledge of a particular horse medicine from them near Bear Butte (Bent in Hyde 1968:17-21; Stands In Timber and Liberty 1967:244-245 ). Even more importantly, these Apaches and their Kiowa allies were the only known people from the Black Hills region, besides the Comanches and Padoucas, to have moved back and forth from the southern Plains at an early date. In their southerly travels, both populations clearly had access to horses, but most likely, it was these Apache or their Padouca relatives who first introduced horses to populations living in the region of the Black Hills. Thus, it would not be surprising if the Horse People the La Verendryes met in 1742 were a group of Plains (Kiowa) Apaches. If not, then the most likely candidate for the enigmatic Horse People are the Comanches, since so many tribes report that they acquired their first horses from them.

C. Kiowas

Aside from the Snakes, only three other native populations can be identified with any confidence in the La Verendrye journal, and one of these is the, Pioya which in all likelihood is a corruption of the name Kiowa or Ga igwu (the name the Kiowa call themselves and probably the original nucleus of the Kiowa tribe) (Mooney 1979:228). The Kiowas trace their origins to the Three Forks of the Missouri River in the mountains of Montana, where, after an internal dispute, half of the tribe left their homelands to migrate to regions along the Yellowstone River east of the Crows. At the turn of the eighteenth century, they were closely aligned not only with the Crows but the Arapahos as well. In fact, it was at this time that they received their sacred Sun Dance medicine, which originated with the Crows and was given to an Arapaho man who married into the Kiowa tribe. As late as the 1880s, the keepers of this medicine were required to trace their descent to an Arapaho ancestor (Mooney 1979:242). It was also during the early eighteenth century that many sacred stories emerged about Bear Lodge Butte (Devil’s Tower), Bear Butte, and the Black Hills more generally (Mooney 1979:160). From the Yellowstone, the Kiowas report they migrated to the northern edge of the Black Hills, where they stayed until 1760 when they

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4 There is also a tradition among the Cheyennes of their people having other close ties with Apachian speaking peoples, who the Cheyenne called Mosehometant [People of the Rasp Fiddle] (Petter 1913-15:582). Petter (Ibid: 583) argues the people the Cheyennes called Sasap were probably the Sarsi.

5 The Kiowa Apaches have a number of traditions linking the origins of some of their most sacred medicine bundles to Bear Butte (McAllister 1937:162-163, 1964).
moved to the South Fork of the Cheyenne River, where they remained for thirty years before traveling south to the Platte River (Mooney 1979:153-154).

The Kiowa's own oral traditions closely match what appears in the historic documents for this period. After 1742, when the La Verendryes encountered them somewhere north of the Black Hills, they do not appear in the records of the northern Plains until Truteau writes about them in 1794 as two of the three tribes who regularly accompanied the Cheyennes on trading expeditions to the Arikara villages on the Missouri. They were clearly the tribe Truteau (in Nasatir 1952:379) identified as the Cuyahoga, but they were also undoubtedly represented by a second tribe, the Pitapahato. Even though Truteau stated that this group spoke a different language than the Cuyahoga, Pitapahato is probably a corruption or derivation of Witapaha (Island Hill) (Mooney 1979:150-151). Witapaha is an old Lakota name for the Black Hills and the people who lived there, the Kiowas, and it is one of the Cheyennes, Arikaras, and Pawnees also used for the Kiowas (Petter 1913-15:582; Parks 2001b:970). It is also an ascription that the Lakotas apparently applied to a segment of the Cheyennes (Vestal 1934:264; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:314). It is possible that traders gave this name to one of the divisions of the Kiowa known as the Kuato (Pulling Up), who spoke a different dialect of the Kiowa language and lived in areas near the southern Black Hills where they intermarried with the Wotapio band of Cheyenne (Moore, J. 1987:218-222). The name Witapahato disappeared as a distinct tribal identity in the historic record not long after 1780, when Kiowa oral tradition tells us that the Kuato were exterminated in a battle with the Lakotas (Mooney 1979:229).

In 1796, Collot's map showed the Pitapahata on Cherry Creek, a tributary of the Cheyenne River and the Kayo (Kiowa), along with an unidentified group, the Tokiwako (probably a group of Plains Apache), on the South Fork of this river (Hyde 1951:40; Hurt 1974:105-106). During the next decade, Tabeau (in Abel 1939:132) recorded the Kayo but not the Pitapahato among the groups who traded with Arikaras and Cheyennes at the foot of the Black Hills. In the same time period, Lewis and Clark listed the Kiwis and Wetepahatoes together and reported that both lived on the North Fork of the Platte River with 70 tipis, 200 warriors, and 1000 souls. They wrote that their territorial range extended to the southwestern Black Hills, and that they were closely aligned with the Kanenavish (Arapahos). They also noted that the Kiowas traded their horses to the Arikaras, Mandans, and Hidatsas and bartered what they received from these groups with the Dotomes and Castahanas (possibly a group of Atsina) (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:421-422).

**D. Arapahos and Atsinas**

In the historic records of the early nineteenth century, the Arapahos were almost always reported in association with the Kiowas, and they were most commonly identified as Blue Bead or some variant of their Arikara name, Tuhkniha: wish (Color Bead Village) (Fowler 1986: 309 n28). They were also listed as Gens de Vash (Buffalo People) (Fowler 2001:860). Like the Kiowas and Plains Apaches, the Arapahos entered the Black Hills region from the north after they broke away from their Astina (Gros Ventres) relatives. It is nearly impossible from the vantage point of the Canadian records to separate the two when references to their existence appear in seventeenth-century accounts based on information collected in the vicinity of the Saskatchewan River (Gussow 1974:40-41). Arapaho oral traditions claim that they separated from the Atsinas sometime in the eighteenth century over a quarrel in some accounts and, in others, during a plague (Trenholm 1970:15-16). However, in 1897, Left Hand of the Southern Arapahos told Hugh Scott (1907:558) the following:
We originated in the north beyond the Missouri river, and became separated by the breaking up of the ice on the Missouri river --that is the way we left some of our people up there. After we came south to the Black Hills we separated again because the Northern Arapaho preferred to stay north and we preferred to come south because there were more horses and a milder climate.

In Kiowa oral traditions, the Arapahos, along with the Crows, were in the vicinity of the Yellowstone River in the early eighteenth century. In Cheyenne traditions, the Arapahos were first encountered when the Cheyennes started to move to the Black Hills around 1750 (Bent in Hyde 1968:17-18). The Cheyennes report that, when they arrived on the northern side of the Hills, the region was occupied by Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Comanches, Arapahos, and Crows.

In 1794, Truteau listed them as the Caminanbiches and also as Tocaninanbiche, one of the three tribes allied with the Cheyennes, who often accompanied them to trade at the Arikara villages on the Missouri (Nasatir 1952:301, 379). In 1796, the Collot map placed the Red Bead people on the Yellowstone River (these are probably Atsina), the Blue Bead nation on the headwaters of the Little Missouri River, and the Tokaninambich on the south branch of the Cheyenne River (Hyde 1951:40; Hurt 1974:122, 123). Several years later, Perrin du Lac noted that the Arapahos hunted in the summer with the Cheyennes at the forks of the Cheyenne River (Gussow 1974:58-59). Tabeau (in Abel 1939:87, 153-155) reported them in association with the Cheyennes, not only trading on the Missouri but also at the foot of the Black Hills. In Lewis and Clark s descriptions, the Cannenavich were located on the upper reaches of the Platte and the South Fork of the Cheyenne River but traveled with the Cheyennes as far west as the Big Horn Mountains (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:487-488). In 1806, the trader, Alexander Henry, the Younger, also mentioned them living in the vicinity of the Black Hills and on the Missouri in association with the Cheyennes (Coues 1965:1:383-384). Tribal historian Tom Shakespeare (1971:27) wrote that by the first decade of the nineteenth century the Arapahos were not only actively trading with Cheyennes in and around the Black Hills but hunting with them as well. The close relationship between these two tribes was apparently maintained at locations along the north and south branches of the Cheyenne River and farther south along the Platte River (Scott 1907:549).

Besides their close trading partnerships with the Cheyennes, the Arapahos maintained trade ties with the Arikaras and other village tribes on the Missouri (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:487-488). They were also affiliated with two other populations, the Staetan and Kite, whose tribal identities have been a source of some debate (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:423). The Staetan are identified as a tribe of Kites of the Cannenavich tribe on Lewis and Clark s map. The Staetans are variously linked to the Ietan, a group of mixed-Ute, Comanche, and Apache, well known in earlier Spanish records (Hyde 1959:99, 183, 201), and to the Sutaio branch of Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:11). More likely, given Lewis and Clark s descriptions, both groups were names of divisions within the Arapaho tribal nation, even though they may have had foreign origins (Fowler 2001:860).

Another possible Arapaho group is the one identified by Tabeau (in Abel 1939:104) as the Nimoussines, which probably derives from the Cheyenne ascription, Nomsin neo, which means southerners (Fowler 2001:861). Whether this population is Arapaho, as Loretta Fowler claims, or Cheyenne, as John Moore (1987:67-68) argues, is hard to determine. They were probably not a group of Comanches, as Frederick Hodge⁶ (1907-10:1:28) once suggested. Regardless of their

⁶ The argument for a Comanche connection is based on the name the Comanche call themselves, which is Neme [People].

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ethnic origin, Lewis and Clark placed the Nemousin on the headwaters of the North Fork of the Cheyenne River and reported that their territorial range, which extended from the Yellowstone in the north to the Loup Fork of the Republican River in the south, was shared in common with the Datome and Cataka. They also described them as being aligned with the Kiowas and occasional trading partners of the Arikaras (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:425-426). This is another one of the groups who traded at the foot of the Black Hills with the Arikaras and Cheyennes (Tabeau in Abel 1939:87, 153-155; Hyde 1959:189).

The Astinas, the Arapaho’s close relatives, were identified separately as the Castehana and the Paunch Indians in Lewis and Clark’s journals, but at this point in history, most of this population appears to have been located in regions north of the Big Horn Mountains and the Yellowstone River (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:426-429). Indeed, most early nineteenth century historical documents place the Atsinas at locations in northcentral Montana near the Judith Basin (Fowler and Flannery 2001:678). The Atsinas ranged farther south to visit the Arapahos, and some even spent extended periods of time encamped with them at locations south and west of the Black Hills along the Platte River (Fowler 1987:45-47). Unlike the Arapahos, however, they were never reported at locations in and around the southeastern Black Hills where Wind Cave National Park is located.

**E. Crows**

The Crows, who call themselves Apsaroke, were an offshoot of the Hidatsas (Voget 2001: 715). They once lived on the prairies northeast of the Missouri River, near present-day Spirit Lake (a.k.a. Devil’s Lake), North Dakota, and with their Hidatsa relatives, they migrated to the Missouri River and established villages there sometime around 1200 A.D. (Ibid: 695). According to their own oral traditions, the Crow separated from their Hidatsa relations in the late seventeenth century and moved southwest along the Yellowstone and Little Missouri rivers where they came in close contact with the Kiowas and the Arapahos. By the middle of the eighteenth century, they were closely allied with both populations, but especially the Kiowas, living and traveling with them in the northwestern areas of the Black Hills (Ibid:695; Mooney 1979:153-154, 242).

There is no question that Crows lived in the vicinity of the Black Hills; they were probably the Beaux Hommes the La Verendrye brothers encountered in 1742 (Parks 2001b:967). At this point in history, the Crows appear to have been well established in areas northwest and west of the Black Hills along the valley of the Little Missouri River, although they clearly traveled to areas east and south of the Hills on trading and raiding expeditions (Garnett in Friswold 1976: 130). Unlike their Arapaho and Kiowa allies, the main bodies of Crows, the Wirresapere [Mountain Crows] and Pelaccwiwraxpake [River Crows], do not appear to have had any extensive or long-term territorial connections to the southern reaches of the Black Hills (Voget 2001:695), although they certainly entered this area to wage war on the Lakotas (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:25-26). Additionally, small family or band groups no doubt took up residence and traveled with the Arapahos and Kiowas whose territorial range during this period most definitely included the southern Black Hills and the upper reaches of the Platte River.

In 1796, Collet’s map places them on the Yellowstone River (Wood 2003:50). A decade later, Lewis and Clark (in Moulton 1983-87:3:428) and others (Laroque in Wood and Theissen 1985:170) reported the Crows had ties with the Arapahos and Kiowas’ dreaded enemies, the Shoshones, from whom they were procuring most of their horses. Their Shoshone connections became increasingly important in the early nineteenth century as their access to other horse sup-
pliers, notably the Kiowas, was cut off by the territorial expansions of the Cheyennes and Lakotas (Voget 2001:696-698). Indeed, as discussed in the next section, alliances with the Shoshones may have been one of the factors that precipitated a later break down in the Crows’ ties to the Arapahos and a disruption of the Arapahos’ friendship with the Kiowas.

**F. Cheyennes and Sutaiois**

There are many stories in Cheyenne oral traditions recounting their migrations from Minnesota to the Sheyenne River in North Dakota and then to the Missouri River in the early decades of the eighteenth century (Bent in Hyde 1968:3-16; Grinnell 1972:1:25-33; Moore, J. 1987:89-125), although one of their tribal historians, Black Moccasin, reckoned they had moved to the Missouri as early as the late seventeenth century (Powell 1969:1:22). In these travels, the Cheyennes met another group, the Sutaio, who spoke the same language and eventually became incorporated into their camp circle (Bent in Hyde 1968:12-14). Together, the Cheyennes and their Sutaio allies crossed the Missouri River. According to the stories of Bear Woman and Old Woman (Bent in Hyde 1968:14-15), they moved across the Missouri between the Mandan and Arikara villages somewhere near the present site of Fort Yates, North Dakota. While living on the Missouri, they continued to plant corn and other crops.

Although some scholars have suggested that the Horse People of the La Verendrye expedition were Cheyennes (Hurt 1974:93), this is doubtful given other historical evidence that places them on or near the Missouri until the 1760s. The more likely candidates in the La Verendrye journal for a Cheyenne identity are the Gens de la Flesche Collee (Glued Arrow People), who the La Verendryes met on their return trip to the Mandan villages seven days north of the Arikara village at Pierre, South Dakota (Smith, H. 1980:113). These people have also been linked to the Lakotas on equally plausible grounds (Parks 2001b:968). Whatever the case, Bear Woman and Old Woman told George Bent (in Hyde 1968:16) that while living on the Missouri, the Cheyennes made two annual trips up the courses of the Cheyenne and Grand rivers and gradually moved their hunts southwest to the Black Hills.

It is not until Truteau’s accounts of 1794-1795 that we begin to get a more exact picture of Cheyenne locations and movements, which many scholars argue took place incrementally one band at a time (Holder 1970:90-97; Moore, J. 1987:85). As reported in their own oral traditions, the Cheyennes abandoned their Missouri River settlements before the outbreak of smallpox in 1781 and moved their villages to the Cheyenne River (Bent in Hyde 1968:16). According to Truteau (in Nasatir 1952:301), they were located on Cherry Creek, a tributary of the river that bears their name, situated midway between the Arikaras on the Missouri and the Kiowas and Arapahos, who were closer to the Black Hills. Here, they built permanent lodges, planted corn, and occupied three villages named Ouisy, Chouta, and Cheynne (Truteau in Nasatir 1952:379). In Collot’s map of 1796, the Cheyennes were located just below the confluence of the north and south forks of the Cheyenne River (Hurt 1974:106; Wood 2003:50).

Perrin du Lac wrote of the years between 1801 and 1803 that the Cheyennes lived along the river bearing their name and hunted buffalo on the plains as far south as the Platte River, and that they shared this area with the Kiowas, Arapahos, Plains Apaches, and the Witapahatos (possibly a mixed group of the Kiowa/Cheyenne) (Gussow 1974:58-59). By the time Tabeau entered the region in 1802, many of the Cheyennes had given up horticulture, turning to a life centered on hunting and pastoralism. In their new adaptation, they came to inhabit the entire region between the Missouri and Black Hills. George Bird Grinnell (1983:1:9-10) indicates that some of them were now camping on the upper reaches of the White River. The Cheyennes still maintained a
strong middleman position, with the Arikaras on one side and the Arapahos, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches on the other. They were reported to accompany the Arikaras when this tribe attended the trading rendezvous at the base of the Black Hills (Tabeau in Abel 1939:151-153). Some of the tribes that Tabeau described as trading at the edge of the Black Hills, including the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Arikaras, constituted a trade block whose members stood together in competition to another alliance that joined the Mandans and Hidatsas with the Crows and then the Shoshones, Flatheads, and Nez Percé (Voget 2001:695-697; Hoxie 1995:31-46). In these long-distance trade chains, the horses, meat, and hides of the nomadic tribes were bartered against the corn and tobacco of the semisedentary villagers, who also traded guns and other commodities acquired from tribes with access to the commerce of the French and British farther east. The tribes in each trade chain generally cooperated with each other, while the tribes in opposing chains competed and sometimes fought one another over access to horses and European trade goods (Albers 1993:101-112).

Lewis and Clark described the Cheyennes’ territorial range as situated on both sides of the Black Hills along the two forks of the Cheyenne River (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:420-421), but, elsewhere, they reported that it also extended to the Big Horn Mountains (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:487-488). Zachary Gussow (1974:28) notes that the original map Lewis and Clark sent back, which first appeared in 1807, showed the Cheyennes and various Plains Apache groups encircling the Black Hills. The Cheyennes were clearly the largest of these tribal nations, with an estimated 110 lodges, while the combined figure for the rest was 50 lodges.

In his letters to George Hyde (1968), George Bent, the son of a trader and a Cheyenne woman, described how the Black Hills were the area in which the Cheyennes acquired horses from the Comanches, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches sometime between 1750 and 1775. He also indicated that this was the location where most of the Cheyennes gave up farming to pursue a lifestyle centered on horse-raising, hunting, and the procuring of wild plant foods. He related how tribal elders remembered the antelope pits they built at the headwaters of the Little Missouri River, and how they learned this technique from hunting from the Kiowas (Bent in Hyde 1968:17-21). It was in the country of the Black Hills that the Cheyennes became closely connected to the Arapahos, who remained their staunchest allies until their settlement on reservations (Bent in Hyde 1968: 21) and who joined them in wars against the Utes, Shoshones, and Crows that lasted until the reservation period (Moore, J.1987:115-116). It was here as well that much of their sacred knowledge was reconsecrated and tied to Bear Butte (Bent in Hyde 1968:61), which, according to Karl Schlesier (1987), had been their homeland in prehistoric times before they moved east for many centuries. However their prehistory is interpreted, it is clear that Bear Butte and the Black Hills became the center of their territory when most of them moved to this region in the last half of the mid-eighteenth century (Grinnell 1906:15, 1972:2:543; Powell 1969:4:467-469, 1982:2:4; Hoxie 1960:15; Schlesier 1974:4-6, 1987:54-55, 79-80; Moore, J. 1987; Moore, Liberty, and Straus 2001:863-864). It is also clear that they learned important sacred knowledge at Bear Butte from the Plains Apaches, three of whose women married Red Hat, an early Keeper of the Sacred Arrows, around 1780 (Ottaway 1970:94; Stands In Timber and Liberty 1967:242-244; Schukies 1993:187).

At the end of the eighteenth century, the Cheyennes were still allied with the Arapahos, Plains Apaches, and Kiowas, who often joined them on expeditions to trade at the Arikara villages. As Joseph Jablow (1951:58-59) rightly argues the Cheyennes had become a major middleman group in the region’s trade, linking the Missouri River villagers with the more nomadic populations living near the Black Hills. This is also the time we begin to get a glimpse of the complexity of the Cheyennes’ relations with the Lakotas.
The close association between the Cheyennes and Lakotas stretches back to the seventeenth century when they occupied adjacent territories in Minnesota and were considered a part of the same alliance formation. John Moore (1987:30-37) argues that a number of Cheyenne divisions, in particular the *Wotapio*, *Masikota*, *Totoimana* and *Omisis*, had Lakota and/or Dakota origins. Although one can certainly challenge some of the details in Moore’s reconstructions of Cheyenne band histories, there is no question that D/Lakota speaking peoples resided with the Cheyennes throughout much of their recorded history. Tribal elders told George Bent that the *Moiseyus*, people of mixed Sioux ancestry, accompanied the Cheyennes on their westerly migrations to the Missouri River and the Black Hills in the early eighteenth century (Bent in Hyde 1968:12-14). D/Lakota speakers, or Sioux as they were commonly called in early historic sources, were certainly reported west of the Missouri in the company of Cheyennes at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1794, Truteau (in Nasatir 1952:310) noted the presence of a Sioux village on the Cheyenne River next to a Cheyenne settlement, some of whose inhabitants had been murdered by a Cheyenne named The Lance. In 1795, Jacques Clamorgan requested medals for Arikaras, Mandans, Cheyennes, and for the Sioux who are living with the last named (*quote taken from* Hurt 1974:125).

Cheyenne oral traditions certainly support the fact that their relations with the Lakotas were uneven at this point in history. According to George Bird Grinnell (1956:36-37), when the Cheyennes occupied the Black Hills area and settled the upper reaches of the Cheyenne River, there were no Lakotas present. As small bands of Lakota began to make their way across the Missouri, moving their belongings on dog travois, the Cheyennes took pity on them and gave them horses. But sometime after 1780, when Lakota movements infringed on the territories of the Cheyennes’ allies, the Kiowas, war broke out and the Cheyennes appear to have been caught in the middle (Hyde 1937:24). Kiowa oral traditions reveal a great deal about their battles with the Lakotas (Mayhall 1971:30; Mooney 1979:156-157), although there is surprisingly little about these hostilities in Lakota winter counts for the same period. Since the Cheyennes depended on the Kiowas for horses, which they kept not only for themselves but also brokered to the Arikaras and Mandans in exchange for guns and other European trade goods, their relations with their Lakota relatives and friends must have been strained. Indeed, winter counts and oral traditions report a number of battles taking place between the Cheyennes and Lakotas, in this period, including one as far west as Rawhide Butte in Wyoming (Good in Mallery 1893:311; Hyde 1937:24; Howard, J. 1979:13; White Bull in Howard, J. 1998:11). These battles appear to have involved only some of the Lakotas because the Ben Kindred Winter Count indicates that the Cheyennes were aligned with the Soane Lakotas against the Oglalas and Sicangus (Beckwith, M. 1930:351), and this is also suggested in another source (Walker 1982:125). The fighting may well have involved only some of the Cheyennes too. Ironically, it was probably the Cheyenne *Wotapio* band, a group descended from intermarriages with Lakotas a century earlier, that became embroiled in this warfare: they were the ones who lived along the upper reaches of the White River and along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River, and they were the Cheyenne division who became intermarried and most closely allied with the Kiowas. Indeed, as their subsequent history indicates, many of them broke ranks with other Cheyennes and joined forces with the Kiowas, moving south of the Platte River at the dawn of the nineteenth century (Moore, J. 1987:218-225).

The other Cheyennes, including most of those from the ranks of the *Omisis* (with *Totoimana*, *Masikota*), *Sutaios*, and the *Tsistsistas* proper (with *Hisiometaneo*, *Heviksnipahis*, *Hevhaiteano*, *Ovimana* and *Hetametaneo*) tended to occupy the northern areas of the Hills and do not appear to have broken ranks with their Soane Lakota allies (Moore, J. 1987:229-234). Nonetheless, as George Hyde (1937:24) points out, the battles between the Lakotas and the Cheyennes were short-lived and a peace was reestablished between the two by 1810. At this point in history, the Cheyennes probably realized that they needed to rely on the Lakotas to help protect their ter-
ritorial and trade interests against the Crows, and there is considerable evidence in oral traditions and winter counts that the two were engaged in battles against the Crows north of the Black Hills after 1785.

**G. Poncas and Omahas**

The Omahas and Poncas were semihorticultural populations, who occupied village settlements along the lower stretches of the Missouri River in protohistoric times (O’Shea and Ludwickson 1992). These tribal nations were the first ones traders encountered as they entered the plains along the Missouri River. Their oral traditions reveal that they came from the Southeast, migrating to the central Plains by way of the Ohio River, across Iowa and Missouri, to their historic homelands in eastern South Dakota and adjoining areas of Nebraska (Howard, J. 1965a:14-15; Fletcher and La Flesche 1973:1:73-77; Wood 1993:79-80). From these traditions, we learn the Omahas and Poncas were forced out of western Iowa and Minnesota by the combined forces of Cheyennes and Dakotas, and for much of the early seventeenth century, they took up residence near the current site of Lake Andes where they received their sacred pole. Cheyenne oral traditions reveal they were aligned with Dakotas in this offensive war until a peace was made at the end of the seventeenth century (Fletcher and La Flesche 1973:1:73). During this time, the Cheyennes learned of the sacred pole that eventually became incorporated into their own Sun Dance (Schlesier 1987:75-76).

The combined forces of Omahas and Poncas traveled farther west to the valley of the White River where they built villages and hunted upstream in the years between 1730 and 1750. At this time, the Poncas moved even farther, following the Bad River to the country near the Black Hills, the place where they acquired horses from the Comanches (Howard, J. 1965a:7, 20-21, 130-133; Fletcher and La Flesche 1973:1:78-81, 102; Hurt 1974:86; Jablow 1974:92-93; Brown and Irwin 2001:416). During these decades, the Poncas appear to have intermarried with Arikaras and joined them on hunting expeditions into the Black Hills (Howard, J. 1965a:13). Indeed, archeological evidence from Nanza, the Ponca trading fort on the Missouri River, reveals the presence of Arikara-style pottery (Wood 1993:105). It was probably during these hunting excursions in the 1740s that the Poncas learned about Wind Cave and the little people who lived in the mountains (Howard, J. 1965a:20, 26). In later years, it was during these trips that they encountered the Kiowas, who fought them and forced them to retreat to the Missouri River where they built their fortified villages at the mouth of the Niobrara River (Hyde 1937:15; Hurt 1974:86).

Once again, tribal oral traditions closely match the written records. Some European maps from the early half of the eighteenth century locate the *Les Maha*, the Omahas, and the *Les Maha Nation errante*, referring to the Poncas, on the north side of the Missouri near present day Sioux City, Iowa and at the mouth of the Big Sioux River in South Dakota (Howard, J. 1965a:24; Wood 1993:80-86). When European traders began to arrive in the region during the 1790s, the Poncas were situated on Ponca Creek and at the mouth of the Niobrara (Nasatir 1929b: 535; Howard, J. 1965a:25; Wood 1993:83-89; Brown and Irwin 2001:416-417). Truteau, who wintered among the Poncas in 1794-1795, wrote that their main village was located about seven miles above the mouth of the Niobrara, and that they were middlemen carrying European goods north and west to other tribes, including the Arikaras (Howard, J.1965a: 25-26; Hurt 1974:107). Tabeau (in Abel 1939:99-101), who traded in the region between 1802 and 1804, wrote that the Poncas were ravaged by the smallpox epidemic that swept the area two decades earlier. As a result of their dwindling numbers, they were frequently preyed upon by the Lakotas/Dakotas and thus were required to retain a strong alliance with the Omahas.
On their ascent of the Missouri, Lewis and Clark stopped at Ponca Creek on September 5, 1804 but found the Poncas’ village deserted because the tribe was away hunting buffalo (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:49-50). In their entry for this date and in the Statistical View section, Clark wrote that their numbers had significantly declined from the ravages of smallpox. He estimated their former strength was 400 men, while their present numbers were reduced to no more than 50 men. He also wrote that Poncas joined forces with Omahas on hunting excursions to the upper reaches of the Loup and Niobrara rivers, suggesting that their hunting grounds were much farther south now (Clark in Moulton 1983:3: 50-51, 399-400).

H. Arikaras and Pawnees

Like the Poncas with whom they had once intermarried, the Arikaras were devastated by the smallpox epidemics of the late eighteenth century. After they separated from their Pawnee relatives, migrating north and establishing villages on the Missouri around 1300 A.D., they became a powerful tribal nation with more than thirty-two different settlements scattered along the Missouri from the mouth of the Niobrara to the Grand River. Until the 1780s, their geographic locations, fortified villages, and large numbers made them largely invincible against the periodic attacks of their Sioux-speaking neighbors to the east (Parks 2001a:366-367). As Joseph Jablow (1951:52-56) astutely argued, the Arikaras tolerated the thievery of the Sioux because they were the principal source of trade goods before European traders set up their commerce at the Arikara villages.

From various tribal oral traditions, especially those of the Kiowas and Cheyennes, we know the Arikaras were major trade partners of these tribes. They were a tribe with whom both had extensive ties of intermarriage (Moore, J. 1987:100-102). Indeed, one of the Kiowa divisions, K at a [Bitters], was given the same name as the Arikaras (Mooney 1979:228). In their early years of trade with these two tribes, the Arikaras supplied corn and other agricultural products in exchange for meat and hides, but as the eighteenth century progressed, more and more products of European origin entered the trade and the Arikara villages became a hub of commerce where horses and Spanish trade goods from the Southwest were exchanged for guns and other commodities of British and French manufacture coming from the East (Parks 2001a:370-371).

One of the first reports of an Arikara presence on the Missouri comes from the writings of Bourgmont, who, in 1718, identified some of their numbers in the neighborhood of the Niobrara River (Hurt 1974: 85; Norall 1988:123; Parks 2001a:366). The Delisle Map from the same year places them near the James and Vermillion Rivers, but according to Wesley Hurt (1974:86), there is no evidence that they ever occupied this location, suggesting that the French still had no direct contact with them. In the 1730s and 1740s, other records reveal that the Arikaras were some distance above the Omahas on the Missouri, but that they visited with their relatives, the Pani-Maha (Skidi Pawnee), then located on the Loup River, with some degree of regularity (Hyde 1951:83-86; Parks 2001a:366). Melbom Thurman s (1988:435-441) careful interpretation of early maps of the Missouri River suggests that the Arikaras may have occupied a number of separate locations during the eighteenth century, either simultaneously or at different times. The history of their settlements on the Missouri has been substantiated by extensive, twentieth-century archaeological research, revealing that the early eighteenth-century stronghold of Arikara settlement was situated on both sides of the Missouri between the Cheyenne and Bad Rivers (Lehmar 2001:245-255).

It was at their locations along the Missouri River, as reported earlier, that various tribes from the Black Hills regularly came to barter with the Arikaras. The Arikaras, however, traveled to the
foot of the Black Hills as well, not only to trade but also to conduct their annual bison hunts. In 1742, the La Verendrye brothers met two groups, one of which, the *Gens de la Belle Riviere*, was probably in a winter hunting camp (Parks 2001a:967-968). The other group, *Gens de la Riviere Cherise*, was hunting in the neighborhood of Cherry Creek; the La Verendryes returned with them to the Missouri, where some of their villages were still located near the mouth of the Bad River (Smith, H. 1980:111-113). Victor Collot's map of 1796 also shows them on the upper reaches of the White River at this time (Hyde 1951:40-41; Wood 2003:50).

The Arikaras’ strong position in the intertribal trade stayed in place until the smallpox epidemic of 1781 killed well over half of their population and seriously impaired the rest. When French traders from Spanish Louisiana first arrived in the area and set up trading posts at the Arikara villages, they described what had befallen the Arikaras and the tragic consequences this was having on their ability to defend themselves against the rising tide of Lakotas moving to the Missouri from locations farther east (Truteau in Nasatir 1952:300-301). Indeed, Hyde (1937:20-21) argued that the 1781 smallpox epidemic on the Missouri was a turning point in the western migrations of the Lakotas. With village populations such as the Arikaras and Poncas unable to fend them off as they had in the past, the Lakotas began to have unobstructed access to many crossing points along the Missouri and used these to reach hunting grounds that eventually took them to the Black Hills.

From the 1750s to the 1780s, Spanish records describe the Arikaras as a large population with seven villages, located some distance above the Omahas on the Missouri River (Hurt 1974:83, 96). When Truteau arrived at their settlement near the Cheyenne River in 1794 (also situated at this location on Collot’s 1796 map), he reported that only two villages remained (in Nasatir 1952:300-301). At these villages, some of the Lakotas had settled and taken up farming, but many more came simply to trade. Many Lakotas also used this location to cross the Missouri to reach hunting grounds along the Cheyenne River. Some of the Lakotas who arrived at the Arikara settlements clearly came in peace, but Truteau (in Nasatir 1952:310-311) notes that others took advantage of the situation to raid Arikara horse stocks.

When Tabeau lived among the Arikaras, from 1802 to 1804, they had abandoned their settlements at the mouth of the Cheyenne River and lived exclusively in the vicinity of the Grand River. As already noted, he wrote about their strong alliances with the Cheyennes and other tribes who lived in the neighborhood of the Black Hills. He also described their relations with the Dakotas and Lakotas, some of whom came to the Arikara villages to trade from areas as far east as the Minnesota River. Their ties to these tribes were more mixed, and as revealed by other traders, they vacillated between periods of peaceful co-residency and trade to times of raiding and pillaging (Tabeau in Abel 1939:131). The Arikaras, however, were clearly at war with the Crows, a hostility that the Cheyennes and Lakotas quickly took up as their hunting ranges extended into Crow territory. They were hostile to the Mandans and the Hidatsas, who at this point in history still posed a major competitive threat to the long-distance trade chain in which the Arikaras were located (Tabeau in Abel 1939:132; Jablow 1951:51, 56-58). In this situation, the Cheyennes tended to remain neutral, although the Lakotas and Dakotas often sided with the Arikaras in their battles with the Mandans and Hidatsas. When Lewis and Clark passed the mouth of the Cheyenne River on October 1, 1804, the Arikaras’ former villages remained abandoned. The Arikaras were now concentrated in three villages: one located on Ashley Island above the mouth of the Grand River, where Tabeau lived, and the other two on the west bank by Oak Creek (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:400-401).

The Arikaras’ relatives, the Pawnees and Skidi Pawnees, appear to have had little connection to the Black Hills other than as a location to raid their enemies (Hyde 1951:145-147). These
populations occupied village locations along the Republican River, the central portions of the Platte, and the upper reaches of the Loup Fork (Parks 2001c:515). Their annual buffalo hunts took them west towards the Rocky Mountains, but their long history of hostility with the Padoucas, followed by the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Arapahos, and then by the Cheyennes and Lakotas probably prevented them from reaching the Black Hills except on military forays (Hyde 1951:39-82). Also, according to Douglas Parks and Waldo Wedel (1985) in their study of Pawnee sacred geography, most of the sites of religious significance to them were located in central Nebraska.

I. Mandans and Hidatsas

Farther north on the Missouri River, above the Arikara settlements, Lewis and Clark arrived at the Heart River villages of the Mandans, where they remained over the winter of 1804-05. The Mandans were another population of semihorticulturalists who, along with the Hidatsas, their northern neighbors on the Knife River, lived in large fortified villages. Of the two populations, the Mandans had the longest history of occupation on the Missouri River and lived there well before either the Hidatsu proper or their close relatives, the Awaxawi, arrived (Stewart, F. 2001; Wood and Irwin 2001).

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Mandans and Hidatsas maintained regular and friendly contacts with many of the tribes in the region, including the Cheyennes, Crows, Kiowas (with Witapahas), Plains Apaches, and Arapahos, all of whom traveled to their villages on the Missouri to trade (Henry in Coues, 1965: 1:383-384; Lewis and Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:401-403; Laroque in Wood and Thiessen 1985:156-220). There is also evidence that Mandans and Hidatsas met the Cheyennes and other tribes to trade in regions south of their villages toward the Black Hills (McKenzie in Wood and Thiessen 1985:280-281), and that some established winter villages on tributaries of the Missouri River, perhaps as far south as the Cheyenne River (Bowers 1963:48-50).

The Mandans and Hidatsas appear to have taken their annual bison hunts towards the Black Hills, probably along the Little Missouri River (Bowers 1963:51; Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:234). In later years, Maximilian, Prince of Wied (in Thwaites 1966:2:346-347), reported that the Black Hills were considered a prime location for hunting elk and bighorn sheep, while Alfred Bowers (1950:210) reported the Hills as a location for eagle-trapping. Again, much of this hunting appears to have taken place on the northern peripheries of the Hills (Bowers 1963:49). There is no evidence that these tribal nations were in areas of the southern Black Hills where the Arikaras and the Poncas took their annual hunts, even though they reached this area on raiding expeditions (Bowers 1963:238, 259). Also, ancestors of the Mandans may very well have occupied some of the prehistoric horticultural settlements along the Cheyenne River at the foot of the Black Hills (Schlesier 1994:342-344). In earlier times, it is probable that the Mandan had a much closer relationship to the Black Hills area because one of their oral traditions refers to Bear Butte and the pilgrimages the tribe once made to this sacred landmark (Rosen 1895:54). By the time of the La Verendrye brothers, however, we get the distinct impression that the two Mandan guides who accompanied them were not comfortable in areas far beyond the Missouri.

The Hidatsas, strong allies of the Crows and Shoshones, were part of a trading block that stood in competition with the one connecting the Arikaras to the Cheyennes. The Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Arapahos appear to have divided their trade allegiances between the Crows and Arikaras (Jablow 1951:51), a fact that may explain some of the early intertribal hostilities among some of these tribes. Even though the eighteenth century Kiowas and Arapahos who lived in the
Black Hills were reported to maintain contact with the Hidatsas and Crows, these associations were diminishing as the Cheyennes and later the Lakotas, both bitter enemies of the Crows, dominated regions bordering Crow and Hidatsa territories (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:426-428).7

J. Lakotas (or Teton/Western Sioux) and Dakotas (Eastern Sioux)

The Lakotas (also known as the Teton Sioux), along with some of the Dakotas -- mostly Yanktons, Yankonnais, and Sissetons, certainly reached the Missouri River early in the eighteenth century from their primary settlements in Minnesota and adjoining regions of eastern South Dakota. Their winter counts list scores of horse raiding expeditions against the Arikaras, Hidatsas, Mandans, Omahas, and even the Crows and Shoshones far to the west beyond the Missouri River in the eighteenth century (Hurt, 1974:85; Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930:351-353). In 1738, the La Verendryes reported Dakotan peoples making raids on the Mandan villages (Hurt 1974:88). If these raids followed patterns described at the end of the century, they were probably associated with peaceful trade encounters as well. Notwithstanding frequent forays to raid and possibly trade on the Missouri, there is no question that, before 1760, the winter settlements and hunting grounds of the main body of Lakotas were still far east of the Missouri in regions near Lake Traverse and Big Stone Lake in Minnesota.

In one oral tradition recounted by Nicholas Black Elk to John Niehardt in December of 1944 (DeMallie 1984:307-316), the Lakotas, along with their Cheyenne and Arapaho allies, lived to the south near a big water where a man named Slow Buffalo led them. At this time, they had already learned to make fire from the yucca plant, they had knowledge of the bow and arrow given to them at the Race Track in the Black Hills, and they also had knives and slingshots (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:311). At a great council led by Slow Buffalo, the seven divisions of the tribe were sent out to live at different corners of the earth (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:309). In these travels, they stuck together with the Cheyennes and Arapahos. The Cheyennes went south and west to find horses. As Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:314) states:

The Cheyennes, the ones that went toward where the sun goes down, came as far as the Black Hills. There was another tribe that grew from this band, and they called them the Island Hill [Witapaha, Kiowas], by which I think they meant [that] the Sioux called the Black Hills at that time the Island Hills. Soon another tribe derived from the band and called themselves Island Hills. They are the ones who traveled back to the south, and there they ran into the horse.

Eventually, the Cheyennes met the Lakotas and gave them horses in exchange for bows, arrows, and other valued objects (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:315). When the Cheyennes and the Lakotas began to fight, the Lakotas got their horses from the Arapahos, who also remembered the story of Slow Buffalo, and like the Lakotas, they too received a pipe (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:315-316). From Black Elk’s narrative, it is clear that these tribes were close allies, even though hostilities erupted for a time between segments of the Lakotas and the Cheyennes.

Another story of how the Lakotas acquired horses was told by an Oglala man named Left-Hand to Ella Deloria (Howard, J. 1980:20-21). It tells how two Lakotas were scouting for bison

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7 In light of this, it is important to point out that in contrast to the Cheyennes and Lakotas, whose sacred landscape became centered around the Black Hills in the nineteenth century, most of the Mandan and Hidatsa’s origin stories and sacred sites were located in the Killdeer Mountains and at higher elevation buttes along the Little Missouri River (Bowers 1963:12). Much of the Crows’ sacred landscape became attached to the Big Horn-Pryor Mountain region (Nabokov and Loendorf 1994).
and got trapped on the west side of the Missouri River because the ice broke up. Unable to return to the other side, they traveled upland where they met two men on horses who were Cheyennes. The Cheyennes took them to their large camp on the White River, treated them generously, and gave them horses. There is also an entry in Battiste Good’s winter count (Mallery 1893:296-297) which reveals that the Sioux may have acquired horses from the Omahas and Poncas even earlier.

According to George Hyde (1937:15,18), Lakotas and Dakotas began to permanently stay on the Missouri River sometime around 1760 in small groups with few horses. Some of them, notably the Yanktons, lived amidst the Ponca in villages where they planted corn and other crops (Howard, J. 1980:11). Others, including some of the Oglalas and, later, the Minneconjous, settled among the Arikaras and also farmed (Tabeau in Abel 1939:104; Howard, J. 1980:21). The vast majority, however, did not take up horticulture and retained a more nomadic lifestyle. Their westerly movements in this and subsequent decades, as Gary Anderson (1980) argues, were stimulated as much by access to horses, new trading opportunities, and more favorable hunting grounds as they were by pressures coming from their Ojibwe enemies to the east.

Whatever the exact date of their entry into the country adjoining the Missouri River, it is clear from a letter written by Miro that the Lakotas had become the dominant group on the east bank of this river by 1785 (Nasatir 1929b:535). There is no question that their dominance was secured by the losses the village tribes sustained in the aftermath of the 1781 smallpox epidemic, which was also reported in Lakota winter counts (Good in Mallery 1893:313; High Hawk in Curtis 1907-30:3:168; Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930:353; White Bull in Howard, J. 1968:9; No Ears, Short Man, and Iron Crow in Walker 1982:127). The declines suffered by the villagers gave the Lakotas an opportunity to cross the Missouri unimpeded and to establish settlement areas along its various western tributaries. Initially, the Lakotas used the White, Bad, and Cheyenne rivers to penetrate the plains beyond the Missouri, but, later, they followed the Moreau and Grand rivers as well (Hyde 1937:20-21; DeMallie 2001a:731). It was not until the following decade, however, that a more precise picture of Lakota locations and movements emerges.

As the larger body of Lakotas moved towards the Missouri in the 1760s, smaller groups were probably already crossing the river and beginning to travel towards the Black Hills (Vestal 1934:260; Ewers 1938:5). The Ben Kindred Winter Count reports Lakotas securing shells from the Platte River for making knives and also mentions numerous raids against the Shoshones and the Crows between 1760 and 1830 (Beckwith, M. 1930:351-354). In addition, they must have retained some memory, and even some connection, with their relatives among the Cheyennes who lived near them in the seventeenth century and who had crossed the Missouri decades earlier.

The first written evidence of the Lakotas arrival in the Black Hills, however, does not appear until 1775-1776, when a man named Stands Upright Bull was reported on the winter counts of American Horse and Cloud Shield to have returned to camp with a bough of hante, or cedar, from the enemy country (American Horse and Cloud Shield in Mallery 1987:130,131), or 1777-1778 in White Bull’s count (in Howard, J. 1968:8). Other winter counts report a similar incident that took place a decade later (Good in Mallery 1893:309; High Hawk in Curtis 1907-30:3:168; Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930:354; Red Horse Owner in Karol 1969:59; No Ears, Short Man, and Iron Crow in Walker 1982:127; American Horse and Cloud-Shield in Mallery 1987:130-131). One historian, James Hanson (1983:32), regards 1775 as the earliest possible date the Lakotas were ever present in the Black Hills, but it can be argued that this date simply marked one of many Lakota excursions into the Hills region (Feraca and Howard, J. 1963:8). Judging by the date, this event may have signified the victorious return of a war party that waged a battle where one of the divisions of the Kiowas was nearly exterminated. John Ewers (1938:5) suggests that the Lakotas entered the Black Hills country earlier, around 1765, and Cheyenne oral
traditions lend support to this. For if the Lakotas were approaching the Black Hills with dog travois rather than horses, as the Cheyenne stories tell us, this would predate 1775 by several decades. In fact, the trader, Peter Pond (in Gates 1965:57-58), reports that the Lakotas, or western Sioux, were already well stocked with horses in 1774. Writings from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century (Larson 1997:25-27; DeMallie 2001b:725-727) suggest that the Lakotas were ranging widely on the prairies west of Minnesota, and prehistoric evidence from South Dakota suggests their early presence there as well (Michlovic 1985; Sundstrom, L. 1990:268-269; Gibbon 2003: 41-42).

George Hyde (1937:23) believed the Oglalas were already established in the Black Hills by the 1790s, the time when the Kiowas retreated from their locations on the Cheyenne River because of their warfare with the Lakotas. It is difficult to know exactly how far west Lakota settlements reached beyond the Missouri because most of the information for this period comes from traders who never entered the Black Hills. What can be established from the accounts of traders in the 1790s is that Lakota bands were making inroads along the lower reaches of a number of Missouri River tributaries, including the White, Bad, Cheyenne, Moreau, and Grand Rivers. Truteau (in Nasatir 1952:2:310-311), for one, reported several instances where Lakotas were encamped with Cheyennes or Arikaras. Some of the Lakota winter counts also call attention to this co-residency (Good in Mallery 1893:101-103). In reference to the Bad River, Truteau (in Nasatir 1952:2:379) wrote that the Oconona (Oglalas) wandered habitually along the banks of this stream. McKay and Evans encountered a band of Lakota buffalo hunters on the White River (Nasatir 1952:1:99), and as already noted, Clamorgan requested medals for the Sioux who lived among the Cheyennes (Hurt 1974:125). If some Lakotas were residing with the Cheyennes, they probably covered the same country, which, at this time, most certainly included the Black Hills.

Even though some Lakotas were living among the Cheyennes, or, at the very least, sharing the same territorial range, relations between the two tribes began to deteriorate as larger numbers of Lakotas moved west of the Missouri (Hyde 1937:17, 24). In the last decades of the eighteenth century, hostilities broke out between the two and major battles were reported near Rawhide Creek in Wyoming in 1785-1786 and then again in 1793-1794 (Good in Mallery 1893:313; High Hawk in Curtis 1907-1930:3:169). It was during these years that the Cheyennes got caught in the middle of the hostilities between their Kiowa and Plains Apache allies on one side and the Lakotas on the other. But, as pointed out earlier, the Lakotas did not stand united in these hostilities because some of the northern Soane divisions remained staunch allies of the Cheyennes (Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930:351; No Ears, Short Man, and Iron Crow in Walker 1982:125). According to Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:314), it was the Oglalas who broke off relations with the Cheyennes and became allies of the Arapahos.

At the end of the eighteenth century, the Black Hills remained at the western edge of the Lakotas’ territorial range. Most of the Lakota bands who were beginning to live along the White, Bad, and Cheyenne rivers kept their main winter camps along the lower stretches of these waterways (Hurt 1974:173-174). At this time, many Lakotas most certainly traveled to the upper regions of these tributaries to hunt in the late summer and fall for reasons discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven (Larson 1997:23). A decade later, according to Tabeau’s account (in Abel 1939: 107), the Sicangus, Oglalas, and Soanes had become firmly established on some of the Missouri’s western tributaries, and a few of their camps were already as far west as the forks where the Cheyenne River divides into its north and south branches. At the same time, he listed the major divisions and subdivisions of the Lakota, which included: Sitcanrhou-Titons (Sicangu), Okondanas (Oglala), Minekanhini-yojou (Minnieconjou), and Saones-Titons (Soane) (Tabeau in Abel 1939:103-104). He also reported that none of the Lakotas who were associated with the
Arikaras farmed any longer. All of the bands had horses, depended largely on buffalo and wild plant foods, and traveled over large geographic areas (Tabeau in Abel 1939:103-104).

Some Lakota bands also played a middleman role, bringing horses and other goods from the Missouri to their Minnesota Dakota relatives in exchange for European trade goods. In the late eighteenth century, Lac Qui Parle in Minnesota was the location of trade fairs between the eastern and western branches of the Sioux. In later decades, after the Lakotas acquired horses and moved farther west, these gatherings shifted to a location along the James River in eastern South Dakota (Tabeau in Abel 1939:121-122; Hyde 1937:20-21; Ewers 1938:24-25; Robinson 1967:25; Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:356). According to Hyde (1961:15-16), the site was called *Otuhu Oji* (Oak Grove), and it was situated on the James River due east of the mouth of the Cheyenne. This area persisted as a trade center well into the nineteenth century but began to diminish in the 1830s after the Lakotas became well established in the Black Hills (Hyde 1961:15-16).

When Lewis and Clark came up the Missouri in 1804, the Lakotas were reported on both sides of the river from the Big Bend near present day Chamberlain, South Dakota to a point just south of the Cannonball River in North Dakota. Even more specifically, the Sicangus were located on both sides of the Missouri at the Bad and White Rivers, while the Oglalas were placed near the Cheyenne River and the Minneconjous at the Moreau River. The Sicas, including the Sicaspas and the Hunkpapas, were situated along the Grand River and at locations farther north interspersed with Arikara hunting camps (Moulton 1983-87:3:27-33,415-419). Within a time span of no more than three decades, the demography of this section of the Missouri River valley had changed, shifting from an area dominated by Arikaras, with a substantial number of Cheyennes and a small Lakota presence, to a region where the Lakotas were the dominant population, with a small group of Arikaras and a few Cheyennes in their midst. Farther west, the distribution of populations had also shifted since 1794, when Truteau's account offered the first detailed evidence on the subject. The territorial range of the Lakotas now extended to the eastern edge of the Black Hills, overlapping areas occupied by Cheyennes, whose territorial range, in turn, now stretched beyond the Hills to the Platte River, reaching areas once dominated by the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Arapahos.

As these changes were taking place, Lakota hostilities with the Kiowas continued unabated, and their wars with the Crows and Shoshones intensified (High Hawk in Curtis 1907-30:3:169; Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930:351-354). In the coming decades, it was along the Crow battlefront that the Lakotas would eventually realign themselves with the Cheyennes and intensify their alliances with the Arapahos. Their conflicts with the Mandans and Hidatsas began to escalate as well, placing the Arikaras in an untenable position that would soon force them to leave the Missouri and seek refuge among their Pawnee relatives on the Platte. Indeed, when the Lewis and Clark Expedition returned to the area in 1806, Clark reported the fighting had already begun and a large force of 700 Sioux warriors were moving north from the Arikara villages to fight the Mandan (Clark in Moulton 1983-87: 4:201-202).

Prior to 1790, it is doubtful that the Lakotas maintained a large, permanent presence in the Black Hills region. It is certain, however, that small Lakota raiding and hunting parties were in the vicinity of the Hills with some degree of frequency and that their activity in the region was a prelude to the larger population movements that would follow. It is very likely that, in keeping with the custom of the tribal nations who lived along the Missouri River, they frequented the Black Hills on a regular and recurring basis during the seasons of their large communal bison hunts. It is also highly probable that small numbers of Lakotas, especially from the ranks of the Oglalas and Sicangus, started to remain in reach of the Black Hills and near the region of Wind Cave National Park well before 1800, but they would have done so in the company of allies.
among the Arapahos and/or Cheyennes. By the turn of the nineteenth century, however, they were staking their claims to these areas independently and in growing numbers (Hyde 1961:14).

III. WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK IN REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

From the time of the La Verendrye expedition in 1742 to the arrival of Lewis and Clark in 1804, the movements of tribal nations in and around the Black Hills underwent considerable change. The history of their tribal occupancy during these years is complex and at times confusing. One thing is clear, however: the Hills were never exclusively occupied by any single tribe. Instead, the tribal nations who entered, held, used, and defended large tracks of territory in and around the Black Hills did so in association with other tribes. In describing the tribal nations who occupied the Black Hills at the turn of the nineteenth century, Lewis and Clark (Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:422) wrote that these populations did not have any idea of exclusive right to the soil, which means that there were no geographic boundaries separating the territories they traveled. This lack of territorial exclusiveness was very common in the Plains region, and contrary to the conventional image of tribes being dispersed across the landscape like separate pieces in a jigsaw puzzle, populations of diverse ethnic origin were generally not separated by distinct territories but were interspersed over the same territorial ranges (Albers and Kay 1987; Binnema 2001). Territorial sharing went hand-in-hand with collaborations in trade and war.

This was no doubt true as well for the tribal nations who were occupying lands at or in the vicinity of Wind Cave National Park. There are no direct historical data on the nature of tribal use and occupancy in Wind Cave National Park during the protohistoric and early historic eras, although there is plenty of circumstantial evidence to reconstruct a probable, albeit very general, picture of tribal affiliations in this area. What can be pieced together from archaeological evidence, historic writings, winter counts, and tribal oral traditions reveals that peoples from at least nine different tribal nations lived at different moments in time in areas within easy reach of present-day park lands and probably used the area for seasonal settlement, food procural, and religious observance.

A. 1742-1781

During the middle decades of the eighteenth century, the Black Hills were probably held by tribal nations who comprised two separate, and, at times, warring, political blocs. One was situated on the northern and northwestern edge of the Hills and comprised primarily of Crows, Kiowas, Plains (Kiowa) Apaches, and Arapahos, who maintained important trade relations with the large and powerful village populations, the Mandans and Hidatsas. Another was centered on the southern and southeastern margins of the Hills and formed around Padouca Apaches and Comanches, who maintained important trade ties with the Poncas. The alliances of these three tribes with the Arikaras appear to have shifted because early reports indicate they were carrying on a trade with the Padoucas and Poncas, while later accounts suggest that these tribes were enemies (Hyde 1951:39-83). Whatever the case may have been, it is clear that, in later periods, the Arikaras were situated in a trade sphere that included the Kiowas, Plains (Kiowa) Apaches, and Arapahos.

A strong case can be made for the presence of Apachean-speaking peoples, commonly known as the Padoucas, in the vicinity of Wind Cave National Park from the sixteenth through the early eighteenth century. For reasons that are not at all clear, the Padoucas' powerful presence in the region was destroyed, leading them to abandon the area or join forces with other tribes,
including some of their erstwhile enemies. Their disappearance as a separate and identifiable tribal nation by the end of the nineteenth century may have been a consequence of the disease epidemics sweeping the area, something that certainly played a role in the well-documented declines of Arikara and Ponca populations. As these tribes sustained huge population losses, other tribes began to enter and jostle for control of their territories.

Less solid but highly suggestive information lends support to the claim that some Comanches may have lived and traveled in this area at the same time too, although most of the population was probably in regions farther west. A few bands of Comanche apparently remained on the southern fringes of the Black Hills until the late eighteenth century, even though the main body of the tribe had migrated south to Texas and Oklahoma along the eastern flanks of the Rockies. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, most of the Padoucas and Comanches had disappeared from this region, although some appear to have remained as small remnant populations who became incorporated into other tribal bodies.

Sometime after the 1760s, much of the territory between the southern Black Hills and the Platte River became home to a large segment of the Kiowas as well as some Arapahos, Plains Apaches, and smaller numbers of allied Crows who lived in their midst. At this time, the Arapahos and Kiowas moved their territorial ranges farther south, taking up settlements on the southern side of the Hills, where Wind Cave National Park is located. In the process, they not only pushed out or absorbed the populations of Padoucas and Comanches who may have remained there, but they also prevented tribes like the Poncas from accessing their hunting grounds near the Black Hills. As these tribes began to inhabit the southern reaches of the Black Hills, the Cheyennes and their Sutaio allies were taking their annual hunts to the Black Hills and moving some of their settlements away from the Missouri River. Tribal oral traditions place the Cheyennes on the upper reaches of the White River and along the South Fork of the Cheyenne, both of which are locations within easy reach of the Buffalo Gap and Wind Cave National Park. The Cheyennes had close and friendly trade connections with the Kiowas, Arapahos, and Plains Apaches, but like their Arikara friends, they were not on good terms with the Crows. It is very likely that the Wotapio Cheyennes aligned themselves at this time with some of the Kiowas and took up residence along the upper reaches of the White River and the South Fork of the Cheyenne. It is also probable that the Sutaio and the Omisis Cheyennes began to penetrate areas along the northern edge of the Hills, where they became closely connected to the Plains (Kiowa) Apaches and Arapahos. The main body of Cheyennes and their related bands also started to move away from the Missouri and established some of their principal settlements near the forks of the Cheyenne River, an area also reputed to be a location for some of the Arapahos and Plains Apaches as late as the 1790s. Following rapidly in the footsteps of the Cheyennes were small groups of Lakotas who were beginning to gradually make their way into areas west of the Missouri River. The Oglala and Sicangu Lakotas pushed their movements towards the territories of the Wotapio Cheyennes and their Kiowa allies in the southern Hills, while some of the Minneconjou and Itazipco Lakotas pressed their migrations along the Cheyenne River in areas dominated by Cheyennes.

Until 1781, the Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, and Ponca villages were large and well-defended trading centers on the Missouri River. These tribes were able to control the distribution of trade commodities, preventing tribes on either side from crossing the river and bypassing their advantageous geographic positions. These groups spent the greater part of the year at their village locations on the Missouri, but in the summer and fall, they abandoned them for extended periods to hunt buffalo, especially on ranges west of the river. Two of these horticultural populations, the Arikaras and the Poncas, took their hunts to the eastern and southern margins of the Black Hills.
Although there are no written accounts of Arikaras establishing camps in or near the southeastern Hills, there is ceramic evidence of their seasonal presence in the archaeological record. There are written accounts and oral traditions, however, to place the Poncas here, a tribe who used this area as a bison hunting ground during the middle decades of the eighteenth century and even had a name in their language for Wind Cave. When Ponca and Arikara numbers were drastically reduced after smallpox epidemics swept their villages, they were unable to launch these expeditions and move unaccompanied into areas dominated by enemy tribes. In the case of the Poncas, their foes were Kiowas; for the Arikaras, they were the Crows. The Poncas ultimately abandoned the area in the face of rising hostilities with the Kiowas. In time, the Arikaras aligned themselves with the Cheyennes, who served as a go-between in their peaceful encounters with distant tribes such as the Kiowas and who also became the Arikaras' allies in wars against the Crows. Neither the Poncas nor the Arikaras, however, were able to maintain their positions against the rising tide of Lakotas and Dakotas, who were now moving out of Minnesota in increasing numbers to reach locations near and beyond the valley of the Missouri River.

B. 1782-1806

After the 1781 smallpox epidemic decimated the semihorticultural populations who lived along the Missouri River, the Lakotas were able to cross the Missouri without obstruction and establish themselves along some of the major tributary streams that flowed from locations in and around the Black Hills. In the 1790s, some of them were reported at sites west of the Missouri, sometimes in the company of Cheyennes. Although Cheyennes still occupied villages near the Missouri, and apparently did so until the 1830s, the main tribal body was now firmly established in settlements near the forks of the Cheyenne River and at locations surrounding the Black Hills. From this strategic location, they played a central role in the trade of horses from the west against European trade goods coming from locations along the Missouri River (Jablow 1951).

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when the Oglala and Sicangu Lakotas began to push their territorial reach towards the Black Hills along the tributaries of the White and Bad rivers, they came into conflict with the Kiowas. These hostilities engulfed some of the Crows too, and many of the battles the Lakotas fought against these two tribes are reported to have taken place at locations near Wind Cave National Park on the southern edge of the Black Hills in the vicinity of the Buffalo Gap and Battle Mountain. The Arapahos, who occupied this area as well, appear to have remained neutral in these struggles, while some of the Cheyennes aligned themselves, at least initially, with the Kiowas. This alliance was short-lived, however, and by 1810, some of the Cheyennes and Arapahos were fighting on the side of the Lakotas against the Kiowas. But other Cheyennes and Arapahos were neutral and continued to trade with the Kiowas and their Apache and Comanche allies. Eventually the Kiowas were routed from their locations at the southern edge of the Black Hills, and by the first decade of the nineteenth century, they had moved well south of the Platte River.

By the start of the nineteenth century, the Kiowas and some of their Apache and Comanche allies were beginning to push their settlements even farther south and out of reach of the Black Hills. Their southerly movements were the result of many factors beyond the threat of the Lakotas who were now penetrating the upper reaches of the White and Bad Rivers on the eastern edge of the Black Hills. One of the primary incentives for the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Comanches to move south was better pasturage for their rapidly expanding horse herds. Another was the emergence of direct and more stable opportunities for trade with European Americans who were starting to build posts on the upper reaches of the Platte and Arkansas rivers. Whatever the reasons, we find little evidence of a Kiowa, Plains Apache, or Comanche presence in the Black
Hills after 1805, and when these tribes occasionally appear, it is usually in the context of trading or raiding. By the late eighteenth century, the Kiowas and their Plains Apache and Comanche friends had formed a major alliance bloc, whose members regularly traveled as far as Oklahoma and Texas to secure horses to trade with the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Arikaras at locations along the foot of the Black Hills. Places such as Bear Butte, Horse Creek [a tributary of the Platte near Fort Laramie], and French Creek were well-known rendezvous points for this trade. Horse Creek remained an important trading location well into the nineteenth century, but Bear Butte and French Creek were no longer major trade sites for the Kiowas or Plains Apaches after 1807.

As the Kiowas pushed south, they became ever more removed from their long-standing and close friends, the Crows. Distance was not the only thing that separated the two: a wedge had now been driven between them as the Cheyennes and later the Lakotas took control of lands the Kiowas and Crows once shared and freely traveled. By 1804, when Lewis and Clark reported on the tribal occupation of the area, the Black Hills were held and completely surrounded by the Cheyennes with small numbers of Plains Apaches and Arapahos in their midst. At this point in time, most of the Arapahos and Plains Apaches had moved to the western side of the Hills and to locations along the Platte River and beyond. Small numbers of Lakotas probably lived among the Cheyennes on the eastern side of the Black Hills, although most historic documents for this period place them at locations closer to the Missouri River.

Once the Cheyennes control of the area between the Missouri and the Black Hills strengthened, they became major competitors and enemies of the Crows, who were long-standing rivals of the Cheyennes trade associates, the Arikaras. In their wars with the Crows, the Cheyennes called into play not only their strong links with the Arapahos but also their ties with the Lakotas, who were now moving in ever larger numbers into areas occupied by the Cheyennes. Along the Cheyenne River and the northern flanks of the Black Hills, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos peacefully shared and co-occupied a huge tract of territory, which became even larger when the combined forces of these three tribes were able to successfully penetrate lands held by the Crows northwest of the Hills.

Meanwhile, along the southern flanks of the Black Hills, the relations between the Cheyennes and Lakotas were not so peaceful. The Cheyennes and Arapahos who settled in this area appear to have been caught in the middle of the heated and growing war between the Lakotas and the Kiowas. Indeed, some of the battles may have been fought at locations immediately to the south of Wind Cave National Park. Local historians commonly tell stories about a fight between the Lakotas and Cheyennes at Battle Mountain. The source of this information is unclear, for there is no evidence of a battle having taken place here either in written records or in tribal winter counts and oral traditions. In the battles reported in the historical record, some of the Cheyennes (probably Wotapios) seem to have sided, at least initially, with the Kiowas, but eventually, they made peace with the Lakotas with whom they shared common genealogical ties. This warfare illustrates an important fact: the bands that shared the same tribal identity were not always united in their relationships with other tribes. Even at this early date, there were hints of fractures within their ranks, fissions that would lead in later decades to the division of the Cheyennes and Arapahos into northern and southern branches.

It is clear that in the first decade of the nineteenth century, when Lewis and Clark wrote about the locations of tribes in the region, the lands between the forks of the Cheyenne River and the
FIGURE 3. Probable Tribal Locations, circa-1795*

Arikara □ □ □ □ □ Arapaho □ □ □ □ □ Cheyenne □ □ □ □ □
Hidtasa □ □ □ □ □ Comanche □ □ □ □ □ Lakota □ □ □ □ □
Mandan □ □ □ □ □ Crow □ □ □ □ □ Kiowa □ □ □ □ □
Ponca □ □ □ □ □ Kiowa □ □ □ □ □ Location of Wind Cave □ □ □ □ □
Padouca Apache □ □ □ □ □ Plains Apache □ □ □ □ □
FIGURE 4. Reported Tribal Locations, circa-1805*
Platte, which included the southern Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park, were the shared territorial domain of the Arapahos and Cheyennes. Indeed, we can assert that the Hills were at the center of these two tribes territorial ranges, with the largest concentrations of Cheyennes reported on the northern and eastern sides of the Hills and the main body of Arapahos located in areas to the west and south. It is probable that the Cheyennes were the dominant population in the neighborhood of Wind Cave National Park at this point in history. The Lakotas also probably had a recognizable but small presence. Most of the Lakotas still maintained their wintering sites along the Missouri River and the lower reaches of its western tributaries, although many were now taking their summer and fall hunts towards the Black Hills and in the region where Wind Cave National Park is now located. It was not until the decades after 1825 that the Lakotas became the dominant population in this region.

In the coming decades, the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas would be the only populations regularly affiliated with the Black Hills. These three nations formed a strong alliance bloc and commonly collaborated in subsistence, trade, war, and ceremony. Eventually, they came to co-occupy and control a huge territorial range that stretched from the Missouri in the east to the Rocky Mountains in the west and from the Yellowstone River in the north to the Arkansas in the south. Even though their locations and their relative population sizes changed in relation to the Black Hills, all of them continued to live within the reaches of these mountains. All of them also shared strong cultural attachments to them until they were seized by the United States government in 1877.
Chapter Four

TRIBAL MOVEMENTS AND
THE BISON HIDE TRADE: 1807-1850

The year 1807 ushers in the beginning of another era, when the tribal nations of the Plains faced new challenges, precipitated in one way or another by the growing presence of foreigners in their midst. The newcomers were now largely Americans who came to the region, as the French and Spanish before them, to develop a commerce that revolved around a trade in beaver skins and other peltries. Beginning in the 1820s, the fur-trade became unprofitable and in its place a new kind of commerce evolved around a traffic in buffalo robes as well as deer, antelope, and elk skins (Mekeel 1943:168-173; Wishart 1979:41-115; Swagerty 1988:73; Kardulas 1990:35; Klein 1993:133-160; Pickering 1994:61; Moore, J. 1996b; Isenberg 2000:97-113). Over time, the tribal nations of the region developed more specialized economies that focused on the hunting of bison and the processing of their hides for American markets. Although bison were the mainstay of Native economies in earlier times, they were hunted mostly for subsistence and for exchange with neighboring tribes. Once American markets were developed, the demand for hides and robes escalated (Hyde 1961:29-33). Tribes began to spend much more of their labor on hunting bison and processing their robes for the commercial marketplace (Pickering 1994:62-66). As a result, they were under greater pressure to find and maintain control over territories that held the best bison ranges. As these ranges became depleted in areas east of the Black Hills, local tribes began to push farther west and south to find better hunting grounds (Hyde 1961:29).

The buffalo hide market was a big business, employing thousands of people who collected the hides procured and processed by American Indians for export to factories in the East. The hides were transformed into a variety of leather products, including industrial strength belts for factory machines and upholstery for carriage and buggy seats (Price, C. 1996:47). The Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos became some of the biggest tribal producers for this market (Moore, J. 1996b). Steamboats on the Missouri and freighters traveling the Overland Trail were able to transport large quantities of bison robes to markets in the East (Wishart 1979:83-87; Swagerty 1988:77; Pickering 1994:61). It is estimated that during the heyday of the bison trade as many as eighty-thousand hides were shipped annually from some of the trading posts along the upper reaches of the Platte and Missouri rivers (Hyde 1937:62; Isenberg 2000:105-109). The Lakota alone were reported to supply more than fifty-thousand robes in the early 1830s (Feltskog in Parkman 1969:680 n6). Fort Pierre, at the mouth of the Bad River on the Missouri, was one of the most important posts for collecting hides from tribes who hunted in the Black Hills, but, within a decade, Fort Laramie and other sites on the Platte River became major entrepots for the hide trade (Isenberg 2000:108-109).

Transformations in the region’s economy directly affected how tribes related to one another, and how they distributed themselves over local landscapes. As trade companies multiplied the locations where they set up their operations, tribes no longer relied on each other for access to European and now American trade goods. The long-distance trade chains that once connected tribes living in the Black Hills with those residing on the Missouri began to break down (Albers 1993:105; Pickering 1994:64). By the 1820s, nearly every tribal nation had one or more trading houses in their own territory, and three decades later, there were trading posts in almost every
district within a given tribe’s territorial range. As trade sites proliferated near the Black Hills, tribes no longer needed to travel to the Missouri, much less the Minnesota River, to secure the guns and other trade items they now required. In the face of this transition, intertribal confederations began to develop around tribes who shared and protected a common territorial range, which included prime bison hunting grounds and good grazing lands for their horses (Ewers 1975). When bison numbers began to decline precipitously, these ranges became bitterly contested between tribes who stood in opposing confederations (Albers 1993:122-128).

After 1834, emigrants started to stream into the region, following the Platte River before crossing the mountains to their final destinations in Oregon, Washington, and California. The Overland Trail cut through the heart of some of the region’s best tribal hunting territories. This eventually led many of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos to travel farther south to the Republican River and north to the Yellowstone to reach less disturbed bison ranges. As more and more settlers used this trail (exceeding 55,000 per year by 1850), many bands became dislocated not only from their prime hunting lands but also from some of the best riparian locations for their winter campsites (Price, C. 1996:27-30; Isenberg 2000:109-110). After 1845, the bands that typically wintered along the Platte River were becoming increasingly alarmed by the disturbances to their hunting and settlement areas (Fowler 1982:22). In retaliation, they began to launch raids against emigrant wagon trains. The emigrants responded by demanding the U.S. government take action to ensure their safe passage across the plains. In the summer of 1845, a force of dragoons under Colonel S.W. Kearney was sent to the Platte to intimidate local tribes and to warn them that they would be punished if the raiding continued (Hyde 1937:103-105; Hurt 1974:224-225; Price, C. 1996:28). A year later, when Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:63-64, 117-118, 129-30, 144-145, 147, 534) traveled the Overland Trail, he reported that the raiding went on unabated, not only against emigrant trains but also against the Pawnees, Shoshones, and Crows. As the hostile incidents increased, the U.S. military started to establish posts within reach of the Black Hills. Indian Agents arrived too, and they were responsible for managing relations between the United States and the tribal nations who lived along the overland trails. All of this led in the coming decades to major confrontations between the U.S. military and the allied forces of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos.

Between 1807 and 1850, a combination of forces, which developed out of a growing American presence in the region, set the stage for rapid shifts in the demographic profile of the tribal nations who peopled the Black Hills. The following discussion gives evidence of some of the change.

I. THE HISTORIC SOURCES

During the first half of the nineteenth century, much of what we know about the Black Hills was still written by Europeans and Americans at some distance from the area. In fact, before 1850, only two very brief accounts came from people who actually traveled in or near the Hills. The Missouri River remained the location where much of the information originated, although the Platte River was rapidly gaining ground as a place where traders, travelers, missionaries, and government agents wrote about the Hills.

A. The View From the Missouri River

American commercial interests dominated the Black Hills region after 1803, although French traders continued their operations here in association with companies owned by Americans. In 1807, Manual Lisa in partnership with William Morrison and Peter Menard started the Missouri
Fur Company. It was not until 1811, however, when Henry Breckenridge (1966) accompanied one of Lisa’s expeditions up the Missouri that a written record was left about the area and the tribal nations he encountered (Chittenden 1935:1:114-119). The following year, John Luttig (in Dumm 1964; Hurt 1974:165-166), a Missouri Fur Company employee, traveled with Lisa and wrote of his journey. After Lisa’s death in 1820, Joshua Pilcher took control of the Missouri Fur Company’s operations, and he became an important source of information about the region in testimony given before the U.S. Congress (Pilcher 1824; Chittenden 1935:1:114-119, 125; Hurt 1974:178-180).

On the plains west of the Missouri, unlike locations to the north, most tribal nations were not inclined to invest a great amount of labor in the trapping of small fur-bearing mammals. As a result, when the American Fur Company of St. Louis and other fur-trade outfits began to operate, they brought in non-Indians, now popularly known as mountain men, to trap the animals. In the early years, these trappers usually traveled in large brigades. One of the most famous of these, the Astorians, named after John Jacob Aster, owner of the American Fur Company, included sixty-three men who traveled up the Missouri to the Arikara villages on the Grand River and then across the Plains skirting the Black Hills to the Snake and Columbia river drainages (Wishart 1979: 115-204; Irving 1897). Under the leadership of Wilson Hunt, the expedition of 1811 included the naturalist, John Bradbury (1966), who traveled as far as the Arikara villages and wrote about his tour. Another company that sent out large brigades was the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, which was formed by William Ashley and Andrew Henry in 1822. One of these brigades, led by Jedediah Smith, probably entered the Black Hills at the Buffalo Gap (Palais 1941: 4-5). Many years later one of the expedition’s members James Clyman (in Camp 1960), wrote a narrative recalling their famous tour. The account is very confusing, and it is hard to track what routes the brigade actually traveled through the southern Hills. Ashley himself led another party in 1823, but the Arikaras attacked it. This brought the arrival of American military troops under the command of Colonel Henry Leavenworth (High Hawk in Curtis 1907-30:3:173; Chittenden 1935:1:247-249). Two years later, an American military expedition led by General H. Atkinson and Major Benjamin O. Fallen (1929; Jensen and Hutchins 2001) came to the region and negotiated the first peace treaties with the tribal nations of the Missouri River and the Black Hills. They left a wealth of information on the whereabouts of these nations and their relations with each other. Fourteen years later in 1839, Joseph Nicollet (DeMallie 1975, 1976) led a government sponsored scientific expedition to Fort Pierre on the Missouri River where he recorded some of the most detailed information on the locations of Lakotas in and around the Black Hills.

Notwithstanding their emphasis on the use of trapping brigades, American entrepreneurs and their employees continued to expand their trade entrepots, not only along the larger and well-traveled rivers like the Missouri but also along branch streams in more remote locations closer to the Black Hills (Cassells, Smith and Smith 1984:133-135). While carrying on trading operations of varying scale and intensity in the region, many of the traders and their employees, most of whom were French in descent, married into the tribes with whom they lived and worked. Over the years, a new community of native people emerged on the Plains, whose lives were centered on the trading forts of their European American fathers (Bent in Hyde 1968; Swagerty 1988:75, 82; Pickering 1994:61). Although most of the traders who lived in the region left little written information about their experiences, one of them was a notable exception. Edwin Denig, an employee of the American Fur Company, wrote journals and extensive descriptions of the tribal

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1 Some writers (Palais 1941:4-5; Turner 1974:16) claim that Smith’s brigade entered the Black Hills at the Buffalo Gap and followed Beaver Creek into the interiors. Given the fact that Clyman talks about passing through a narrow, deep rocky canyon, one source (Parker, W. 1966:9) traces their route into the Hills by way of French Creek.
nations he encountered in more than twenty years of service between 1833 and 1855 in the Upper Missouri trade, including a short stay at a trading post on the Cheyenne River tributary, Cherry Creek (Ewers 1961). Denig’s writings contain some of the most detailed commentary on the Black Hills and the tribes who lived there. He also provided Henry J. Schoolcraft (1851-1857) with information included in his monumental work on the tribal nations of the United States.

In this era, several European travelers made grand tours of the northern plains. Paul Wilhelm, Duke of Wrttemberg, who arrived in 1823, was one of the earliest of these travelers. Although he had little to say about the Black Hills, he did note that some of the Lakotas were hunting there (Hurt 1974:170-173). A decade later, Maximilian, Prince of Wied (in Thwaites 1966) toured the Missouri between 1833-1834. He kept copious notes of his travels and conversations with local traders and tribal peoples, and some of these include important and specific references to the Black Hills.

Missionaries were now arriving in the region, and many of them recorded their observations of the area too. Samuel Parker, who represented the American Board of Foreign Missions, traveled the Missouri in the years between 1835 and 1837 (Hurt 1974:216-217). Stephen J. Riggs, a Presbyterian missionary, who worked among the Dakota of Minnesota, visited Fort Pierre in 1840 (Price, C. 1996:48). The Belgian priest, Father Pierre Jean De Smet, (Thwaites 1966:22:136) arrived in the area in 1840, and he purportedly was the first clergyman to set foot in the Black Hills.

B. The View From the Platte River

Although much important writing about the Black Hills and the tribes who lived there continued to come from sources tied to locations east of the Black Hills, the vast majority of the documents after 1840 were written from the vicinity of the Platte River. This happened because most of the populations who traveled and lived in the Black Hills now traded on this river instead of the Missouri and also because this became a major route of emigrant travel. In 1819, a military party led by Major Stephen J. Long crossed the Plains to the Rocky Mountains by way of the Platte River. Two journals, one by Captain John R. Bell (1957) and another by Edwin James (in Thwaites 1966), provide rich accounts of the tribal nations who lived in the regions they traveled. Twenty-three years later, in 1842, John C. Fremont (in Viola and Ehrenberg 1988) led a scientific expedition through the area, and his journal contains important information on the locations of various tribal nations. The traveler and adventurer, Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969), followed the Oregon Trail in 1846, and he also left a rich, albeit at times very confusing, account of his encounters with tribal peoples and trappers who stayed in the general vicinity of the Black Hills and the Laramie Mountains.

C. The View From the Black Hills

Other than Father De Smet’s limited comments about meeting Cheyennes at the base of the Black Hills (in Thwaites 1966) and Francis Parkman’s descriptions (in Mason 1947; in Feltskog 1969), many of which actually apply to the Laramie Mountains and not the Black Hills proper, only one other observer left a record of his presence in this area before 1850. James Clyman (in
FIGURE 5. Locations of Some Early American Trading Posts
a member of Jedediah Smith's trapping brigade, offered a brief glimpse of his travels through the area. Again, it is mostly from tribal oral traditions and winter counts that we find a more detailed picture of Native life in the Black Hills during this period (Good in Mallery 1893; High Hawk in Curtis 1907-30: 3; Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930; Carloff in Powers, W. 1963; Bent in Hyde 1968; Swift Dog in Praus 1962; Red Horse Owner in Karol 1969; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973; Howard, J. 1979; No Ears, Short Man, and Iron Crow in Walker 1982; American Horse and Cloud-Shield in Mallery 1987; White Bull in Howard, J. 1998).

II. CHANGING TRIBAL OCCUPANCY OF THE BLACK HILLS

Between 1807 and 1850, another major shift was under way for the tribal nations who peopled the Black Hills. At the beginning of the period, some of the populations who once lived within reach of these Hills, including the Kiowas, Comanches, and Plains Apaches, were gone, returning only occasionally to trade or raid. The Cheyennes and the Arapahos were the tribal nations who now dominated the landscape with increasing numbers of Lakotas in their midst. By the end of the period, the demography of the area had shifted again. The Lakotas were the ones who prevailed, with bands of Arapahos and Cheyennes living among them.

A. Those Who Left

By 1807, the tribal nations who once dominated the Black Hills had abandoned whatever territories they held on the southern edge of the Hills, especially along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River. To briefly recapitulate, the Padouca Apaches, followed by the Comanches, controlled much of the area where Wind Cave National Park now sits in the early half of the eighteenth century, and, for a brief period of time, from the 1730s to the 1760s, they were joined by the Poncas who came to the region to hunt bison and acquire horses. The northern and western sides of the Hills were inhabited by the Arapahos, Kiowas, and Plains (Kiowa) Apaches, who began to abandon these locations in the 1760s and move towards the southern reaches of the Hills, where they displaced and/or incorporated into their own ranks the Padouca and Comanche populations who were still living there. As late as 1803, a small number of the Padouca Apaches still remained in the area, but a decade later, most of them had relocated to areas along the Platte River. Under rising pressure from the Lakotas, the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Comanches, eventually withdrew from their locations between the South Fork of the Cheyenne and the Platte River and moved to regions farther south where they joined the main body of Comanches. By the early nineteenth century, the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Comanches were regularly reported as sharing encampments and a vast territorial range that hugged the Rocky Mountains from the South Fork of the Platte to the Arkansas River. After 1807, there are only a few records of their presence near the Black Hills.

Unlike earlier times, these tribes no longer took their trade to locations near the Hills. The days of the large trade gatherings of the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Comanches, Arapahos, and Cheyennes near the mouth of French Creek and at the foot of Bear Butte had passed. Now their large summer trade rendezvous shifted to a site at Horse Creek, a tributary of the Platte River on the Wyoming-Nebraska border (Hyde 1937:33; Mayhall, 1971:43). As a Lakota presence in this area increased, even this trade location became too dangerous for the Kiowas, and after 1825,

2 His reminiscences were compiled in 1871, when he was 79, 48 years after he was in the Black Hills. The precise accuracy of his recollections is probably questionable. In fact, at times, Clyman (in Camp 1960:20) questions his own memory.
they never returned to it (Mayhall 1971:43). White Bull (in Howard, J. 1998:15), however, indicates that in the year 1814-1815 a peace council took place in the Black Hills between the Lakotas and Kiowas that was derailed when a Lakota clubbed a Kiowa at the event.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, relations between the Kiowas and their Arapaho and Cheyenne friends started to deteriorate. Historical records and oral traditions report the steady intensification of rivalries between these tribes. In the 1820s, a full scale war broke out between them, driving the Kiowas and their Apache and Comanche allies even farther south to the Arkansas River region where they remained until the reservation era (Grinnell 1956:32-34; Berthong 1963:23; Weist 1977:42; Coel 1981:14; Foster and McCollough 2001:928; Fowler 2001:841-842; Kavanagh 2001:888). In subsequent decades, the Black Hills disappeared from their visual horizon except as a vital memory of a place where their ancestors once lived, where important wars had been fought, and where highly sacred knowledge had been received (McAllister 1965; Mooney 1979).

The rising hostilities between the Kiowas and Lakotas had two major consequences, one of which was the combined forces of Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Comanches hardly ever returned to their old haunts in the Black Hills (Larson 1997:27-28). The second major effect was the emergence of a major north-south divisional split within the ranks of the Arapahos and Cheyennes. Along with the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Comanches, the Arapahos were well established in the Black Hills throughout much of the eighteenth century. Indeed, their recorded whereabouts closely follow the reports of these other tribes. As the Cheyennes moved to the northern reaches of the Hills, they became aligned with all of the groups who already lived there, especially the Arapahos. Both the Cheyennes and the Arapahos were caught in the middle of the escalating warfare between the Kiowas and Lakotas. It was during the period when this warfare went on unabated that the Arapahos and Cheyennes began to pull back from their alliance with the Kiowas. Although the reasons for the separation have never been fully documented in ethnohistoric sources, it can be conjectured that the Arapahos and Cheyennes were unable to maintain a neutral stand in the face of the rising hostilities and had to take sides. They ended up favoring their alliance with the Lakotas. In subsequent decades, some Arapahos and most of the Cheyennes remained in the immediate vicinity of the Black Hills. But the larger body of Arapahos and a few Cheyennes began moving into areas south and west of the Black Hills abandoned by their former Kiowa, Plains Apache, and Comanche allies. In time, as described in the next section, major segments of the Arapaho and Cheyenne would leave their settlements near the Hills and along the Platte River and move south to hunt and trade in the vicinity of the Republican and Arkansas rivers.

As the Kiowas and their allies, the Plains Apaches and Comanches, moved out of the Hills, so too did the Crows. Unlike the wars unfolding on the southern flanks of the Hills, the northern battleground involved a largely unified front of Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas waging war against the Crows and driving their enemy from locations at the headwaters of the Little Missouri and away from the Hills region entirely (Mallery 1893:319; Hyde 1937:33-35; Swift Dog in Praus 1962:11,13; Hurt 1974:238; Moulton 1983: 3:25,26 n7). By the 1820s, the Crows had retreated to areas west of the Powder River, and by the 1850s, their territorial reach did not extend far beyond the Yellowstone River (Voget 2001:697-698). In a letter written to Valentine McGillycuddy, the agent at Pine Ridge, William Garrett (in Friswold 1976:130), a former scout and interpreter wrote: The Crows never owned the Black Hills, but they used to sneak in there

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3 The Arapahos were not always firmly committed to this alliance against the Crows, and they were known to trade with them throughout the nineteenth century.
and hunt, pick fruit and get lodge poles. They never had permanent homes there and were always run out by the Sioux as soon as they found they were there.

In the aftermath of a succession of disease epidemics, the strength of the once powerful Missouri River tribes was broken. The long-distance trade chains that once connected these groups with those living in the Black Hills and along the Minnesota River largely disappeared. American traders, who were now nearly everywhere in the region, undercut the middleman roles that many local tribes played in the region’s trade. This had especially disastrous consequences for the Arikaras, who saw their powerful trade position erode in less than three decades. In 1823, they killed a group of Ashley’s trappers in a desperate attempt to block their passage upriver (Parks 2001a: 367). In retaliation, Colonel Henry Leavenworth, with a small group of infantry and rifleman, mobilized a group of Lakotas to join them and attack the Arikaras. The battle lines were drawn, but before a fight ensued, the Arikara chiefs presented their peace pipes. The peace negotiations were never concluded, for the Arikaras fled their villages in the night (Hyde 1937:38-39).

In the coming years, Lakota and Arikara relations deteriorated and entered into a cycle of skirmishes that ultimately forced the Arikaras to leave their Missouri homeland in 1832 to take up residence with their distant Skidi Pawnee relatives in Nebraska (Hyde 1951:183-185). After four years with the Pawnees, they returned to the Missouri to live with their former Mandan enemies just at the time another smallpox epidemic nearly wiped out the village populations in 1837-1838 (Hyde 1937:49; Parks 2001a:367).

After their return to the Missouri River, the relations the Arikaras held with their former Lakota and Cheyenne trade partners became even more tempestuous. Although the Cheyennes continued to trade with them, albeit in a diminished way, many Lakotas appear to have abandoned their trade connections not only with the Arikaras but also their Dakota-speaking relatives who lived farther east on the Minnesota River. The disruption of trade and the continuing enmities with the Lakotas severely limited the ability of the Arikaras and their neighbors, the Hidatsas and Mandans, to access the Hills as they had done in the past (Parks 2001a: 367).

Although the Mandans and Hidatsas were reported to make trips to the Black Hills by way of the Little Missouri River for hunting bighorn and elk and trapping eagles as late as the 1830s, these excursions probably became less frequent once their Crow allies were driven from the region by the combined forces of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos (Thwaites 1966:2:346-347; Bowers 1950:210, 1963:238, 259). Many battles were reported between these semihorticultural tribes and the Lakotas near Bear Butte (Odell 1942:34). When the Mandan and Hidatsa tribes lost more people in the smallpox epidemics of 1836-1837, their ability to travel independently to a territory now dominated by enemies was further compromised, although one Lakota winter count reports Mandan wintering in the Black Hills at Bear Butte in 1844-45 (Odell 1942:34). By 1851, when a combined force of Arikaras, Hidatsas, and Mandans traveled to the Fort Laramie Treaty conference in Wyoming, the Black Hills was considered enemy country. Repeating the words of his Arikara ancestor, Carries Moccasins, Alfred Morsette (Parks 1991:379) said: Now this is where there are enemies, here in this country. If they see us, they’ll kill us. In less than half a century, the Black Hills went from being a prime hunting ground for these tribes to the territory of their enemies.

References to Hidatsa and Mandan hunting excursions in the Black Hills may actually mean the hills and buttes along the Little Missouri not the Black Hills proper. It is hard to determine the locations to which some early sources refer because of the ambiguous uses of the name Black Hills during this time period. Alfred Bower’s work (1950, 1963), however, was conducted in the twentieth century when there was no longer any confusion between the Black Hills proper and other high elevation locations west of the Missouri River.
Farther south on the Missouri, at the mouth of the Niobrara, were the villages of the Poncas, also much reduced by epidemic disease. This tribe, by contrast, appears to have been able to maintain a limited degree of access to the Black Hills and the upper reaches of the White River well into the nineteenth century through a pattern of intermarriage with the Sicangu division of the Lakotas (Howard, J. 1965a:28; Hurt 1974:203-204). By the late 1830s, an identifiable band of Ponca-Lakota ancestry, the Wazazi, had emerged within the ranks of the Sicangus (Hyde 1961:56). Its principal territorial range hugged the southern edge of the Hills between the headwaters of the White River and the forks of the Cheyenne, an area within easy access to the region of the Buffalo Gap and Wind Cave (DeMallie 1975:36).

B. Those Who Remained

As explained previously, the Arapahos were well established in the Black Hills by the end of the eighteenth century, occupying locations along the north and south forks of the Cheyenne River (Fowler 2001:841). Indeed, during the last decade of the eighteenth century, they appear to have replaced the Kiowas as the dominant group in the southern Black Hills. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, however, more of them were moving to the rich bison ranges along the Platte River at locations immediately south and west of the Hills (Gussow 1974:75-76; Fowler 2001:840). As the Arapahos started to move away from the Hills, larger numbers of Cheyennes were occupying the locations their allies vacated. According to Cheyenne oral traditions recorded by George Bird Grinnell (1972:1:12-13), the Cheyennes first journeyed into the Black Hills on hunting expeditions in the last half of the eighteenth century, and they probably did so in the company of their Arapaho and Arikara allies, who regularly hunted in and around the Black Hills (Shakespeare 1971:27). Eventually, more and more of their people began to stay in the area over longer periods of time until the early nineteenth century when the Black Hills became the center of their territorial range (Grinnell 1906:15).

The Cheyennes were well established at locations in and around the Black Hills when Lewis and Clark traveled through the region, even though some Cheyennes maintained locations closer to the Missouri River. In fact, the map drawn by Lewis and Clark indicates that they were the most populous nation in the Black Hills (Berthong 1963:15). Their dominance of the region continued into the next decade. John Bradbury’s journal (1966:139-140, 176) entry for June 17, 1811 simply reiterated what Lewis and Clark found, namely, that the Cheyennes had no fixed area of settlement but traveled the Black Hills country at the headwaters of the Cheyenne River. It also confirmed that the Cheyennes continued to play an important middleman role in the intertribal trade, carrying the horses, peltries, hides, and meat they acquired from tribes who lived beyond the Black Hills to their European American, Lakota, Arikara, and Mandan trade partners on the Missouri River (Jablow 1951:56-60). In the same year, Henry Breckenridge (in Thwaites 1966:5:92) wrote that the Cheyennes resided on the headwaters of the Cheyenne River, and that they traded with the Arikaras and the Spanish. In February of 1813, when John C. Luttig arrived in the area, he also reported that the Cheyennes had considerable quantities of skins to exchange with the traders and their village hosts (in Drumm 1964:55; Hurt 1974:167-168).

Many Cheyennes remained in regions north of the Black Hills during this period (Grinnell 1972:1:30). Yet, it is equally clear that, in the company of their Arapaho allies, others were moving beyond the Black Hills to the valley of the Platte River. By 1812, a large segment of the Arapahos were firmly established on the Platte and beginning to move as far south as the Arkansas River in the company of some of their Kiowa friends (Berthong 1963:19; Gussow 1974:75-76). Some even ranged as far south as Texas (Fowler 2001:840-842). In 1819, Dr. Edwin James and Captain John R. Bell, members of the Stephen H. Long Expedition, reported a large
number of Arapahos and a small band of Cheyennes bringing British trade goods from the Missouri River, to an intertribal trading encampment along Cherry Creek near the present site of Denver, Colorado (Berthong 1963:20-21; Gussow 1974:31, 45). A year later, in 1821, Jacob Fowler again reported a sizable presence of Arapahos and Cheyennes at a large encampment of Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Comanches on the Arkansas River (Berthong 1963:21). This written evidence, along with tribal oral traditions (Bent in Hyde 1968:31-57; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:1-9) indicates that in the 1820s some of the Arapahos and the Cheyennes were beginning to split into southern and northern divisions (Jablow 1951:62-65). While the southern branches largely abandoned the Black Hills region, living, hunting, and trading in areas between the Platte and Arkansas rivers, the northern Arapahos and Cheyennes remained in the environs of the Black Hills, with some concentrated on their western flanks towards the Platte River and others located on the eastern side towards the Missouri (Grinnell 1972:1:9-40). The historic record also reveals that, as in the past, both tribes not only jointly held the same territorial ranges but also shared them in common with other tribes including some of the Atsinas who occasionally joined them from Montana.

In 1825, when Atkinson and 0 Fallon (1825: 606) came up the Missouri to negotiate a peace treaty between the United States and the tribal nations of the region, they wrote a letter to James Barbeau of the War Department, stating that the Cheyennes inhabited the river that bears their name from its mouth to the Black Hills. They estimated that the Cheyenne population in the area was about 3000 people, that they traded at the mouth of Cherry Creek, and that their principal hunting grounds were towards the Black Hills. In their travels up the Missouri in the summer of 1825 to treat with the local tribes, they dispatched several messengers to find the Cheyennes who were reported in the neighborhood of the Black Hills or Black Mountains (Jensen and Hutchins 2001:101, 119). They encountered bands of Cheyennes at a number of different locations along the Missouri from the mouth of the Bad River where they encamped with the Oglalas for treaty deliberations, to the Arikara village on the Grand River, and onto a location across the river from Warrenconne Creek in present-day North Dakota (Jenkins and Hutchins 2001:118, 119, 120, 166). Notwithstanding the movement of some Cheyennes to the Platte and Arkansas, an impressive number still remained on the eastern edge of the Black Hills living and traveling among groups of Lakotas and Arikaras.

It was during the 1820s that George Bird Grinnell (1972:1:9) and E. Admonson Hoebel (1960:9) claim the Cheyennes and Sutaios began to merge into one sociopolitical body, although Thomas Weist (1977:24) argues that they did not camp together or intermarry until 1830. Written records on the Sutaios are hard to find in the early historic record, and it is not clear with whom earlier traders identified them. In this same decade, whatever hostilities once existed between the Cheyennes and Lakotas were now localized and situated within a larger framework of peace. As historical records (Atkinson and O Fallon 1929:27; Hyde 1937:33-34) and tribal oral traditions (Bent in Hyde 1968:25-26) reveal, the Cheyennes and Lakotas began to join forces to route the Crows from the Little Missouri and Powder River regions. George Bent (in Hyde 1968: 25-26) recalls a famous story of a how a party of Bowstring Society soldiers lost their lives in a deadly fight with the Crows around 1819, and how the following year, the Lakotas and Cheyennes assembled in the Black Hills and set out to the Tongue River to seek revenge by destroying a Crow camp and taking its women and children captive. He also describes another battle with the

Oddly, the editors (Jensen and Hutchins 2001:101n105) of Henry Atkinson and Stephen Kearny s journals of the expedition assert that the Black Hills named in these accounts refer to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains not the Black Hills proper. This makes no sense given what we know about the locations and movements of the Cheyennes who were widely dispersed at this point in history in a region that extended from the Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains and that most certainly included the Black Hills proper.

67
Crows that took place on Horse Creek in Wyoming when the Cheyennes were camped there some years later (Bent in Hyde 1968: 26-28). Other versions of these same stories are found in George Bird Grinnell’s book *The Fighting Cheyennes* (1956: 26-32).

The complexity of intertribal relations during this time is revealed in another story that George Bent (in Hyde 1968:28-30) recalled and that Grinnell (1956: 2-34) recorded as well. Sometime around 1826, a band of Cheyennes was encamped along the South Platte near Greeley, Colorado with Arapahos and some Atsinas who had joined them from Montana, when a group of Crows arrived and set up their camp two miles away. While feasting their Arapaho and Atsina friends, the Crows demanded that the Cheyennes give up a Crow child who had been captured several years earlier. The Cheyennes refused, and the Crows threatened to start a fight hoping that their Arapaho and Atsina friends would join them. They declined and a battle ensued in which the Cheyennes, Arapahos and Atsinas joined forces against the Crows and their long-standing Kiowa friends, who were returning to the Arkansas having visited with the Crows in Montana the previous summer. This presumably began the period when relations between the Arapahos and Cheyennes on one side and the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Comanches on the other broke down and developed into a full-scale war which did not end until 1840 (Berthong 1963:23; Grinnell 1972:1:35-69; Weist 1977:42; Coel 1981:14; Fowler 2001:842).

By this time, most of the Arapahos appear to have been well south and west of the Black Hills, with their primary territories stretching between the south and north forks of the Platte River (Shakespeare 1971:37-38,71; Gussow 1974:47-48; Fowler 1982:21-23, 2001:841). Even though Zachary Gussow (1974:31-35) maintained that the Arapahos still had control of the Black Hills as late as 1827, this does not correspond with much of the historical record, which reveals not only a large Cheyenne population in the Hills, but a substantial Lakota presence as well. It can be conceded, however, that the Arapahos were still the largest population on the western side of the Black Hills because they clearly had a dominant presence on the plains north of Fort Laramie (Fowler 1982:21-23). Rufus Sage described their western boundary as the Medicine Bow Range in Wyoming, and in the same period, John Fremont described them as ranging all along the Platte and the eastern flanks of the Rockies as far north as the present day town of Casper, Wyoming (Ibid: 22-23). Throughout much of this area, they traveled in the company of their Cheyenne and Lakota allies (Gussow 1974:78). The Arapahos’ territorial range had clearly shifted west by this time, although some probably remained along the upper reaches of the White River in the midst of resident Cheyenne and Lakota bands.

Meanwhile, back on the Missouri River, Maximilian, Prince of Wied, reported in 1832 that the Black Hills were the area where the Cheyennes dwelled (in Thwaites 1966:22:33), and eight years later, Father De Smet visited a Cheyenne village at the eastern base of the Hills (in Thwaites 1966:22:136). Iron Teeth (Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:4) and several other Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:1:252-254) maintained that some of their fellow tribespeople continued to practice horticulture at locations on the eastern side of the Black Hills during this time period. In fact, some Cheyennes were reported to still farm near the Missouri River as late as 1833 and to trade there until 1850 (Grinnell 1972:1:30; Culbertson in McDermott 1952:52, 67). Older Cheyennes also remembered a Sun Dance taking place at this time in the valley of the Cheyenne River (Moore, J. 1987:32). These records indicate that part of the Cheyenne population was still holding onto their old territories, even though they were being surrounded by growing numbers of Lakotas. They also reveal that some Cheyennes still traveled back and forth between the Black Hills and the Arkansas River to acquire horses and trade in the Mexican southwest (Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:5).
Following John Moore’s reconstructions of Cheyenne band histories, it is possible to deduce the general whereabouts of the Cheyennes in relationship to the Black Hills in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The Omisis and Totoimana divisions of the Cheyenne, who had a long history of intermarriage with the Lakotas, lived on the northern and western edge of the Hills and eventually occupied a large swath of territory that extended between the Black Hills and the Powder River. The Masikota band of Cheyennes inhabited areas southeast of the Black Hills where some of them intermarried with the Oglala and Sicangu Lakotas. The Hisiometaneo lived along the upper reaches of the Niobrara River, and they also had close ties with the Oglalas and Sicangus (Grinnell 1972:2:68). The early locations of the Sutaios are difficult to reconstruct, although given where most of them eventually settled in the reservation era, they probably covered much of the same area as the Omisis. They also appear to have been divided into northern and southern branches, with some occupying areas near the southeastern Black Hills until 1877. The main body of the Cheyenne proper, which includes the Tsistsistas, Heviksnipahis, Hevhaitaneo, Oivimana, and Hotametaneo, made up the core group of Cheyenne who occupied the forks of the Cheyenne River from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century. They were the ones who moved to locations between the forks of the Platte River, and they apparently did so as a block in a series of successive moves between 1815 and 1825. They were also the segment of the Cheyennes who appear to have had some of the most intimate and enduring connections with the Arapahos (Moore, J. 1987: 229-235).

In 1849, Thomas Fitzpatrick, the first Indian agent for the upper Platte and Arkansas rivers, noted as much when he wrote that growing numbers of Lakotas were pushing the Cheyennes farther south into areas the Arapahos occupied (Berthong 1963:24). Yet, he also claimed, The Cheyennes at that time were living on the south side of the Missouri River, between the Cheyenne and White rivers, and along the Black Hills (quoted from Berthong 2964: 24). On Francis Parkman’s 1849 map, published in Mason Wade’s edition (1947) of his journals, a small group of Cheyenne was still located in the southern Black Hills, but the larger body was placed outside the Hills between the south fork of the Platte and the Arkansas. The Arapahos were located in the same region but in areas south of the Arkansas. On this map, no Arapahos appear in the Black Hills.

After the Cheyennes and their Arapaho allies made peace with the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Comanches in 1840, these tribes sometimes met with each other to trade and conduct ceremonies on the South Fork of the Platte River. Rufus Sage described a large convocation in 1842 that drew together all of the above five tribes plus Lakotas and even Blackfeet (and possibly Atsina) from Montana (Gussow 1974:44). In this period, more waves of Arapahos, Cheyennes, and also a few Lakotas moved out of the regions near the Black Hills to establish their primary territories in areas below the South Fork of the Platte. Like the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Comanches before them, the southern Cheyenne-Arapahos were attracted to this area not only for the new trading opportunities it offered, but also because it contained rich grazing lands for their horses and good hunting grounds where bison were still plentiful. Indeed, it was probably these opportunities and the declining populations of bison in the northeast as much as the pressure of the incoming Lakotas that brought more and more Cheyennes and Arapahos south (Mooney 1907:376-377; Scott 1907:558; Berthong 1963:25-27; Fowler 2001:842-843; Moore, Liberty, and Straus 2001: 864-865).

By the 1840s, the Arapahos and Cheyennes were divided into two geographically separate and politically distinct branches with different ethnic identities (Mooney 1907:376-377; Fowler 2001:842; Moore 1976b; Moore, Liberty, and Straus 2001:865). The Arapahos referred to their northern branch as Nenebi.neno? [Northern People], while the southerners were known as No.kho.sein mn? [Sage People] (Fowler2001:862). The Cheyennes referred to their northern
FIGURE 15. Reported Tribal Locations, circa 1835

Arikara  Hidatsa  Mandan  Ponca  Padouca Apache
Arapaho  Comanche  Crow  Kiowa  Plains Apache
Cheyenne  Lakota  Location of Wind Cave

Little Missouri River
Powder River
Grand River
Moreau River
Cheyenne River
Bad River
White River
Nobrara River
Hatte River
Republican River
branch as Notam ohm sEhe, [Northern Eaters], sometimes shortened as Ohm sEhe, and the southerners as He«vAhetaneo? [Roped People] or Sowonia, [Southerners] (Moore, Liberty and Straus 2001: 882-883). After the 1840s, the histories of the two branches of the Arapahos and Cheyennes follow divergent courses. Even though the two groups continued to come together over common interests, cultural traditions, and family ties, they were now situated in very different spheres of social, economic, and political influence and their lives started to follow different paths as well. In fact, many of the southern Cheyennes and Arapahos had become so geographically removed from the Black Hills that some in the younger generations no longer had direct knowledge of them, only their parents and grandparents recollections of what life had been like there in times past. Some of the southern Cheyenne bands did return periodically to their former homelands in the Black Hills to trade and meet with their northern relatives, to conduct religious observances at their sacred mountain, Bear Butte, and to procure specialized lithic and plant resources (Moore, J. 1981:14). But generally speaking, the Hills were no longer a part of their primary territorial range. In direct contrast, the Hills remained well within the territorial boundaries of the northern Arapahos and Cheyennes. Even though both tribes now lived in areas increasingly populated by Lakotas, the Hills were still considered a part of their homeland and an integral part of their territory as later oral histories, government documents, and ethnographic writings reveal (Moore, J. 1987; Powell 1969, 1982).

C. Those Who Arrived

Although the Lakotas had already arrived on the high plains of the Missouri River by the late eighteenth century, gradually establishing hunting grounds and camping sites on tributaries leading to the Black Hills, they had not built a large settlement base in and around the Hills. Until the 1820s, much of the eastern side of the Black Hills region was held by Cheyennes, while the western flanks still remained in the hands of the Arapahos. As Lakotas entered the Hills to hunt and camp, they traveled in areas occupied by these other two tribal nations. Even after the 1820s, when the sheer size of the Lakota population far outnumbered the Cheyennes and Arapahos, the Lakotas never gained any real exclusive occupancy of the Black Hills. Cheyenne and Arapaho camps were always present, interspersed among those of various Lakota affiliations until 1877 when all American Indians were forcibly removed.

1. 1807-1829

In the years before 1830, many of the Lakotas still maintained their winter encampments along the lower portions of tributaries that fed the Missouri River from the Black Hills country. There is little doubt, however, that they used the upper reaches of these rivers as hunting grounds, a pattern commonly followed by the Poncas, Arikaras, and Cheyennes in the previous century (Clow 1995:262). It is equally clear that more bands were now wintering at the southeastern base of the Hills in association with the Cheyennes who were the principal tribal nation in the area.

From 1807 to 1819, there is clear evidence that the Sicangu [Brule or Burnt Thigh] Lakotas were well-established along the White River from its mouth to its headwaters, and that some were also using the neighboring Niobrara River as a hunting ground and a location to capture wild horses (Clyman in Camp 1960:16-17; Hyde 1961:17; Hurt 1974:179, 181, 199, 201, 204, 206; Cheney 1979:19; Clow 1995). There is also good documentation that the Oglala [Cast-on-own or Scatter Their Own] Lakotas controlled most of the course of the Bad River, and that they had a sizable presence on the White and Cheyenne rivers as well (Clyman in Camp 1960:16-17; Hurt 1974:200). Of the various Lakota or Teton divisions, the Oglalas were the ones most likely to have reached the base of the Black Hills before 1820 (Hyde 1937:20). The Minneconjou [Plant...
near water] and Itazipco [Sans Arc or No Bow] Lakotas were above the forks of the Cheyenne, which means both of these divisions were within striking distance of the Black Hills as well (Hyde 1961:4). Some of the Hunkpapa [End of the Horn] and Sihasapa [Blackfeet] Lakotas were moving towards the headwaters of the Grand River (Hyde 1937:39-40), although much of their territory was still located east of the Missouri River. Despite a winter count marking 1828 as the first year the Hunkpapas camped at Bear Butte (Swift Dog in Praus 1962:13), this site was still outside their primary territorial range.

Following George Hyde's reconstruction, the above summary takes into account the extended movements Lakotas were making once they were firmly established at locations on the west side of the Missouri River. This gives a picture that is slightly different from the written record, but again, we must remember that the eyewitness accounts of Europeans and Americans took place along the Missouri River at a considerable distance from the Black Hills. While a few traders were establishing posts close to the Black Hills at places such as the forks of the Cheyenne River, none of them left written records of their stays. Therefore, our impression of what was happening at this time is still slanted towards the Lakotas who were observed at locations removed from the Black Hills proper.

For several decades after the Lewis and Clark expedition, there is little documentary information on the whereabouts of the Lakotas beyond the Missouri. Although many traders traveled the area, they did not leave any writings of their experiences (Hurt 1974:176). Most of the information for this period comes from travelers who passed through the area without any extended stay. Manuel Lisa's 1811 expedition up the Missouri was accompanied by the traveler, Henry Breckinridge, who left a journal (in Thwaites 1966) with brief comments about the tribes he observed along his route of travel from April 27 to July 6. These included Lakotas, Cheyennes, Arikaras, and Mandans who were noted at their usual and accustomed locations (Hurt 1974:177-178). In the same year, John Bradbury, a naturalist who traveled with the Astoria expedition, left an account (1966), and map of his travels, both of which contain information that is consistent with what Lewis and Clark gathered five years earlier (Hurt 1974:179-181, 199, 204). A year later, John Luttwig (in Drumm 1964), an employee of the Missouri Fur Company, accompanied Lisa's expedition and wrote a journal that again reiterates what others reported as locations for the Lakotas, Arikaras, Cheyennes, Poncas, and Mandans (Hurt 1974:182-183).

When Paul Wilhelm, the Duke of Wrttemberg, traveled the Missouri in 1823, he wrote a journal with several interesting entries. First, while ascending Ponca Creek, he encountered a Ponca and Sicangu war party that had just returned from a battle with the Pawnee who lived on the middle reaches of the Platte. When he came to the mouth of the White River, he came across some Yanktons who were on a hunting expedition. This is one of the earliest pieces of evidence for the presence of Dakota speaking populations west of the Missouri. He met with Joshua Pilcher, a local trader, who told him that the friendly Lakotas had gone to the Black Hills to hunt because game was scarce down river (Hurt 1974:187), and he also learned that Poncas and Sicangus were hunting together on the Niobrara River (Hurt 1974:203-204; Howard, J. 1965:28). Another source for this period, Joshua Pilcher's 1824 testimony before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, contains more evidence that the Lakotas were in the Black Hills. He told Congress that on the west side of the Missouri the Lakotas ranged over the valleys of the Niobrara, White, and Bad rivers as far as the Black Mountains in which some of these streams rise and as far north as the head of the Little Missouri, above the Mandans (Pilcher 1824:453).

A year later, when Atkinson and O Fallen came to the Missouri River, their accounts clearly suggest that some of the Lakotas were residing near the Black Hills. They report that the Oohenonpas [Two Kettle] or Broken Arrow band was camped at Fort Kiowa and were ostracized
by the other Lakotas (Atkinson and O'Fallon 1929:21). Oglala camps were located on the Bad River six miles west of its mouth (Atkinson and O'Fallon 1929:26-27; Atkinson in Jensen and Hutchins 2001:115, 118; Kearny in Jensen and Hutchins 2001:115, 116, 119), but their usual travels extended along this river to the Black Hills (Atkinson and O'Fallon to James Barber, 7 November 1825:606). The Soanes (probably Minneconjous and Itazipcos) were reported to camp thirty miles upstream on the Bad River (Atkinson and O'Fallon 1929: 21, 29; Atkinson in Jensen and Hutchins 2001:113, 119, 120) and also on the Cheyenne River fifty miles above its mouth (Atkinson and O'Fallon 1825:607, 1929:21,29,169; Kearny in Jensen and Hutchins 2001:124). Another Soane group, the Hunkpapas, were situated near the mouth of the Grand River (1929: 31), but the bulk of their territory was described as extending from the Missouri east to the Minnesota River (Atkinson and O’Fallon 1825:607). Atkinson and O’Fallon (1825:607) also record the presence of Tetons on the White River as far back as the Black Hills but do not identify their divisional affiliation. Hyde (1937:39) and Hurt (1974:204), however, conclude that these were Sicangus. In their 1825 letter to James Barber, they wrote that the Black Hills were the western limit of Lakota territory.

In their entries for the year 1828-29, six Lakota winter counts record the presence of Lakota camps in the vicinity of Bear Butte (Howard, J. 1960:368). This confirms other observations that the Lakotas were situated within range of the Black Hills by 1830. During the same time period, it is important to note that accounts from the Long Expedition give no evidence of a Lakota presence beyond the Black Hills -- a situation that would change dramatically in coming decades (Hurt, 1974:198). Nevertheless, the American Horse winter count reports that some Lakotas were traveling as far south as the Sand Hills in Nebraska to capture wild horses (American Horse in Mallery 1987:82-83).

In the years between 1807 and 1829, only the Cheyennes stood in the path of Lakota migration to the Black Hills, and while this certainly must have slowed their movement when hostility prevailed between the two tribes, the Cheyennes’ presence was no longer an obstacle once a general peace was established, probably sometime after 1813, because Luttig writes that they were still stealing horses from the Cheyennes at this time (Hurt 1974:184). A decade later, however, Atkinson and O’Fallon (1825:605-608) write that the Lakotas were at peace with the Cheyennes. In this era, the Kiowas were no longer a major threat either, even though Lakota winter counts identify a hostile encounter with them in 1814-1815 (Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930:357; Blue Thunder in Howard, J. 1965b:360-361; American Horse in Mallery 1987:82-83; White Bull in Howard, J. 1998:14). Once the Kiowas abandoned their areas of occupation on the southern edge of the Hills, these locations were now open to Lakota expansion. This was especially true after 1823, when Sicangus bands were coexisting peacefully with the Poncas, intermarrying and fighting with them against the Pawnees (DeMallie 1975:36). Farther north, the eastern side of the Black Hills was also open as far as Bear Butte through the Lakota’s peaceful ties with the Cheyennes, but the area of the Little Missouri River and beyond was the ground on which the Lakotas and Cheyennes were still waging war with the Crows. Battles between the Lakotas and Crows are regularly noted for this period in winter counts and the documents of traders and explorers (Atkinson and O’Fallon 1825:607-608; High Hawk in Curtis 1907-30:3:175, 176; Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930:357-359; Swift Dog in Praus 1962:11; Hurt 1974:199; Howard, J. 1979:29; White Bull in Howard, J. 1998:17). By 1823, the combined forces of Lakotas and Cheyennes were able to take the headwaters of the Little Missouri River.

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6 There are conflicting reports on the identity of this enemy. Some accounts suggest that the enemy killed was a Crow, and one even suggests that he was a Cheyenne, but the vast majority identify him with the name the Lakotas commonly gave the Kiowas (Howard, J. 1965b:360-361).
FIGURE 7. Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Lakota Band Division Locations, circa 1850
and begin their penetration into the heart of Crow territory along the Powder, Tongue, and Yellowstone Rivers (Ewers 1938:88). But this area was still probably not safe enough to bring encampments with children and the elderly.

2. 1830-1850

Between 1830 and 1840, most of the Lakotas were moving away from their locations on the Missouri River. The Lakotas’ southerly and westerly movements, according to Hyde (1937:45, 1961:29), were encouraged by the presence of new trading posts near the Black Hills and on the Platte River in areas with richer grazing lands for their horses and better hunting grounds. In the early 1830s, many Oglalas and Sicangus were still trading at posts near the Missouri, including Fort Pierre and Fort Tecumseh. Once posts were established for the Sicangus on the White River, another for the Miniconjous near the forks of the Cheyenne, and a third for the Oglalas just east of Bear Butte, many no longer needed to make the long-distance trip to the Missouri to trade (Hyde 1937:41; Clow 1995:264). In time, posts would appear near Horse Creek and at other spots along the Platte River directly south and west of the Hills. In 1834, William Sublette and Robert Campbell opened a post on the Platte where Fort Laramie would eventually be built, and within a year, about two thousand Lakotas were reported to have visited this post (Price, C. 1996:21-22).

Richard White (1978:333-334) disputes Hyde’s assertion that Oglalas under Bull Bear’s leadership came to the Platte because of the presence of traders. He claims company records only reveal that traders recognized the Oglalas and Sicangus hunting grounds were shifting in a southerly direction because bison were beginning to withdraw from locations near the Missouri River. Shortages of bison were reported in the winter of 1832-1833, but this was temporary and due to an exceptionally warm winter (Clow 1995). Seven years later, however, the missionary Stephen J. Riggs saw few bison on his journey to Fort Pierre. As bison numbers declined east of the Missouri, more Lakotas moved west to hunt them (Hyde 1961:29; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:200; Price, C. 1996:8). Even on the Platte River, there were reports of scarcity after 1840. In 1842, a grasshopper plague destroyed the grasslands and caused starvation among the Lakotas, who were greatly alarmed by the disappearance of their herds (Price, C. 1996:49). Most of the reports of dwindling bison numbers along the Platte and Missouri rivers before 1840 appear to have been the result of local weather conditions, especially drought and/or unseasonably warm winters, rather than the irreversible and long term forces, climatic or otherwise, that came later.

The truth of what motivated the Lakotas to move farther west probably lies somewhere in the middle. On the one hand, it is clear that Lakotas were pushed westward as game became more erratic and scarce near the valley of the Missouri River. On the other hand, there is no question that they were also being drawn west because of new opportunities, which included the proximity of traders to prime bison ranges, better grazing conditions for their horses, and closer access to horse-rich tribes, such as the Pawnees and Kiowas, whose herds could be easily reached and raided (Bray 1994:178; Price, C. 1996:21-22). William Bordeaux (1929:192), a Sicangu historian, clearly implies that his people wintered along the Platte and in regions farther south because of their more temperate winter climate. Whatever the reasons for the Lakotas’ continued western migration, which probably reached its height in the 1830s, it led in no small degree to a period of great economic prosperity and independence (Ewers 1938:83).

By the 1830s, the historic record of Lakota locations is not dissimilar to what was reported for the Cheyennes and Arapahos. The German traveler, Maximilian, Prince of Wied, who made a tour of the Missouri River in 1832-1833, described Lakota territory as extending over the Black Hills to the Arkansas River, to the Rocky Mountains, and to the Yellowstone River (in Thwaites
1966:1:305). A few years later, 1835-1837, the missionary Samuel Parker (Hurt 1974:232-233) described Lakota territories as reaching from the Mississippi to the Black Hills, south to the Platte and over to the Big Horn Mountains. Although both probably exaggerated the extent of the Lakotas’ primary territories at this point in history, Maximilian more so than Parker, they were correct in their assumption that the Lakotas’ territorial reach had extended well beyond the Black Hills during the 1830s.

There is little doubt that the Lakotas had clearly established themselves on the eastern side of the Black Hills by 1830. There is also no question that when they reached this area other tribes were still present, including the Cheyennes and also the Poncas, who were located on Maximilian’s map in areas north of the Niobrara River (Hurt 1974:227). In 1832 and 1835, the letter books and journals of the Fort Pierre and Fort Tecumseh trading posts on the Missouri provide fairly detailed information on the whereabouts of the Lakotas. Some of the Sicangus were trading at posts on the White and Bad rivers (Deland and Robinson 1918:95n12, 112n51, 160). Yet, in the same period, George Hyde (1961:28) indicates that a portion of the Sicangus moved from the White to the Platte River in search of a more plentiful food supply. The Oglalas were trading at posts on the White and Bad rivers too (Deland and Robinson 1918:160), but they also appeared on the Platte (Hyde 1937:46-47; Clow 1995:264). In 1835, missionaries traveling to Oregon along the Platte River encountered a large group of Lakotas, probably Oglalas, who were going to the Black Hills to hunt and trade (Bushnell 1922:68). Returning to the year 1832, some of the Minneconjous were reported on the east side of the Missouri River, while others were with Sicangus and Oglalas on the White River and still more were on the Cheyenne and Moreau rivers (Deland and Robinson 1918:121-122, 141, 234). Even though some Sihasapas remained east of the Missouri (Deland and Robinson 1918:159), Hyde (1937:38-39) claims that the main body was already halfway up the Grand River with the Hunkpapas.

In 1839, Joseph Nicollet (De Mallie 1975:353-356, 1976:260-261) offered the most detailed account of a Lakota presence in the Black Hills. For the Soane divisions, he reported the Minneconjou with one hundred and eighty lodges on the Cheyenne River and in the Black Hills under the leadership of Red Fish, White Swan, and Noble White Crow. Led by Four White Bears, the Wanonwaktininan [Oohenonpas or Two Kettles], with eighty lodges, were situated on the Belle Fourche River and at Bear Butte. The Itazipco, who were headed by Crow Feather and Elk Head, were found on Cherry Creek and the Cheyenne, and Moreau rivers with one hundred and ten lodges. The Sihasapa, with one hundred lodges, were on the Grand River, and the Hunkpapa, also with one hundred lodges, were at locations from the Grand to the Cannonball River. For the Oglala, he identified the locations of three different bands, each with one hundred lodges. The Onkp hatina [Lodges at the end of the circle] led by Yellowish Eagle, and Ku-Iyan [Ku iya, or Gives Rock] under the direction of Mad Bear were reported from the Black Hills to the Platte River. The Oyurpe [Oyuxpe or Unloads], led by White Earrings, were located principally in the Black Hills. Finally, the four bands of Sicangu were given the following locations: the Cokatowanyan [Middle Village], with ninety lodges, were on the sources of the Niobrara and White rivers and at the White Buttes near Crawford, Nebraska; the Wazazi (also known as Wazaze or Fringed), a band of mixed Ponca ancestry with seventy lodges, were under the direction of Black Horn and traveled between the White and Cheyenne rivers; the Minishanan [Red Water], led by Red Water, had sixty lodges and traveled in the Sand Hills along the Niobrara River; and the Kiuksa [Those Who Divide], also in the Sands Hills, had sixty lodges under the leadership of Two Elks.

It is clear that the Lakotas were well established in the Black Hills by the end of the 1830s with several divisions wintering at locations near the foot of these mountains. Indeed, we can say that at this point in history the Lakotas were not only the largest and most dominant group in the
region but the Black Hills had become the center of their territorial universe as well (Larson
1997:50-51). We can also conclude that some of the Lakotas, especially those located along the
Platte, had abandoned their former haunts along the Missouri and no longer used this area as a
location for trade. Instead the southern divisions of the Lakotas, the Oglalas and Sicangus, were
taking their commerce to the upper reaches of the Cheyenne, White, Niobrara, and Platte rivers.
Most of the other Lakotas, however, were still east, but many of them were probably using posts
at the base of the Black Hills too, rather than traveling to the Missouri to trade. In later decades,
we find little about the bands who remained on the eastern side of the Hills and who were largely
removed from the catastrophic course of events that would engulf their relatives at locations south
and west of the Hills along the Platte River.

Until the 1830s, Dakota-speaking populations remained largely in territories east of the
Missouri River, although some of the Sisseton, Yankton, and Yanktonnai crossed the river to hunt
and trade (Hurt 1974:187). After hostilities erupted between Inkipaduta and his followers in Iowa,
some of the Wahpekute Dakotas joined the Yankton Dakotas and settled along the Missouri
River. In later years, these Wahpekute were reported in the Black Hills among bands of Lakota,
and in the 1870s, they were present at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. In its aftermath, most of
them fled with Sitting Bull to Canada, where many of Inkipaduta’s descendents now live. Some,
however, eventually returned to the United States and settled on the Spirit Lake Reservation in
North Dakota (Albers 1974; 2001a). With the decline of the fur-trade and the disappearance of
bison in regions east of the Missouri River, some of the Dakotas started to push their settlements
farther west. By 1837, Yankton territories were reported in locations west of the Missouri
along the White and Niobrara rivers (Denig in Ewers 1961:213; Horr 1974:313; Woolworth
1974:136, 145; Bray and Bray 1976:254). By contrast, their northern relatives, the Yanktonnais,
still remained on the east side of the Missouri at this time (Woolworth 1974:52; DeMallie 2001b).

During the decades of the 1830s and 1840s, the Lakotas were fighting wars on two fronts. In
the northwest, their hostilities with the Crows and Shoshones continued and even escalated with
many battles now being waged in their home territory, including locations at Bear Butte in 1830-
31 and the Buffalo Gap in 1831-32 (Good in Mallery 1893:319; Kindred in Beckwith, M. 1930:
359-362; Swift Dog in Praus 1962:13; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:120; American Horse and
Cloud-Shield in Mallery 1987:114-115). At this time, the Lakotas and their Arapaho and Chey­
enne allies were pushing their territorial reach to the Crow’s coveted hunting ranges on the
Powder and Tongue rivers (Gussow 1974:68). To the south, hostilities with the Pawnees also
intensified, not only because the Pawnee’s large horse herds were a favorite target for Lakota
raiding activity but also because the Lakotas’ territorial range was starting to infringe on the
Pawnees’ hunting grounds along the upper reaches of the Republican River (Dodge 1959:130-
131, 373).

In the next decade, the territory covered by the Lakotas continued to expand. Reports of their
presence in areas dominated by Cheyennes and Arapahos west of the Black Hills and north of
Fort Laramie became common. Likewise, more references appear listing them in Arapaho and
Cheyenne encampments at various locations between the Platte and Arkansas rivers. In 1842,
when John Fremont’s expedition reached Fort Laramie, several camps of Lakotas were seen.
They were described as allies of the Cheyennes and Arapahos, participating with them in joint
raids against Crows, Shoshones, and American emigrants (Hurt 1974:220-221). By 1846, the
Lakotas were the dominant population at Fort Laramie, with the Oglalas and Sicangus making up
the largest numbers. Some bands of Minneconjou were reported there as well (Parkman in
Feltskog 1969:135, 139). Although some Lakotas traveled and even moved into areas dominated
by their allies south of the Platte River, their numbers remained comparatively small at these
locations. Conversely, Arapahos and Cheyennes still remained, albeit in smaller numbers, in areas of the Black Hills now dominated by the Lakotas (Gussow1974:37).

In contrast to conventional understandings, the process by which Lakotas extended their territorial reach to the Black Hills and beyond was not simply a process of conquest and aggression. It also involved a gradual and incremental movement where the Lakotas entered into areas that they jointly held and protected with the Arapahos and Cheyennes who already lived there. As these two allies moved on in search of new hunting ranges and trading opportunities, the Lakotas became the dominant occupants of the Black Hills, often in areas where small segments of the previous inhabitants remained. Through the intermarriages, which often accompanied these patterns of co-residency, tribally distinct populations sometimes merged into single band communities taking on the identity of the dominant group. This is what appears to have happened to some of the Cheyennes who remained in the Black Hills and eventually became incorporated into the camp circles of the Oglalas as well as to some of the Poncas who became affiliated with the Sicangus. In the process, their separate identities became largely obliterated in the historic record.

In many respects, the decade of the 1840s represents a continuation of earlier historical trends. There were now several trading posts skirting the Black Hills that the Lakotas were reported to use with some regularity (Deland and Robinson 1918:179; Larson 1997:57-58). The 1842 and 1845 Fort Pierre journals and letter books continue to mention the presence of Sicangus on the White River (Deland and Robinson 1918:199), but in 1845, they also indicate the arrival of Minneconjous in the area. Other Minneconjous, however, were listed at Butte D Ores (Bear Butte), some were on the Platte, and one band was encamped near Fort Pierre. A portion of the Two Kettle division was also at Fort Pierre but others were on the White River (Ibid:206-207). The Hunkpapas and Sihasapas were located at Three Buttes on the Little Missouri River, but some were on the Platte as well. The Oglalas were mostly trading at Horse Creek and at other locations on the Platte River (Ibid:199).

Just as the larger body of Lakotas dispersed and realigned themselves in relation to their Cheyenne and Arapaho allies, they also began to rearrange their affiliations at a divisional level. Unlike earlier decades, when each Lakota division occupied a distinct territorial range that followed one of the Missouri River’s western tributaries upstream to the Black Hills, local groups were now reorganizing themselves with little regard to the territorial integrity of the divisions with whom they affiliated. In relation to the changes taking place among the Oglalas, George Hyde (1937:57-58) argues that after the death of Bull Bear in 1842, the group split into factions with each going its separate way. One segment became associated with Cheyennes and Arapahos and hunted southwest of Fort John, while another became aligned with Sicangus and Minneconjous from the Black Hills and hunted southeast of this post. In 1846, there was another separation with the Smoke people moving north and hunting between the Black Hills and the Big Horn Mountains (Hyde 1961:99; Price, C. 1996:25-26). In contrast to the position that Hyde takes, one could argue that this was not simply an example of political factionalism within Oglala ranks, but rather an instance of multiple adaptive strategies emerging under conditions of rapid change. Older alignments were disintegrating and new ones were being formed as Lakotas moved away from their former areas of occupation to search out new territories and trade opportunities. These new alliances not only cut-across the Lakota’s own divisional affiliations, but they transcended tribal boundaries as well.

Following the path of their Arapaho and Cheyenne allies, the Lakotas now became more geographically dispersed, but they were also becoming more internally differentiated and specialized. Some bands, who were called Wagluke [Loafers], began to establish their principal
settlements near trading posts, marrying their daughters to traders and serving as go-betweens for
the bands who focused much of their labor on bison-hunting (Mekeel 1943:188; Hyde 1961:100;
Bray 1994:178-179). Some of the bison-hunting bands began to travel more widely, as far south
as the Republican River in Kansas and as far north as the Tongue River in Montana, to find
hunting grounds where bison were still plentiful (Bordeaux 1929:192; Bray 1994:179; Price, C.
1996:26-27). Other bands, however, stayed behind, remaining in or near the Black Hills and in
the valleys of the Cheyenne, White, and Bad Rivers where bison were less abundant but other
kinds of game, including antelope, bighorn sheep, elk, and deer, were still plentiful. Differences
such as these existed among the Cheyennes and Arapahos as well, and this helps us to under­
stand why some of the bands of these two tribes also remained close to the Black Hills until the
reservation era, even when their relatives in other bands were moving to far removed locations in
search of the larger herds of bison (Bray 1994:185-186).

Before Lakota lives were disrupted and profoundly changed by the growing presence of
foreigners in their midst, Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961) wrote about their locations and culture
prior to 1845 based on his many years of experience as a fur-trader on the Upper Missouri and at
Cherry Creek, a tributary of the Cheyenne. West of the Missouri River, he described Sioux
territory as extending from the mouth of the Grand River to the head of the Powder River, and
from this point it moved along the western side of the Black Hills to Fort Laramie on the Platte
and then east to the junction of the Niobrara with the Missouri (Ibid:3). Denig also offered some
of the most detailed information to date on the travels and whereabouts of various Lakota
divisions.

He described the Sicangus territorial range as extending from the headwaters of the Niobrara
and White rivers to the Bad River. He identified their leader as Clear Blue Earth and their
principal enemies as Pawnees and Arikaras. Denig (Ibid:16-19) also reported that due to the
emigrations of white people across their country, the Sicangus had suffered more than any other
Lakota population the devastating consequences of epidemic disease.

Denig (Ibid:19-21) claimed the Oglalas inhabited a territory that included the Black Hills,
extending northeast from Fort Laramie on the Platte to the headwaters of the Bad River and the
forks of the Cheyenne. He wrote that The Swan led them, and that their primary enemies were
the Crows who they regularly raided for horses. Like the Sicangus, they were now suffering the
effects of epidemic disease. Prophetically, he also argued that in due time the Oglalas would start
to raid along the Overland Trail and force the government to exterminate them.

The Minneconjous, according to Denig (Ibid:22-23), largely abandoned their locations near
the Missouri River due to the absence of bison and traveled the country between Cherry Creek
and the Grand River where game was still plentiful. They were led by La Corne Seule, but after
his death they divided into many small groups. They were allied with the Oglalas in wars against
the Crows, and they also counted the Mandans and Hidatsas as their enemies. In the 1840s, they
made peace with the Arikaras from whom they acquired corn in exchange for meat and hides

The Hunkpapas, Sihasapas, and Itazipcos often traveled in the same area as the Minneconjous
but also inhabited the Moreau, Cannonball, Heart, and Grand rivers (Ibid:25). In later years, their
hunting territories extended to the Little Missouri River. Denig also noted that they were little
affected by the diseases originating along the Overland Trail, and that they were at peace with the
Arikaras but enemies of the Assiniboins, Hidatsas, and Mandans (Ibid:27). Finally, the
Oohenonpas (Two Kettles) were headed by Two Bears, restricted their territorial reach to the
Moreau and Cheyenne rivers, and maintained good relations with the traders on the Missouri (Ibid:28-29).

Kingsley Bray (1994:172-174) has written that the Lakotas experienced a remarkable expansion of their population from 8500 people in 1805 to 16,100 in 1881. In this period, Oglala growth was staggering: their numbers increased nearly fivefold from a population size of 1000 in 1805 to 4800 in 1881. The growth of other Lakota divisions was more modest: Sicangus doubled their numbers and the Sihasapas grew by about forty percent. The Minneconjous, on the other hand, lost about half of their numbers, while the size of the Itazipcos and Hunkapapas remained about the same. Unlike the village populations who lost about ninety-five percent of their people from the time of contact to the reservation period, the Lakotas gained large numbers. Their nomadic patterns of dispersal helped them to avoid some of the most disastrous effects of the epidemic outbreaks that depopulated the village populations, but they also enabled them to broaden their adaptive strategies by covering a wide range of ecological and economic niches in the territories they traveled.

Clearly, part of their phenomenal growth was sustained by lower mortality rates and an improved access to food resources. Yet, it was also the result of people being siphoned off from other tribes, such as the Cheyennes and Poncas, who became integrated into the Lakota body politic. This was certainly happening internally. The remarkable growth of the Oglalas was the result of people being drawn from other divisions, especially the Minneconjous. Bray (1994:185-186) argues that the Oglalas maintained an aggregative strategy, characterized by greater flexibility in their leadership, residence, and alliance formations, enabling them to rapidly and easily incorporate outsiders into their ranks. Moreover, they moved more often and dispersed themselves over a much wider range of territory. This allowed them to achieve an adaptive advantage because they continued to have access to prime food resources. This would have been particularly critical, after 1840, when bison began their precipitous decline in areas east of the Black Hills. The Minneconjous, on the other hand, followed a more stable strategy with limited movement, a hereditary leadership, and more rigid patterns of residence and alliance. As Bray (Ibid:185) puts it, they shed their excess population to other Teton divisions.

III. TRIBAL TIES TO THE ENVIRONS OF WIND CAVE

In the decades before 1850 the tribal nations who lived in the shadows of the Black Hills were able to pursue many different opportunities in making a livelihood. They had access to a wide range of environments with a varied selection of game, plant, and mineral resources, and they possessed diverse strategies for drawing on them. They also had access to a large network of commercial centers in which to trade their own products for commodities of American manufacture. In making different choices, some bands established a fairly direct reliance on the commerce of American trading communities. Others, however, retained more of their independence, either through a highly specialized and trade-focused bison-hunting economy or through a more variegated and subsistence-focused orientation (see Chapter Seven). The particular paths local bands followed clearly influenced where they traveled and located their settlements and whether they remained in one area or moved on to another.

By the 1850s, the eastern Black Hills were not an ideal location for bands that were becoming heavily vested in the region’s commerce as middlemen, as hide producers, or as pastoralists. The middlemen required territories near trading posts with a strong commercial traffic, and many of these were some distance from the Black Hills at locations along the Missouri and Platte. Nevertheless, as William Bordeaux (1929:45, 82-83, 191-192) and Susan Betteleyoun and Jose-
Phine Waggoner (1988: 21) point out, these groups still made annual trips to the Black Hills for specialized purposes such as elk hunting and the procurement of lodge poles. Nor were they especially suited to the needs of the hide producers, who required access to hunting grounds where bison were plentiful enough to produce a surplus of robes for trade. Most of the good bison ranges were now situated at some distance from the Black Hills near the Republican, Tongue, and Powder rivers. Nevertheless, many of these groups traveled long-distances to the Hills every year to cut lodgepoles for their tipis, to carry out religious observances, and to conduct other specialized procurement activities (Bordeaux 1929:82-83, 191-192; De Giradin 1936:63; Denig in Ewers 1961:6; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:154,270-271; Bettelyoun and Wagonner 1988:21). The Hills were also not the most optimal location for groups who specialized in horse raising. As John Moore (1987:14) notes, many Cheyenne bands moved south in the winter to take advantage of a milder climate and richer grazing conditions for their horses but returned to the Black Hills region in the summertime. These transhumance migrations were determined not simply by the presence of bison and other sources of food but equally important by the availability of good pasturage for their horses.

Nonetheless, the Hills remained an excellent location for groups who pursued more diversified subsistence strategies, offering easy access not only to small herds of bison but also to elk, antelope, deer, and bighorn sheep. They also held diverse plant environments and good locations for winter shelter. For these groups, the Black Hills and its immediate surroundings constituted their primary territorial range (Hassrick 1964:156; One Bull in Stone 1982:23; White Bull in Stone 1982:25). As will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Seven, some Lakota and Cheyenne bands spent a great deal of time at the base of the Hills and in the open parks at their southern reaches where good hunting grounds and pasturage for their horses were found. Many of them also used the high elevation interiors of the Black Hills in the summertime for specialized purposes and camped in these areas for short periods of time as well (Bordeaux 1929:45, 82-83, 191-192; Denig in Ewers 1961:6; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:154, 270-271).

Understanding that bands among the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas followed diverse adaptive strategies during this time period helps us make sense of their wide-ranging and ever-shifting movements. From 1807 to 1850, the Black Hills stood within the vast territorial reaches of all three tribes. Indeed, it can be asserted that these tribes jointly and exclusively occupied the Hills throughout much of this period. While other tribal nations were known to have entered the Hills occasionally to trade, raid, and to carry on limited procurement activities, they no longer lived near the Hills on a year-round basis, nor did they reside at the base of the Hills for extended and seasonally defined stays.

In the case of the Cheyennes, the Hills constituted the heart of their settlement from 1780 to 1825. This was the place where the largest concentrations of Cheyenne lived and congregated. In subsequent decades, even as increasing numbers of Cheyenne, mostly Wotapi, Tsististas and their affiliated bands, moved away from the Hills to locations along the Platte and as far south as the Arkansas River in Colorado, the Hills still remained the home base for a substantial population of Cheyenne from the Totonomaa, Osmisis, and Sutaio divisions. These Cheyennes inhabited the northern and western sides of the Hills at locations extending from the forks of the Cheyenne River to the Big Horn Mountains. Another recognizable body of Cheyenne made up mostly of Masikota and Hisometaneo continued to live on the southeastern side of the Hills at locations that covered a territory between the South Fork of the Cheyenne River and the upper reaches of the Niobrara. The Masikota were probably the Cheyennes that Parkman (in Wade 1947) placed in the Black Hills on his 1849 map. Regardless of where and how far away the Cheyennes lived and traveled from the Hills, they always returned to this area to conduct their religious observances, to trade, to meet and deliberate on political issues with other tribes, and to

Of the tribal nations who inhabited the Black Hills in the early half of the nineteenth century, the Arapahos were the oldest occupants. When the main body of Cheyennes took up residence around the Hills at the end of the eighteenth century, Arapaho settlements already encircled the Hills and had done so for many decades. Although some Arapahos were reported on the eastern side of the Hills near the forks of the Cheyenne River as late as the 1790s, the vast majority had moved to locations on their southern and western peripheries. Like the Cheyennes, the Arapaho bands of the early nineteenth century were dispersed over a wide geographic area, which extended from the North Fork of the Platte River near present day Casper, Wyoming to the Arkansas River in Colorado. By 1850, most of their bands lived outside the reaches of the Black Hills, but some wintered along tributary streams on the western side of the Hills. The Black Hills may no longer have been at the geographic center of this tribe’s territorial reach but they were certainly well within its territorial boundaries (Fowler 2001:840-841, Personal Communication Oct. 2001).

For the Lakotas, the Black Hills did not become the geographic center of their territorial range until the 1830s. Some Lakota bands certainly lived there in earlier decades amidst Cheyennes and Arapahos, but for the vast majority, the Hills stood at the western margins of their territory. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, they were a location to which the Lakotas traveled to hunt bison in the summer and fall from their winter settlements on the Missouri River. By the 1820s, the eastern edge of the Black Hills had become well populated by Lakotas, who were now living in their reaches on a year-round basis. Over the next decade, Lakota camps would surround the Hills in the same fashion as the Cheyenne and Arapaho before them. Before the 1830s, the Lakotas were not the dominant population in the Black Hills, although this would change rapidly in subsequent decades. By the 1850s, the Lakotas were clearly the largest population in the Hills with smaller numbers of Cheyennes and Arapahos living in their midst.

In Lakota movements to the Hills, the Sicangus were the ones who occupied much of the territorial range on the southern end of the Hills, while the Oglalas took up the territory on their eastern peripheries. To the north, Minneconjous and Itazipcos dominated the Black Hills landscape. In later years, this would change as Sicangus expanded their territorial reach south to the Niobrara River and beyond, as the Oglalas moved to distant locations south, west, and north of the Hills, as some of the Hunkpapas moved south and wintered on the northern edge of the Hills, and as Minneconjous took up residence on the eastern margins of the Hills and at locations as far south as the Platte River (Denig in Ewers 1961:16, 19, 22-23; DeMallie 1975).

From material presented in Chapter Seven, we can conclude that during the 1830s many Oglala, Sicangu, Minneconjou, and Itazipco bands of the Lakota and the Omisis, Sutaio, Totoimana, and Masikota bands of Cheyenne wintered near the Black Hills and remained in and around their reaches for much of the year, leaving them to travel to trading posts and to search out bison herds on the surrounding grasslands during the late summer and early fall. For the other bands, the Hills were not the locations where their people typically wintered, but places they visited on a regular and recurring basis for specialized purposes, especially during the summer months. Most of these visits were probably of short duration, a few weeks or even a month, but on some occasions, bands who typically wintered elsewhere may have stayed for an extended season or longer when game resources were scarce in the areas they customarily hunted or when politics and kinship compelled them to stay. No matter how their specific relationship to the Black Hills was defined, it is clear that a large portion of the Lakotas and Cheyennes were affiliated with the Black Hills in some way after 1835 and so too were some of the Arapahos.
The picture of the particular peoples who lived and traveled near the region of Wind Cave National Park is not much clearer in the early half of the nineteenth century than it was in the previous century. What we know about the area is still based on information that originated at far removed locations. More so than in the previous century, however, we can begin to specify the band affiliations of some of the peoples known to occupy this area, but we are still unable to determine from any direct line of historical evidence how this area may have been utilized. The record of human habitation from this period still rests largely on circumstantial evidence. From 1807 to 1850, there is no direct mention of any Arapahos living in the southeastern Hills or adjoining areas. This stands in contrast not only to the literatures reported from an earlier era but also to government correspondence from the next decade that documents Arapahos in the midst of Sicangus on lands within easy reach of the southeastern Black Hills and the area of Wind Cave National Park (Twiss 1855:82-83, 1856:96). Many of the same government accounts and also tribal oral traditions reveal that a few Cheyenne bands from the Masikota, and possibly the Omisis and Sutaio divisions were in the same area too, living among the Sicangus and Oglalas with whom they intermarried (Twiss 1855:82-83; Moore, J. 1987:229-234). The Wotapio Cheyenne, who had lived in this region at the end of the eighteenth century, abandoned the area probably when their Kiowa allies were under Lakota attack, and they were among the first Cheyenne to establish themselves in territories south of the Platte River (Moore, J. 1987:228-229). The Tsistsistas Cheyenne and their allied divisions were certainly within easy reach of the southeastern Hills and the area of Wind Cave National Park when they wintered at the forks of the Cheyenne River, but after 1825, they moved out of the area to the Platte River and locations farther south (Moore, J. 1987:234-235).

There is a much richer body of evidence for the presence of Lakotas in the southeastern region of the Hills, and after the 1830s, they unquestionably had the largest presence here. The Sicangu division was often associated with this area, and by the 1820s, much of their habitat followed the South Fork of the Cheyenne and the White River at locations only a short distance from the southeastern Hills (Deland and Robinson 1918:121-122,141,234; Clyman in Camp 1960:16-17; Denig in Ewers 1961:16; Hyde 1961:17; Hurt 1974:179, 181, 199, 201, 204, 206; DeMallie 1975:353-356; Cheney 1979:19). In the 1830s, a trading post was built for their commerce at Cache Butte, forty miles directly east of the Buffalo Gap (Deland and Robinson 1918:95n12, 112n51,160; Price, C. 1996:21-22). Even more specifically, the Wazazi band of mixed Lakota-Ponca ancestry was one of the bands most often identified with lands bordering the southeastern Hills (DeMallie 1975:353-356). Some bands of the Oglala division were also affiliated with this area, even though many of them moved to the Platte or Powder River countries (Clyman in Camp 1960:16-17; Denig in Ewers 1961:19; Hurt 1974:200; DeMallie 1975:353-356). The Minneconjou were reported to have a small presence in the area as well (Deland and Robinson 1918:121-122,141,234). Lakotas who typically wintered at locations on the northern side of the Hills, at the forks of the Cheyenne River, near the Missouri River, or at locations farther south on the Niobrara and in the Sand Hills of Nebraska, still used this region too, but they probably did so on a more opportunistic or restricted basis.
Chapter Five

TREATIES AND BROKEN PROMISES:
1851 to 1877

Although only a short span of time in the history of the Black Hills, the decades between 1851 and 1877 were momentous ones. This was a time when bison began to disappear from the Black Hills and the surrounding prairies, forcing local tribes to move even farther away to find good bison hunting grounds. By the 1860s, only a few areas in the Plains, including the Republican Fork and the Tongue/Powder river countries, held bison herds large enough to sustain a livelihood for the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos who hunted there. This was also a period when the growing presence of foreigners created even more hardship for local tribes and when the United States entered into treaties with tribal nations that led to the relinquishment of large tracts of tribal territory. Most of all it was the era of the gold rush when American soldiers, scientists, prospectors, speculators, and settlers entered the Black Hills illegally and made claims on the land, eventually leading the United States to seize the area from the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos: as the U.S. Court of Claims wrote in 1975, *a more ripe and rank case of dishonorable dealings will never, in all probability be found in our history...* (quoted from Lazarus 1991:344).

I. THE HISTORIC LITERATURE

The history of the Black Hills between 1851 and 1877 is written from two very different, and at times antagonistic perspectives. On one side are the writings of Americans who were attempting to civilize local tribes, confine them to reservations and take possession of their lands. These records, which include the writings of soldiers, scientists, government agents, and early settlers, depict a history that ultimately favors and defends American expansionism and the taking of the Black Hills. On the other side are accounts by Indians as well as non-Indians, including traders and federal agents, who viewed the Black Hills in a light more sympathetic to tribal interests and traditions. Today, this divide persists in the various ways the history of the Hills is depicted and interpreted in the writings of contemporary scholars. While all history gets written from different, and at times contested, vantage points, the story of the Black Hills stands out because it continues to be told in a context where questions of their ownership on historical, legal, political, cultural, and even religious grounds are still being challenged.

A. The Agency View

Beginning in 1851, much of the information about the tribal nations who occupied and traveled in the Black Hills originates from the writings of civilian officials who represented the United States government in its dealings with local tribes. Until 1867, this information is part of the record of agencies located on the Platte River, and after 1872, it appears in correspondence and reports primarily from the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail Agencies on the White River. Many of these documents were published in the *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, and they typically cover the agents' day-to-day attempts to supervise and assimilate the bands under their jurisdiction. References made to the Black Hills in these reports give some evidence of tribal use of this area. There are also other government documents that deal with the nego-
tations surrounding the Black Hills, and these are especially important, particularly the pro-
ceedings of the Allison Commission (18 June 1875, Report of the Commission to Treat With the
Sioux Indians for the Relinquishment of the Black Hills, Annual Report of the Commissioner of
Indian Affairs) and the Manypenny meetings that led to the Black Hills Agreement of 1876-77
(The Report and Journal of Proceedings of the Commission Appointed to Obtain Certain
Concessions from the Sioux Indians, Senate Exec. Doc. No. 9, Cong. 2 Sess. 1876). Much of this
government literature is drawn on in a wide variety of secondary sources that detail the more
general histories of local tribes during this period, including work on the Oglalas (Hyde 1937,
Olson 1965; Price, C. 1996; Larson 1997), the Sicangus (Hyde 1961), the Northern Cheyennes
(Powell 1969, 1982; Weist 1977), and the Arapahos (Fowler 1982).

B. The Military Approach

1855 marks the date when American military and scientific expeditions began to explore the
Black Hills, leaving detailed information on their geologic, meteorological, zoological, and
botanical characteristics. The accounts about their tribal occupancy are generally less informative,
although some contain brief but valuable observations on tribal locations, procurement activity,
and religious sites. The expeditions of General William S. Harney in 1855, 1856, and 1857 gen-
erated considerable information about the Black Hills through the accounts of the topographical
engineer, Lieutenant Governor Kimball Warren (1856, 1875; McLaird and Turchen 1973). Warren’s
work contains valuable information on tribal locations, even though much of it refers to areas surrounding the Black Hills. A few years later, in 1859-1860, Captain William Franklin
Raynolds crossed the northern reaches of the Hills (McLaird and Turchen 1974a), describing
many of their topographic features and some of the Native names for them. The naturalist, Ferdinad Vandiveer Hayden, traveled in the area on several private expeditions between 1854
and 1866, and he also accompanied two military expeditions in 1855-56 and 1859-60. He
recorded detailed information on tribal names and territories in an important work entitled On the
Ethnography and Philology of the Indian Tribes of the Missouri Valley (1862; McLaird and
Turchen 1974b). Little was written about the tribal occupation of the southeastern Black Hills
where Wind Cave National Park is now located, although David Dale Owens mapped the area for
the Geological Survey as early as 1852 (Sundstrom, J. 1994:16).

It was not until the 1870s that any writings appear based on direct observations of the Black
Hills southern reaches and their high elevation interiors. Most of these appear in the records of
three government-sponsored expeditions. The first was the expeditionary force under the leadership of General George Armstrong Custer that toured the Black Hills in the summer of 1874. It
was by far the largest and most controversial of the expeditions to explore the Black Hills. The
best information on the expedition’s travels was recorded by its Engineer Officer, William Lud-
low (1875; McAndrews 1974; McLaird and Tuschen 1974c) and various newspaper correspondents (in Krause and Olson 1974). Their writings about the Black Hills Expedition provide some
details about the Hills’ tribal occupation and use, but most of them are limited to brief observa-
tions and ad hoc commentary. Later in the summer, the Sioux Commission under the direction
of Samuel Hinman, a clergyman influential in national Indian affairs, led a group to the southern
region of the Black Hills to scout out possible locations for new Lakota agencies (Anderson, G.
K. 1979). He wrote a short report (10 November 1874, Report of the Sioux Commission, in
Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs) containing a few tribally related references.
A year later in 1875, two geologists, Walter P. Jenney and Henry Newton (Jenney 1875, 1876;
Newton and Jenney 1880; McLaird and Tusch 1974d), led another government sponsored
expedition, under the military command of Colonel Richard I. Dodge (1965, Kime 1998), to
verify the presence of gold in the Hills and to evaluate their worth pursuant to negotiating an
agreement with the Lakotas for their sale. The records left by this expedition contain various sorts of information on the region’s tribal occupancy, but much of it is slanted to justify the United States taking possession of the region.

C. The Settlers’ Outlook

From 1874 when Custer’s expedition arrived in the Black Hills to 1877 when the U.S. government extinguished American Indian title to the Black Hills, large numbers of gold prospectors entered the Hills and with them came an assortment of people to supply their provisions, accommodations, and transportation. Some of these early American settlers left written accounts of their early years in the Hills in published and unpublished form (Brennan 1875; Tallent 1899; Brown and Willards 1924; Hughes 1957; Curley 1973; Booth in Sundstrom, J. 1994:27-29; Arnold in Crawford and Waggoner 1999; McClintock 2000), which reveal a great deal about the life of the miners, the growth of the mining towns, the trails the newcomers took to reach the mines, and the general development of the region’s economic, social, and political infrastructure. Many of these accounts also make reference to the relations between local settlers and the tribal nations who still owned the Black Hills. Most of them focus on the hostile engagements, but a few offer glimpses of peaceful encounters. More recently, a number of secondary histories have been written about the early years of white settlement in the Hills: these include, among others, Watson Parker’s *Gold in the Black Hills* (1966) and Paul Friggens, *Gold & Grass: The Black Hills Story* (1983). Several local county and town histories, including Jessie Sundstrom’s *Custer County History to 1976* (1977) also contain important information about this period in the history of the Black Hills.

D. Tribal Perspectives

FIGURE 8. Fort Laramie Treaty Lands, 1851
and used by local tribal nations; however, it is often at variance with the accounts of the American civilian and military officials who toured the Hills during the same era.

II. THE EVENTS AND LOCATIONS

The 1851 to 1877 era falls into two distinct periods, each of which begins with a treaty negotiated between local tribes and the U.S. Government at Fort Laramie on the Platte River in what is now the state of Wyoming. The Fort Laramie treaties of 1851 and 1868 imposed European American ideas about property ownership on the landscape, and in the process, they introduced a new dimension into Indian-White relationships that would profoundly affect the nature of tribal ties to the Black Hills. The first period covers the years when the United States became actively involved in defining and restricting tribal land rights through treaties, while the second covers the time when the United States started to abrogate earlier treaty commitments that led to the seizure of the Black Hills. The congressional passage of the Black Hills Act in 1877 legitimized for Americans their ownership of the Hills, but it embittered the Northern Arapahos, Northern Cheyennes, and Lakotas, who held both an aboriginal and a legally-binding treaty title to the area. The dishonorable events and circumstances surrounding the passage of this act would make the Hills a site of contestation for generations to come.1

A. 1851-1868

The year 1851 marked a major turning point in Lakota fortunes and in the destinies of their Cheyenne and Arapaho allies. It was the year of the first Fort Laramie Treaty and the end of a time when tribal population growth soared, when their territorial holdings multiplied, and when their economic opportunities were plentiful (Bray 1994). It was the dawn of a new era, when the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos began to feel even greater pressure from the scores of emigrants entering their lands (Price, C. 1996:27-28; Isenberg 2000:111-113). The arrival of these Americans brought more epidemic disease, which had especially devastating impacts on the bands whose territories bordered the overland trails (Hyde 1937:63, 67; Denig in Ewers 1961:19-22; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:44-48). This was a time when the major food source of local tribes, the bison, declined and when the U.S. government began to play a greater role in provisioning tribes with food rations (Swagerty 1988:76, 83; Pickering 1994:62; Price, C. 1996:28-30). In short, it was a period of profound transition when the very fabric of tribal livelihoods was being eroded by the loss of their food base, freedom of movement, and the lands that defined and sustained their way of life.

During the 1850s, major events were also unfolding outside Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe homelands that would have a direct impact on their future independence as sovereign nations. Although their lifestyles had changed in earlier eras through the introduction of foreign technologies, commodities, and systems of commerce, these tribes continued to maintain their own systems of land-use and governance. Now, foreign forces would begin to change their relationship to the land and the very conditions and terms of their sovereignty. By 1851, the American frontier’s relentless march had reached the eastern edge of the vast territorial domain these tribes held. As a result of land cessions by the Minnesota Dakotas in 1851, Yanktons in 1857, and the Poncas in 1858, much of the land east of the Missouri River was now open to white occupation

1 Chapter Eight offers a legal reading of the provisions and consequences of the federal statues negotiated in this time period, namely, the Fort Laramie Treaties of 1851 and 1868 and the Black Hills Agreement of 1877, and the subsequent claims that tribes have made against the United States for the unconscionable taking of the Black Hills and other treaty lands. Here attention is given only to the historical circumstances and events that surrounded the making of the treaties and an agreement.
(Albers 2001:769-770; Brown and Irwin 2001:426-427; DeMallie 2001d:779-781). Once Americans established settlements and territorial governments in areas bordering those of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, more pressure was placed on the federal government to claim and develop their lands. During the 1860s and 1870s, government treaty negotiators were barely a step ahead of the railroad magnates, land developers, mining interests, and emigrants awaiting entry into newly ceded tribal lands. Indeed, as the history of the Black Hills demonstrates, no sooner had the ink on one treaty dried than movements were afoot to negotiate more land cessions.

When the American frontier started to close in on the lands of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, U.S. Indian policy was fraught with inconsistency. In the 1860s, Indian affairs were largely governed by the representatives of various religious denominations, which held a major stake in proselytizing the Indians and bringing them into the fold of Christianity and its ideas of civilization. Under the influence of church and humanitarian groups, a major reform movement was in place that advocated a more fair-minded and even-handed treatment of tribes under U.S. jurisdiction, and this was the dominant policy position when the U.S. began its efforts to bring about the cession of Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho lands (Hyde 1937:187-204; Olson 1965: 202-203; Price, C. 1996:72-73, 84-85). But just as federal Indian policy was being redefined to meet the demands of the reformers, the Civil War broke out. The war stalled, at least temporarily, the frontier's progress, but it also created a well-organized military command that was easily redeployed to fight the tribes when the Civil War ended. Indeed, most of the troops sent west were led by generals who built their rank and reputation on eastern battlefields. The growing presence of the military in the west brought about the development of a more aggressive political posture in the U.S. government's dealings with local tribes, and in many ways, this militarization was a direct prelude to the events that ultimately led to the taking of the Black Hills (Olson 1965: 10-12, 132, 144; Fowler 2001b: 282).

1. The 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie and Tribal Territories

In 1851, Congress appropriated $100,000 for two federal agents, Thomas Fitzpatrick and David Dawson Mitchell, to negotiate a treaty of friendship and peace with tribal nations of the upper Missouri and Platte regions. On September 16, 1851, a council of tribes was convened at Horse Creek, a tributary of the Platte River, east of Fort Laramie in present-day Wyoming. Various accounts (Berthong 1963:119; Lazarus 1991:16-17) estimate that nearly ten thousand people, representing the Arapaho, Arikara, Assiniboine, Cheyenne, Crow, Hidatasa, Sioux, Mandan, and Shoshone nations, attended this gathering. Many of these tribes were bitter enemies, yet peace prevailed among them before, during, and after the treaty deliberations.

Under the terms of the treaty (Kappler 1903:2:440-442), all tribes in attendance pledged a lasting peace with each other. They agreed to cease all forms of aggression, including warring, raiding, and horse thieving. They consented to share their hunting ranges, especially those districts where bison were still plentiful. The treaty also contained articles pledging a peace between the tribes and the United States. Among other things, the articles contained provisions that gave the U.S. government permission to construct roads and military posts within tribal territories and to permit the safe passage of emigrants through these areas in return for the payment of annual annuities.

Although many Lakotas and Dakotas were present at the treaty deliberations, only Sicangu, Oohenunpa, and Yankton leaders signed it. A huge territory was mapped out for them that included the Black Hills (see Figure 8 and Chapter Eight for further details). Much of this
territory, however, was shared with Cheyennes and Arapahos who became falsely and exclusively identified with territories between the North Fork of the Platte River in eastern Wyoming and the Arkansas River in Colorado (Shakespeare 1971:72; Weist 1977:47; Price, C. 1996: 1-36). Even though both of these populations still lived in and used the Black Hills, the Cheyennes much more so than the Arapahos, this was not taken into consideration when treaty negotiators carved out areas of tribal habitation according to European derived notions of exclusive occupancy. This area was assigned to the Lakotas. Judging by some of the speeches of tribal leaders contained in the Fort Laramie Treaty Journal, including one given by Black Hawk (Horr 1974:55-56), the Lakotas were fully aware that they shared much of their territory with the Cheyennes and Arapahos because they had taken and defended it together as allied parties. In fact, it was common practice for tribal nations who fought together to share use rights to the territories they jointly acquired and defended. Imposing territorial boundaries by tribal identification was not the way in which local populations distributed themselves across geographic space (Lazarus 1991:16-19; Albers 1993:112-122). At this point in history, the territorial boundaries drawn on the 1851 treaty map were largely meaningless as local tribes continued to move across the landscape in complex ways that encouraged the sharing of jointly held territories (Albers and Kay 1987:80-82). Nonetheless, as Raymond DeMallie (2001a:795) points out, the treaty set in motion the process of limiting tribal lands.

Given what we now know of tribal movement in and occupation of areas west of the Missouri River and north of the Arkansas, the tribal territories established by the Fort Laramie Treaty are grievously inconsistent with the historic record. This is true not only from the perspective of tribal oral traditions but also in relationship to the observations and writings of European Americans who traveled this region before 1851. Aside from the fact that the treaty borders did not match the actual distribution of the tribal nations across geographic space, they imposed a culturally alien understanding of human-land relationships.

2. Tribal Locations

During the decades between 1851 and 1868, different segments of the Lakota, Arapaho, and Cheyenne tribal nations appear to have been part of four shared territorial ranges, three of which encompassed the Black Hills. One territorial range, which stretched between the Platte and Arkansas rivers and west to the Rockies, was dominated by Southern Cheyennes and Southern Arapahos with small numbers of Lakotas, mostly Sicangus, among them. Another range moved northwest of the Black Hills to the Big Horn Mountains and Yellowstone River. Members of all three tribal nations traveled and lived in this area. A third range moved northeast from the Platte River across the southern and eastern flanks of the Black Hills to the Missouri by way of the Cheyenne River; it was occupied mostly by Lakotas although the Cheyennes had a recognizable presence there as well. Finally, the fourth range, held mostly by Lakotas and a few Cheyennes, covered an area between the northern base of the Black Hills and the Cannonball River in North Dakota.

In the 1850s, there were many reports specifically identifying the whereabouts and numbers of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. The principal sources of information for this era include the Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and Henry Schoolcraft’s Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States (1851-57:3:629-631). There are also Lt. G. K. Warren’s 1855 map (in McDermott 1952:14-15) and reports from the Harney Expeditions (Warren 1875). Finally, Ferdinand Hayden’s work On the Ethnography and Philology of the Indian Tribes of the Missouri
FIGURE 9. Locations of Tribal Nations, circa 1865

- Arikara
- Hidtasa
- Mandan
- Ponca
- Padouca Apache
- Arapaho
- Comanche
- Cheyenne
- Lakota
- Crow
- Kiowa
- Plains Apache
- Location of Wind Cave
Valley (1862), was based on material he collected on his many different visits to the region.

**a. Arapahos and Cheyennes**

Henry J. Schoolcraft's account (1851-57:3:630) confirms the presence of Cheyennes near the Black Hills in the early 1850s, but it also suggests that the bulk of the population, along with most of the Arapahos, were located in regions south and west of the Hills. In one of his reports, Lieutenant G. K. Warren (1875:51) described much of Cheyenne and Arapaho territory as situated south of the North Fork of the Platte to the Arkansas River. Yet, he revealed that many Cheyennes wintered with the Oglalas near Fort Laramie, and that some had taken refuge with the Lakotas in the Black Hills after the Ash Hollow massacre in 1854 (Warren 1875:51). These were probably the Totomania and Masikota Cheyennes. He also prophetically pointed out that the Cheyennes have always been friends with the Dakotas--and associate much with them...They will probably unite with the Dakotas in the event of any general war (Warren 1875:51). Similarly, Ferdinand Hayden (1862a:276) claimed that the bulk of the Cheyennes occupied the area between the north and south forks of the Platte River, an area they shared with the Arapahos, but he also observed that they covered a much larger territory extending from the Black Hills and the Powder River country to the Arkansas River.

Cheyenne oral traditions (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:1, 7, 20, 33, 47-48, 58; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:4-5; Powell 1982:2:758-760; Moore 1987:229-232) for this period consistently place the Omisis and Sutaio bands in areas between the Black Hills and the Big Horn Mountains and also at locations south of the hills along the White and Niobrara rivers. Government reports (Twiss to Manypenny, 10 Oct 1855: 82-83; 22 Sept 1856:96) also indicate a sizable number of Cheyennes and Arapahos, 160 and 140 lodges respectively, in the midst of the Oglalas and Sicangus in areas along the White and Niobrara Rivers. These were probably Masikota and Hisiometaneo Cheyennes (Moore 1987:216), and farther south below the Platte, Sicangus were interspersed with the Cheyenne Dog Soldier or Hotametaneo bands that eventually merged with some of the Masikotas (Curtis 1907-30:6:109).

**b. Lakotas**

The Lakotas were widely dispersed in this period too, and as in the previous era, the divisional affiliations of bands did not always follow discrete territorial ranges. In many ways this was a very confusing period as tribes rapidly regrouped and altered their locations in the face of European American encroachment on their land, dwindling game resources, and military threats. Old band affiliations and locations swiftly changed. Bands were constantly separating and regrouping as they chose either to stay away from or face the hostilities now engulfing the region. For example, the Wazazi band is now identified with the Oglalas rather than the Sicangus (Hayden 1862a:375-376). In this period, we have an especially good picture of the Lakotas and Cheyennes who joined the so-called war or hostile factions and who were associated with bands under the leadership of major figures such as Little Wolf, Sitting Bull, and Crazy Horse (Vestal 1934, 1957; Sandoz 1942; Utley 1963, 1993; Powell 1982; Robinson, C. 1995). There is also good information on the whereabouts of bands who followed other famous leaders, such as Red Cloud and Spotted Tail, and those known as the Wagluke, or Loafers who stayed near the agencies (Bordeaux 1929:45, 84-85, 191-192; Hyde 1937, 1961; Olson 1965; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988; Price, C. 1996). There is much less information, however, on what was happening to the populations who stayed out of the limelight, away from the hostilities and maintained limited contact with the trading posts, and in later years, the agencies.
i. Sicangus: The Sicangus Lakotas, whose numbers were given at five hundred lodges, continued to be identified with an area that extended along the Niobrara and White rivers from their headwaters to their confluence with the Missouri (Warren 1875:48; McDermott 1952:14-15), but they were also located on the Platte (Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:17-19, 50-52). The Teton (or Bad) River was typically identified as the northern boundary of their territory (Schoolcraft 1851-57:3:629-631; Hayden 1862a:372). Lt. G.K. Warren (1875:47) indicated, however, that their range extended to the North Fork of the Cheyenne River. By 1854, some Sicangus ranged even farther in the company of the Cheyennes and Arapahos, who had shifted their hunting grounds from the Laramie Plains to the Republican Fork and locations as far south as the Arkansas River (Hayden 1862:372; Hyde 1961:85-86). Indeed, Hyde (1961:88) argued that when the southern Lakotas began to move farther south, the Black Hills was already rather crowded with Sioux who had migrated westward from the Missouri, where buffalo were no longer plentiful. In 1855, the Sicangus were continuing their southward push into the territories of the southern Cheyennes and Arapahos because, according to Hyde (1961:72), they were fearful of moving north and wintering near the Black Hills with General Harney’s expedition in the region.

ii. Oglala: In the 1850s, the Oglala Lakotas were reported to have four hundred lodges situated at various locations encircling the Black Hills along the two forks of the Cheyenne River. Some were also located between the north and south branches of the Platte River on the western side of the Hills, and others were reported as far north as the headwaters of the Powder and Grand rivers (Schoolcraft 1851-57:3:629-631; Hayden 1862:373-374; Warren 1875:48; Hurt 1974:228), although on Warren’s 1875 map, they are confined to areas along the Platte (Warren in McDermott 1952:14-15).

iii. Minneconjou and Itazipco: The Minneconjou Lakotas, with two hundred and seventy lodges, and the Itazipco Lakotas, with one hundred and fifty, were reported to travel with the Oglalas at the headwaters of the Cheyenne River and over much of the Black Hills country (Schoolcraft 1851-57:3:629-631; Hayden 1862:374; Warren 1875:48; Warren in McDermott 1952:14-15; Hurt 1974 228). On Warren’s 1875 map, the Minneconjous were situated along the eastern flanks of the Black Hills south of French Creek (Warren in McDermott 1952:14-15). The Minneconjous were also located in areas north of the Cheyenne River as far as the Moreau, while some of the Itazipcos were reported to travel in territories along the Grand River in the company of the Hunkpapas and Sihasapas (Hurt 1974:228; Hayden 1862:373; Hurt 1974:228). Warren’s map (in McDermott 1952:14-15) places the Itazipcos on the northern end of the Black Hills.

iv. Sihasapa, Hunkpapa, and Oohenonpa: The Sihasapa and the Hunkpapa Lakotas were listed with seven hundred and twenty lodges, and their principal territorial range was reported to cover the regions between the Moreau and Cannonball rivers (Schoolcraft 1851-57:3:629-631; Hayden 1862:374; Warren 1875:48; McDermott 1952:14-15; Hurt 1974:228). Lt. G.K. Warren (1875:48), however, noted that, after 1855, some of the Hunkpapas and Sihasapas were traveling with the Minneconjous to areas on the northern side of the Black Hills, even though the main bodies of these two Lakota divisions were still located between the Grand and Moreau Rivers (Hurt 1974:228). Finally, according to Warren (1875:48; Hurt 1974:228) and Hayden (1862:374), the Oohenonpa Lakotas (or Two Kettles), who once remained in the vicinity of Fort Pierre, were now scattered and living with other Lakota bands upstream along the Bad, Cheyenne, Moreau, and Grand rivers, and on his 1875 map, Warren (in McDermott 1952:14-15) places them at the edge of the Black Hills near Rapid Creek.
c. Dakotas

Until the 1860s, many of the Dakota-speaking Sioux, including the Yankton, Yankonais, Sissetons, Wahpetons, Wahpekutes, and Mdewakantons, remained at locations east of the Missouri River as far as the Mississippi River in Minnesota (Albers 2001:762; DeMallie 2001c:778). Although some of the Wahpekutes, the Yanktons, and the Yankonais crossed the Missouri to hunt and settle in the West River country of Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota, others typically wintered farther east. Many of the Yanktons were now living along stretches of the Niobrara and White rivers, and in 1855, Lt. G. K. Warren (1856:74) recorded their presence among Sicangus with whom they were intermarrying (Dorsey, J. 1891:261; Betteylouan and Waggoner 1985:24). They were included under the terms of the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty, although not without strong objections from the Lakotas (Woolworth 1974:223-224). In the aftermath of the 1862 Minnesota Conflict, some of the Yankonai, Sisseton, Wahpeton and Wahpekute Dakotas joined forces with Lakota divisions and took refuge in places like the Black Hills and Killdeer Mountains. A few remained among the Lakotas, eventually settling with them on reservations in Montana and western South Dakota, but the vast majority either escaped to Canada where they were settled on reserves in Manitoba and Saskatchewan or returned to their homelands east of the Missouri where they were assigned reservations in the 1860s. In an addendum, the Yankonais were made party to the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty, and they along with the Santee Dakotas (mostly Mdewakanton and Wahpekute) became parties to the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty: again, a source of chagrin to the Lakotas (Albers 2001:769-771; DeMallie 2001c:778-782).

d. Arikaras and Poncas

In this era, the Arikaras and Poncas, whose ranks were much depleted by epidemic disease and warfare with their neighbors, stayed close to the Missouri River and rarely ventured to the Black Hills as they once had (Parks 2001a:367; Brown and Irwin 2001:424-425). Warren (1875:51) described the Poncas of the 1850s as a small remnant of a once powerful tribe, living at the mouth of the Niobrara but maintaining good relations with the Dakotas. Other evidence from this period, however, indicates that Lakotas and Cheyennes were attacking the Poncas when this population took their summer buffalo hunt to the upper reaches of the Elkhorn River (Howard, J. 1965:31; Jablow 1974:323-343). Similarly, the Arikaras were now under the constant siege of Lakota and Dakota raiding parties (Parks 2001a:367). In both cases, these tribes no longer had the military might or a strength in numbers to return to hunting ranges in the shadows of the Black Hills as they had in the eighteenth century.

3. Food Shortages and Patterns of Movement

Part of the vast territorial range the Cheyennes, Arapahos, and Lakotas covered and shared now became the ground over which Americans were establishing major sections of their overland trails to California and other destinations in the far West. The presence of these trails continued to have devastating consequences for the tribal nations whose lands they crossed. As the numbers of emigrants using these trails increased dramatically during the 1850s, the game animals on which local tribes depended were depleted and important areas of tribal settlement were threatened (Price, C. 1996:8-30). In 1854, there were scarcely any bison near the Missouri River, and even on the plains near the Black Hills, their numbers were dwindling (Hurt 1974:242). Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:22,25) reported the herds had decreased to such an extent that Lakotas were starting to face continual shortages of meat and hide. In 1853, Indian Agent Thomas Fitzpatrick noted the dwindling numbers of bison along the Platte near Fort Laramie (Fowler 1982:34), and two years later, Indian Agent, Thomas Twiss (to Manypenny, 10 Oct 1855:83)
noted that bison were becoming scarce along the upper Platte, and that local bands were suffering during the winter months. Indeed, by the end of the 1850s, the Black Hills no longer stood above some of the largest bison herds on the Plains. In the face of this change, many of the Lakota and Cheyenne bands who remained in the vicinity of the Black Hills were now pushing their territorial reach farther north towards the Yellowstone River and farther south towards the Republican to find good hunting grounds (Hyde 1961:97-98; Fowler 1982:34; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:77).

In 1857, when the Harney Expedition encountered a group of Minneconjous surrounding bison at the western entrance to the Black Hills near Inyan Kara Mountain, Lt. G. K. Warren (1875:18-19) wrote that the Lakotas were agitated by the party’s presence because it might frighten the bison into stampeding. Lakota apprehensions about the effect of a growing American presence on the bison herds were widespread at this time (Price, C. 1996:46-47). In 1859, Twiss convened a council of leaders to discuss the matter, which included spokesmen from the different divisions of the Lakotas and the allied Cheyennes and Arapahos. These leaders spoke about the growing shortage of bison on the Platte River and the necessity of moving their hunting grounds into Crow territory along the Yellowstone River. They asked the government to supplement their food needs and set up agencies to distribute provisions at different points in their combined territories (Ibid:47-48). On the Missouri, Lakotas expressed similar frustrations about the declining herds of bison, and some even advocated severing diplomatic relations with the United States. In fact, the local agent, Samuel Latta, warned the government that the safe passage of emigrants was at risk across this section of Lakota territory. By the 1860s, bison had largely disappeared along the Platte River too (Ibid:49-50).

As bison numbers declined, the combined forces of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos renewed their hostile pressures against the Crows, Pawnees, and Shoshones. By the mid-1850s, some of the Oglalas were moving north towards the Powder and Yellowstone rivers where they joined Minneconjous, Itazipcos, Hunkpapas, Sihasapas, Northern Cheyennes, and Northern Arapahos to fight the Crows (Hyde 1937:89, 93; Powell 1982:1:164-179, 414-416). Other Oglalas in alliance with Sicangus, Southern Cheyennes, and Southern Arapahos were pushing south along the Smokey Hill River and the Republican Fork and increasing their hostilities with the Pawnees (Hyde 1961:190-193; Powell 1982:1:414-416). Finally, Oglalas in the company of Cheyennes and Arapahos were moving west across the Laramie Range and into lands historically dominated by the Utes and Shoshones. Notwithstanding agreements made at Fort Laramie in 1851 to cease intertribal warfare, battles with the Crows, Pawnees, Utes, and Shoshones continued unabated throughout this period (Bray 1994:179).

The territorial ranges of the Lakotas, Arapahos and Cheyennes became increasingly dispersed in the 1860s and even more separated after the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1867. As the great ranges of the bison were divided, so were the destinies of the tribes who followed them. The southern bands of these three tribes were the ones who now spent much of the year in locations south of the North Fork of the Platte River, while the northern bands remained north of this waterway in an area that included the Black Hills (Mooney 1907b:396-411; Hyde 1937:113-118, 123, 1961:128-129; Fowler 1982:34-44; 2001:843; Moore, Liberty, and Straus 2001:865).
4. The Emigrant Trails and Rising Hostilities

In the years between 1851 and 1867, Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were becoming more unsettled about the growing presence of emigrants and military commands in their shared territories (DeMallie 2001:795). In 1854, an altercation between a Sicangu Lakota and a Mormon emigrant over the theft of a cow led to the battle commonly known as the Grattan Incident. The fight, which took place north of Fort Laramie, led to the death of Lt. John L. Grattan and most of the men in his detachment. Frightening Bear, a Sicangu leader, and some of his followers were also killed. In retaliation for the U.S. Army’s attack, Sicangu warriors started to raid emigrants along the Overland Trail. The next year, when troops under the command of General William S. Harney destroyed a Sicangu camp at Ash Hollow, the retaliatory cycle broadened. The Lakotas, along with their Cheyenne and Arapaho allies, increased both the intensity and range of their raiding activity on military forts, trading posts, emigrant settlements, and wagon trains across the vast territory they shared and controlled (Hyde 1937:72-76; Powell 1982:1:180-184; Price, C. 1996:38-40).

In his 1855 correspondence to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Thomas S. Twiss (1855b:81-85) responded to the growing hostilities along the Platte by recommending the closure of Fort Laramie and the establishment of agencies away from the major overland trails. Among the locations he suggested for the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos was a site more than 100 miles north of the agency on the North Platte, one on the White River near Cache Butte, and another on the Cheyenne River near Bear Butte. Two months earlier he also remarked that none of the populations assembled among the Black Hills, nor on the L’Eau qui Court were hostile (Twiss 1855:78-79). A year later on September 12, 1856, he wrote a long report to George W. Manypenny, the presiding Commissioner of Indian Affairs, informing him that after recent alterations with the military, some local bands fled to the Black Hills to seek refuge there (Twiss 1856:87). In another report (Twiss 1856b:95), he described the natural assets of the Hills, which included abundant stands of ponderosa pine, juniper, and spruce as well as excellent grazing conditions at all times of the year for the buffalo (bison), antelope, deer, elk, and mountain sheep dwelling there. He does not imply that the Hills were as yet devoid of game, although a year earlier he claimed that bison were becoming scarce near the valley of the Upper Platte (Twiss 1855b:83). Indeed, as numerous reports from later years reveal, the Black Hills continued to be well-stocked with game, especially elk, bighorn, and deer, until the 1880s. While the Hills were no longer at the center of the region’s major bison ranges, they provided sufficient game to support a seasonal use of the area especially over the winter months.

When an expedition under General Harney’s command was ordered to survey the Black Hills in 1857, it met with resistance from a group of Lakotas. In his journals from the expedition, Lt. G.K. Warren (1875:19-20) wrote that the Lakotas believed the Fort Laramie Treaty only gave whites permission to travel along the Platte and Missouri, not over any other territory, especially the Black Hills where the expedition was then heading. On the tour, which skirted the edges of the Hills, the expedition encountered Minneconjous, Hunkpas, and Sihasapas whose leaders were in agreement that the military’s presence in the area was not in compliance with the provisions of the Fort Laramie Treaty (Warren 1875:20). Two years later, another government-sponsored exploratory party under the command of Captain William Franklin Raynolds arrived in the Black Hills to survey them in order to determine the numbers, habits and disposition of the Indians inhabiting the country, its agricultural and mineralogical resources (quoted from McLaird and Turchen 1974a:21). Once again, the Lakotas reiterated their belief that the territories beyond the major waterways of the Platte and Missouri were off-limits to whites, although the expedition was eventually granted permission to cross Lakota lands en route to the Black Hills.
and even given a Lakota guide selected by local chiefs at Fort Pierre (McLaird and Turchen 1974a:29). The guide, however, left the expedition before they reached the Little Missouri River (Ibid:51). As the expedition approached the Black Hills from the east, Raynolds (quoted from Ibid:43) wrote: As yet we have met no Indians, although the fires burning around us nightly show that they are watching our movements. This expedition only skirted the Black Hills on their northern edge, but its members did learn the Lakota names for many of their topographic features, such as Mi-ni Lu-sa, or Running Water, for Rapid Creek (Ibid:47). While the expedition wintered near Fort Laramie, a Minneconjou named One Horn advised them not to travel farther because the younger warriors from a large Lakota camp two hundred miles north were threatening to attack them. The threats were never carried out (Ibid:57-59), but there is no question from these accounts that the Black Hills were important to the Lakotas and an area that they were prepared to defend militarily against outside encroachment.

In 1861 at Fort Wise in Colorado, the Southern Arapahos and Southern Cheyennes ceded lands that were assigned to them under the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty in exchange for a small reservation in Colorado along Big Sandy Creek. (see Figure 10 and Chapter Eight). These lands only covered their territories in eastern Colorado and southeastern Wyoming (Berthong 1963:149-151). Many of the Northern Cheyennes were not a party to the treaty concluded at Fort Laramie in 1851, and most of them did not enter into the negotiations at Fort Wise either. Also, many Cheyennes representing both the northern as well southern branches of the tribe, while present at the deliberations, refused to sign the treaties (Weist 1977:48). The lack of full Cheyenne representation in the conclusion of this and other treaties contributed to a bitterness and divisiveness within their tribal ranks that lasted well into the twentieth century (Powell 1982).

The continual movement and regrouping of local bands that resulted from a loss of land and a declining food base was accompanied not only by increased raiding activity along the emigrant trails but now by attacks on white settlements springing up in ceded territories. The dispossession of the Dakota from their lands in Minnesota and eastern South Dakota gradually spilled over into the country of the Lakotas and their allies. In the aftermath of the 1862 Minnesota Conflict, scores of Dakota crossed the Missouri River to seek refuge among the Lakotas. Although some of the Dakota ended up in Canada, others fled to the Badlands and Killdeer Mountains of North Dakota, and a few ended up in the Black Hills, where some stayed and even married into local Oglala bands (Curtis 1907-1930:3:178; Albers 1966-1976; Utley 1993:52-53;133-134). The Sand Creek Massacre two years later, in 1864, marked another major turning point in the rising hostilities with the United States. After a peaceful Wotapio Cheyenne village, under the leadership of Black Kettle, was brutally attacked by American cavalry, a combined force of Cheyennes, Arapahos, and Lakotas was quickly mobilized to take retaliatory action. As the oral traditions of these tribal nations amply testify, Cheyenne pipe carriers went to camps throughout the vast territory they held in common, an area now extending from the Yellowstone River in the north to the Arkansas in the south and from the Rocky Mountains in the west to the Missouri River in the east. From all locations, the warriors of the three tribes were assembled to seek revenge, with Julesburg, Colorado being the first in a long line of white settlements attacked in the aftermath of Sand Creek (Grinnell 1956:165-262; Bent in Hyde 1968:137-222; Powell 1982:2:299-342; DeMallie 2001:796). After the Minnesota Conflict in 1862 and the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864, what had once been small-scale skirmishes and counter-raids turned into a full-fledged war between the United States and the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos (Hyde 1937:109-113; Utley 1963:319-322; Fowler 1982:28-32; Price, C. 1996:37-41; DeMallie 2001:796; Moore, Liberty and Straus 2001:865).
FIGURE 10. Sioux, Cheyenne & Arapahoe Reservations and Hunting Lands

Location of Wind Cave

GREAT SIOUX RESERVATION Treaty of April 20, 1868

1868 Sioux Treaty Article 16 Unceded Indian Territory

Cheyenne-Arapaho Sand Creek Reservation 1861-1865

Cheyenne-Arapaho 1865-1867 Reservation

Cheyenne-Arapaho 1867-1869 Reservation

5. The 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and Its Prelude

After the U. S. Army failed to defeat the combined military forces of Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas in 1865, the federal government made another effort to negotiate a lasting peace with these tribal nations that would permit the construction of roads and posts to accommodate overland travel. Towards this end, the federal government authorized a commission to study the state of Indian affairs in the West and to initiate meetings with as many Lakotas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes as possible to reach some resolution. Over the next three years, meetings were held at agencies throughout the vast territorial ranges these tribal nations shared in common (Weist 1977:58-59; Powell 1982:1:417-450; Lazarus 1991:33-37; Price, C. 1996:55-61).

On June 1, 1865, a federal commission was convened at Fort Laramie to begin negotiations to gain permission from the Oglalas, Sicangus, Northern Cheyennes, and Northern Arapahos to build roads along the Platte, Powder, and Yellowstone rivers. In order to insure that all bands were included in the deliberations, the Loafer bands at Fort Laramie were dispatched to find and bring in tribal leaders from the far reaches of the Powder River country. Over the next nine months, the leaders of a number of Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho bands signed the treaty, one by one, in hopes of bringing about a general peace (Weist 1977:59; Lazarus 1991:33-37; Price, C. 1996:55-61). Still, many of the bands allied with Red Cloud had not signed. In May of 1866, leaders from the northern Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, who were often identified as the hostiles or war faction, arrived at Fort Laramie to negotiate with treaty commissioner E. B. Taylor. While the deliberations were underway, the tribes learned that military troops under Colonel Henry B. Carrington were already moving into the area to build roads without their consent. Infuriated by this, many abruptly left the proceedings (Weist 1977:59; Price, C. 1996: 55-61). The government, however, continued to deliberate with those who remained, most of whom were leaders of the southern Oglalas and Sicangus, along with some of the Cheyennes who lived among them. After the negotiations were completed and the treaty signed, the southern leaders and their followers, now often referred to as the friendlies, or peace-faction, returned to their hunting and wintering grounds located well south of the Platte River along the Republican Fork of the Smokey Hill River in Nebraska and Colorado. Their readiness to sign this treaty was no doubt a reflection of the fact that the areas being negotiated were outside their territorial range. Because the signatures of the northern Oglalas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were not secured, Congress never ratified this treaty (Price, C. 1996:61).

With a complete breakdown in relations between the United States and the northern bands of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, travel along the Bozeman Trail was virtually closed. Over
the next few years, several well-known battles took place along its route, including the famous Fetterman fight in the winter of 1866 (Hyde 1937:140-149; Olson 1965:41-45; Powell 1982:1:451-462; Price, C. 1996:61-64; DeMallie 2001:796). As hostilities with the United States escalated, many Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, who typically wintered in areas south of the Platte, left their bands and joined forces with their northern relatives. During these troubled years, the Cheyennes, Oglalas, and Sicangus continued to take their women and children to the shelter of the Black Hills for safety (Powell 1982:1:386-387; Fowler 1982:43-44; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:68; Larson 1997:81). Even some of the northern Lakotas, the Hunkpapas and Sihasapas, and various divisions of the Dakotas, such as the Sissetons and Yanktonnais, began to use the Hills as shelter in the wake of battles with the U.S. military (Curtis 1907-30:3:178).

The ranks of the Oglalas, Minneconjous, and Itazipcos who typically wintered and hunted northwest of the Black Hills swelled in these years. They drew Sicangus and more Oglalas from the south, along with Hunkpapas, Sihasapas, Yanktonnais, Sissetons, and Wahpekutes disillusioned by events unfolding in the east (Larson 1997:81-83; Vestal 1934:51,53; Hyde 1937:113, 1961:106). Similarly, many Cheyennes who had taken up territories in the south returned to locations in the north to join forces with the Osmisis and Sutaio bands that lived in areas north of the Black Hills (Powell 1982:1:417-425, 2:722-729). The Arapahos returned north too with Black Bear and his followers, many of whom were intermarried with Lakotas, and they lived in the region between the North Platte and the Black Hills (Fowler 1982:43). In time, however, the followers of the northern bands dwindled as many of the southerners and easterners returned to their homelands south of the Platte and east of the Missouri River (Price, C. 1996:68-70).

Under increasing pressure from American citizens to open more roads to destinations in the West and to ensure their safe passage, Congress authorized monies for another round of treaty deliberations to secure the interests of the United States in the vast territorial domain of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. On July 20, 1867, Congress passed Senate Resolution 136, a bill that authorized the creation of the Indian Peace Commission. The leaders of the commission, included Nathanial Taylor, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Samuel Tappen, a reformer, John Sanborn, a former member of the Sully Commission, John Henderson, a U.S. Senator, Lt. General William Sherman, Maj. General Alfred Terry, and retired General William S. Harney (Maj. General Christopher Auger served as Harney's replacement) (Berthong 1963:289-290; Price, C. 1996:71-72). By mid-September, the commission had held a preliminary meeting with representatives of the Sicangus and various Loafer bands at Fort Laramie before traveling to Medicine Lodge Creek in Kansas to negotiate with the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Comanches, Southern Cheyennes, and Southern Arapahos. The treaties [15 Stat. 589, 15 Stat. 593] with these tribes were concluded on October 17 and 28, 1867 at Medicine Lodge Creek (Kappler 1903:2:759-764). Under the provisions of their treaty, the Southern Cheyenne and Southern Arapaho relinquished the Sand Creek Reservation in Colorado and all title to lands in Kansas in exchange for reservation lands in western Oklahoma (see Figure 10 and Chapter Eight). Also, they retained the right to continue hunting off-reservation as far north as the Arkansas River as long as the bison remained in the region and as long as the tribes did not interfere with the construction of railroads and the passage of travelers along the overland trails (Berthong 1963:297-298). The question remains, however, whether the entire body of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes was represented at these deliberations. Clearly, it was not; for as the subsequent history of these tribes reveals, many of the Cheyennes associated with the Dog Soldier bands refused to sign the treaty (Berthong 1963:299) and most of the northern Arapaho and Cheyenne bands were never a party to it.
The commission then returned north to resume negotiations with the Sioux amongst contentious discussion and debate. As Catherine Price (1996:71-71) describes the conflict, one of the most serious difficulties in negotiating treaties was that no one from the Sioux nation was empowered to speak for everyone. Also, no one considered abandoning their way of life as long as game could still be found near the Black Hills and along the Republican Fork, the Tongue, Powder, and Yellowstone rivers. Nevertheless, over the next several months negotiations were carried out at locations along the Platte and Missouri rivers with several divisions of the Teton Sioux, including the Sicangu, Oglala, Minneconjou, Hunkpapa, Sihasapa, Oohenonpa, and Itazipco, plus the Lower Yanktonai, Cuthead Yanktonai, and Santee Dakotas. The treaty [15 Stat. 635], dated April 29, 1868, reveals some of the concessions the United States was willing to make to insure an overall peace (Kappler 1903:2:775; Price, C. 1996:84-86). These included the abandonment of the Bozeman Trail, the withdrawal of all military troops from the area, and provisions to exclude, subject to special permission, all whites from Sioux land, which was defined as a broad area, extending north from the Niobrara to the Cannonball River and west of the Missouri river to a line that followed the western boundaries of the present day states of North and South Dakota. All lands outside these boundaries were to be ceded to the United States with the stipulation that the Sioux retained the right to hunt on the Republican Fork of the Smoky Hills River and along the Powder, Tongue, and Yellowstone rivers as long as buffalo remained in sufficient numbers to justify a hunt (see also, Figure 10 and Chapter Eight). Except for hunting at the aforementioned locations, the tribes were expected to remain within their reservation. For the lands they ceded, the tribes were promised a payment issued as annuities to be paid out over thirty years in the form of food, clothing, and other goods and also in the form of services to assist in their acculturation. In the spring and summer of 1868, a good portion of the Sioux signed the treaty at various locations in their territorial range (Lazarus 1991:48-63; Price, C. 1996:71-79; DeMallie 2001:796-797).

A few weeks later, on May 10, 1868, a separate treaty [15 Stat. 655] was negotiated at Fort Laramie with the Northern Arapahos and Northern Cheyennes (Kappler 1903:2:778-781). This treaty gave these two tribes a choice of either settling among the Sioux with their permission under the terms of the April 29th treaty or relocating to the reservation established for the Southern Arapahos and Southern Cheyennes under the terms of the Medicine Lodge Treaty. All of the leaders of the Northern Arapaho apparently signed this treaty, and some Northern Cheyenne leaders did so as well, although others, including Little Wolf and Dull Knife, did not participate in the May negotiations (Powell 1982:758-766; Fowler 1982:46-47).

Even though the Northern Arapaho are explicitly listed as parties to the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 with the Sioux [15 Stat. 635], they do not appear to have signed this statute. The Northern Cheyennes were not named at all: they were included, however, under Article 12 as such other friendly tribes or individual Indians as from time to time may be willing, with the consent of the United States, to admit among them. The failure to formally acknowledge the Northern Cheyenne presence in name not only created bitterness, it also set the stage for many of the tragedies that befell them in the coming decades. In later years, the Omisis or Northern Cheyennes strongly believed that they had been robbed of their birthright in the two 1868 treaties. As Father Peter Powell (1982:2:760) writes:

The commissioners did not comprehend one important fact and that is that the Omisesesos believed that they not the Lakotas were the true owners of much of the country included in the proposed Sioux reservation. Bands of the People, with their friends the Arapahoes, lived in the Black Hills country before the first Lakota bands made their home there. From the Black

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2 Sioux is used here to refer collectively to the Lakota and Dakota populations who were included in this treaty.
Hills, bands of the People moved out into the rich game lands between the Black Hills and the Big Horn Mountains, making these lands part of the People’s country before any Lakotas made them their home there. Generations before, a party of the People, most of them Sutaio, crossed the Missouri River at the old Cheyenne Crossing. From there, they moved down into the valley of the Elk River or the Yellowstone. From that time on, the Sutaio considered the lands south of the Yellowstone to be part of their own country. Northern people considered the North Platte River to be the southern boundary of their lands.

It must be remembered that in the late 1860s many of the Northern Cheyennes were distributed over much of the same territorial range as the Lakotas. Although most of them occupied the country between the northern reaches of the Black Hills and the Yellowstone River, some were affiliated with the Sicangu and Oglala Lakotas who wintered at locations from the southern edge of the Black Hills to the White River and beyond (Powell 1982:2:693-778).

William Swagerty (1988: 72, 83) theorizes that the willingness of tribal leaders to sign the 1868 Treaty was more a function of the hunger their people were facing at this time than the military might of the U.S. army. But according to the recollections of some of the traders of the time, it was more likely the result of intimidation and the misleading information given them. In the case of the Cheyennes, they were told that the federal negotiators recognized and acknowledged their claims to the Black Hills and all of the country that surrounded them from the north branch of the Platte to the Yellowstone River. Clearly, none of the most prominent and independently minded leaders of the Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapaho would have signed this treaty on the 10th of May unless they had thought otherwise (Powell 1982:2:768-770). Indeed, John Moore (1981:11) writes that the Northern Cheyenne believed, even more specifically, that a reservation would be established for them in the Black Hills. Whether or not this conclusion can be reached from the language of the treaties is debatable, but one thing is clear: the Northern Cheyennes and especially the Northern Arapahos, who are explicitly named, do have legal entitlements to the Black Hills under the terms of the April 29 [15 Stat. 635] and May 10 [15 Stat. 655] Fort Laramie treaties.

After the conclusion of the two Fort Laramie treaties in 1868, most of the Lakotas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes moved back to their respective hunting grounds. Some of the Sicangus with their Cheyenne and Arapaho friends returned to the headwaters of the Niobrara and south to the Republican Fork to hunt, and many of the Oglalas and their northern Cheyenne and Arapaho friends went back to the Powder, Tongue, and Yellowstone river country where in the following months discussions were held with the nontreaty bands (Hyde 1961:148). Red Cloud and other Oglala leaders, who had not been a party to the original treaty negotiations, came to Fort Laramie to discuss the treaty further and eventually signed it in November of 1868. Some of the northern Oglalas and Cheyennes, however, still refused to sign and never became a party to it (Powell 1982:1:68-77; Price, C. 1996:79-83).

**B. 1869-1877**

One of the many consequences of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty was a growing political divisiveness within tribal ranks. With the possible exception of the Northern Arapahos, the Lakotas and the Northern Cheyennes were split between bands that tried to accommodate their lives to the realities of establishing permanent settlements near government agencies and those who resisted this way of living and tried to maintain their independence at locations far removed from the agencies. As the Lakotas, Northern Cheyennes, and Northern Arapahos, tried to make sense out of their new realities and find alternative paths to survival under radically changing circum-

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stances, movements were afoot in Washington D.C. to get more of their land ceded, not the least of which was their beloved Black Hills.

In the early 1870s, the United States experienced a major economic depression. As farmers lost their lands, workers their jobs, and entrepreneurs their businesses, the federal government was under growing pressure to acquire and open lands that would stimulate development in a starving economy. The gold fields in Colorado and Montana were already settled and no longer held opportunities for new riches. The Black Hills, however, were still untouched and unexplored. As early as 1861, tales of their gold and other precious metals fueled speculation and organized schemes to colonize them, but it wasn’t until the early 1870s that the truth of these rumors would be confirmed. Against the background of the nation’s failing economic health, the federal government authorized expenditures to explore the interior regions of the Black Hills in 1874 and 1875. When news of the Black Hills Expeditions gold discoveries reached the public, thousands of prospectors, land speculators, merchants, and settlers rushed to the Black Hills, which were still part of the Great Sioux Reservation and legally in possession of the Lakotas and other tribes who were parties to the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. In 1877, Congress passed legislation that authorized the illegal taking of the Hills in the face of considerable tribal protest. Since the period between 1869 and 1877 represents such a critical time, a moment in history whose consequences remain unsettled to the present day, it needs to be covered here in some depth.

1. Agency Life

In the decade after the Fort Laramie Treaty was ratified by Congress in 1868, the federal government began the process of building agencies (see Figure 11) that would serve not only as locations for distributing annuities guaranteed under the terms of the treaty, but also as sites for assimilating the tribes into an American way of life as educated Christians and small-scale farmers. The first agency for the Lakotas was established on the Missouri River at Whetstone Creek near Fort Randall, but because it was too far for most of the bands to travel, other agency sites were set up in the following years along the Grand River, the Cheyenne River, and the North Fork of the Platte (DeMallie 2001:797). The question of where to locate agencies for the tribes was a source of considerable consternation for tribal and federal government officials alike. Indeed, the agency for Red Cloud and his Oglala followers was moved several times in the decade after 1868: it was located on the North Platte east of Fort Laramie from 1871 to 1873, near Fort Robinson at the headwaters of the White River from 1873 to 1877, and then near Pierre on the Missouri from 1877 to 1878, after which it was permanently established at Pine Ridge. Similarly, Spotted Tail and his Sicangu followers were moved from agency locations on the Missouri between 1868-1871 to sites near Fort Sheridan from 1871 to 1877 and back to the Missouri from 1877 to 1878 until a final agency was established at Rosebud (Olson 1965:271).

The issue of where to locate the Northern Arapahos and Northern Cheyennes was even more problematic (Powell 1982: 2:766, 817, 824-825). During the years between 1869 and 1877, the Northern Cheyennes and Northern Arapahos did not have separate agencies and received their annuities mostly at the sites serving the Oglalas, although some Cheyennes became affiliated with the Sicangus (Scott 1907; Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:287-288; Powell 1982:2:824-825). According to Loretta Fowler (1982:47-50), the Arapahos were set adrift in the years following the 1868 Treaty. In fact, Medicine Man and Black Bear, two leaders of the Northern Arapahos, enlisted the help of the commanding officer at Fort Fetterman in 1869, asking to be placed on the Wind River Reservation, which had been reserved for the Shoshones, but this could not be arranged. Nor were they able to negotiate a location for a settlement near Fort Casper in Wyoming. Some even went north to the Milk River in Montana to determine whether it would be
possible to settle at Fort Belknap with their Atsina relations, but others decided to affiliate with the Red Cloud Agency within the boundaries of the Great Sioux Reservation. Sickness and death plagued their stay on this reservation. While they collected their rations at the agency, they spent little time there, preferring instead to camp and hunt in the areas they commonly lived and traveled on the western side of the Hills. The Northern Arapahos were not the only ones who avoided the agencies. Many Northern Cheyennes and Lakotas also spent most of the year elsewhere and only came to the agencies to collect annuities; otherwise, they stayed in their former territorial ranges and followed a life revolving around the pursuit of bison and other game (Hyde 1937:187-229, 1961:170-196; Powell 1982:2:815-830; Fowler 1982:49-55; Price, C. 1996:102-132).
By 1870, however, greater numbers of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were camping around the agencies because of the growing shortage of game in the region. As time moved on, they became more dependent on the supplies of food, clothing, and other annuities the government was distributing under the terms of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. In the early 1870s, nearly two thousand lodges of Oglalas, Minneconjous, Itazipcos, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were reported to draw rations at Fort Laramie. Government agencies were becoming like trading posts, places where some bands stayed year-round, following the earlier pattern of the Loafer, Wagluke, band of Sicangus, whose daughters had married traders at Fort Laramie. A few even attempted farming (Poole to Parker, 20 Aug 1869:315-316). Some began to use the agencies as a winter camping location, a place to collect their annuities and to stay through the coldest months before they returned to their favorite hunting grounds in the late spring (see Chapter Seven). Others, however, spent little time at the agencies and came there only to collect their rations (Hyde 1937:187-229, 1961:170-196; Powell 1982:2:815-830; Fowler 1982:49-55; Price, C. 1996:102-132).

It is important to remember that the Northern Arapahos and Northern Cheyennes were included under the provisions of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and in its annuity distributions. Indeed, Red Cloud recognized their rights to these distributions when he said at a council held at Fort Laramie on June 12, 1871: I told you to wait until I had seen the Cheyennes and Arapahos, that I wanted to divide the goods with them. I want to do so again (Cree, 12 June 1871 : 25). In 1876, according to A.G. Lawrence (1876: 200), one thousand Cheyennes were considered by the government to be a part of the Sioux Nation.

Meanwhile, large numbers of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, who remained in the Powder River region and in areas farther north, had still not signed any treaty with the United States. Most of them remained largely independent of the agencies, although in some years they camped with their relatives among the treaty bands. In 1874, Agent J. J. Saville (1874: 251) complained to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs from Red Cloud Agency of the problems with feeding the non-treaty Indians. In his 1875 report (Saville 1875: 250), he wrote the following:

The tribes of Indians who are supplied and remain more or less constantly at the agency are the Ogalla Sioux and Northern Cheyennes and Arapahoes. The Ogallalas are divided into four principal bands: the head band, usually called Ogallalas, Klocales, Onkapas, and Wazzales. Each of these bands are subdivided into smaller parties, variously named, usually designated by the name of their chief or leader. In consequence of their roving habits and proximity of the hunting region of the Black Hills, Big Horn, and Powder River countries, the number of Indians at the agency at different times is variable. This constitutes one of the chief difficulties in making an accurate distribution of food and in making estimates of the quantity required for a year’s supply. The rapid destruction of the game caused last year a larger number to remain permanently at the agency, rendering an increase in the amount of supplies necessary. As there are no means of ascertaining the facts regarding the amount of game, or the exact number of Indians remaining in the hunting regions, estimates must of necessity be but approximate.

From reports such as the above, and also from the twentieth century recollections of Lakotas and Cheyennes, it is apparent that many bands continued to depend on traditional economic pursuits for their livelihood and had only marginal ties to the agencies (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931; Hyde 1937:205-229; Powell 1982:2:926-930; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:154-155; Arnold in Crawford and Wagonner 1999:287-288).
2. Tribal Occupancy of the Black Hills

Before the invasion of gold miners, the Black Hills remained an important settlement and resource procurement area for local tribes (see Figure 12). Although bison had largely disappeared from the region, Ferdinand Hayden (1862:373-374) reported there were still enough elk, antelope, deer, and bighorn to afford the Indians moderate support. The region near the Buffalo Gap and Wind Cave National Park was reported to be a popular winter camping area. Luther Standing Bear (1975:3, 17-23), a Sicangu Lakota who was born in a winter camp near the Black Hills in 1868, remembered spending time in this area, probably in the fall and winter of 1872-1873. He wrote:

The entrance to the Black Hills was through a narrow passage known as Buffalo Gap. The wild animals came in through this gap for protection from the icy blasts of winter, and the Sioux likewise went there. There were springs of clear water and plenty of wood. Nature seemed to hold us in her arms. And there we were contented to live in our humble tipis all through the rough winter (Standing Bear 1975:17).


The nearby Fall River and Hot Springs region has long been written about in local history sources as a popular camping area for the Lakotas and Cheyennes (Richter n.d.; Cook 1888; Rosen 1895: 473; Tallent 1899:644, 695; Brown and Willards 1924:18; Casey 1949:283-285; Williams 1952:7; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:140; Clark, B. 1983:3-4). These sources uniformly identify the Cheyennes as the area’s original occupants who, after a heated battle with the Lakotas, were forced to leave. The Lakotas then held the springs until 1877. John Stetter, an early white settler, remembered seeing a band of Lakotas bathing at Hot Springs when he came to the Hills in the summer of 1874 (Ritcher n.d: 1; Clark, B. 1983:17). Nakpogi Ogiya, a Lakota, also described a camp located in this area in a story he shared with Ivan Stars in 1915 (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:319-320 [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:543-546]). According to S.D. Cook (1888) and Peter Rosen (1895:473), this was a region where whites were forbidden to come, and of all areas in the Black Hills, it was the one with which the Lakotas were most reluctant to part.

Many other locations in the Black Hills were also identified as winter camping sites. In the 1930s, One Bull and White Bull told Dick Stone (1982:23-25) that the region around Devil’s Tower was a popular camping area for the Oglalas and the Hunkpapas, and that the valley where Sylvan Lake is now located was a wintering location for their grandfather. Both of these men also indicated to Stanley Vestal (1934:5-6) that they were born in the vicinity of Bear Butte near Spearfish Creek and the Belle Fourche River and that Chief Hump was born near this site. They reported other times when Minneconjouis camped in this area too (Vestal 1934:132). American Horse and Clarence Three Stars also reported that their families often camped in the vicinity of Bear Butte (U.S. Senate 1897:3, 12). Thomas Odell (1942:24-25) added more information on the importance of this region as a winter camping ground for the Lakotas, and so did James LaPointe (1976:4, 89), who also noted that Rapid Creek was a popular settlement location. Chauncy Yellow Robe’s tiospaye was another Lakota family who wintered in the northern Hills near the Belle Fourche River (McKelvie 1960:92-93), and Crazy Horse’s people were said to have

With the possible exception of the area where Sylvan Lake is now located, most of the Lakotas winter camping locations skirted the lower elevation valleys on the edges of the Hills central core. In the spring and early summer, however, Lakotas frequently camped in the higher elevation interiors. In 1874, the Black Hills Expedition came across a small Lakota camp in Floral Valley (Ludlow 1875:16; Calhoun in Frost 1979:53-54, 59; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:121, 173-174; Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:250; Forsyth in Krause and Olson 1974:255-256). This expedition and the one led by Dodge (in Kime 1998:75, 79, 96) a year later discovered the remains of several recent encampments in the area. Other locations for summer occupation are reported in tribal oral histories and ethnographies. Rapid Creek was a popular, summer camping site for Spotted Tail and other Sicangus (Bordeaux 1929:45, 84-85, 191-192). Sitting Bull’s group was known to camp here during the summer as well (Born 1994:24). This area, along with Spring and Split Toe Creeks, were places Black Elk (DeMallie 1984:155-156) reported his family stayed in the spring of 1874. Henry Standing Bear told John Niehardt (in DeMallie 1984:158) that during the same spring his family camped with Minneconjou at Forest Creek on the northern side of the Black Hills, and Little Day, a Sicangu, remembered spending a summer in the camp of Meddling Bear at the northern edge of the Black Hills in the early 1870s as well (Hasrick 1964:12-13).

The Cheyenne Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:1, 7, 20, 33, 47-48, 58), who was born near the Black Hills in 1858, recalled camping and hunting in the northern region of the Hills during his childhood, and two Cheyenne women, Iron Teeth (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:4-5) and Hoistah (Barrett 1913:3-5) remembered the days of their youth in the shadows of the Black Hills. In these years, other Cheyennes were reported to camp on the northern side of the Hills near Bear Butte too and at Red Water Creek (Powell 1982:2:793, 923). Thomas Odell (1942:13-14) recorded numerous locations where elderly Cheyenne told him they once lived, including Rapid and Bear Lodge creeks. Annie Tallent (1899:48) wrote about encountering a non-hostile band of Cheyennes at the northeastern edge of the Hills in the fall of 1874, and White Cow Bull told Ivan Stars in 1915 about a Pawnee attack on a Cheyenne village in the southern Hills (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:208-210 [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:364-369]). Finally, some of the Arapahos associated with Black Bear were reported to commonly winter along Rawhide Creek near present day Newcastle, Wyoming (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:371; Fowler 1982:43). Most of the recollections on the whereabouts of Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho camping places in and about the Black Hills, however, refer to the period before large numbers of miners invaded the area in the fall of 1874. It is clear that much of this use was threatened and curtailed when large numbers of Americans started to enter the area in search of gold.
FIGURE 12. Some Reported Locations of Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho Hunting and Camping Sites

Red Water Creek
Belle Fourche River
Bear Butte Creek

Stockbridge-Beaver Creek
Castle Creek

Lakota
Cheyenne
Arapaho

Camps
Hunting Sites

South Fork of Cheyenne R.

Wind Cave National Park
Beaver Creek

Elk Creek
Rapid Creek
Spring Creek
French Creek

Oak Butte Creek

Wahbonnet Creek
3. Rumors of Gold

The tribal nations who lived in the Black Hills were certainly aware of the region's gold before Custer made its presence widely known in 1874 (Spring 1949:22-25; Herman 1958:G-2; Hughes, R. 1957:14; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:37; Sundstrom, J. 1977:11, 1994:16). As early as 1804, the correspondence of Spanish traders on the Missouri River reveals that local tribes knew about gold and other valuable minerals in the Black Hills (Nasatir 1952:738). In the 1840s, Father De Smet is reputed to have warned the Lakotas that they would lose the Black Hills if Americans discovered their gold (Parker, W. 1966:11-16; Sundstrom, J. 1977:12). Early itinerant trappers and traders, including Toussaint Kensler, were known to trade for gold from tribal people who found it in the Hills. Indeed, before Kensler was hung for murder in Montana, he claimed that he found gold in 1864 somewhere near the headwaters of French or Beaver creeks (Palais 1941:8-9). Several stories in the oral traditions of American Indians and fur-traders reveal that knowledge of the Hills gold was a jealously guarded secret (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:55; Sundstrom, J. 1994:16). Yet, it is also apparent that some tribal peoples sold this precious metal, or minerals that they thought were gold, to local traders (Odell 1942:150; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:117). As one elderly Cheyenne told Thomas Marquis (and Limbaugh 1973:37):

Soldiers came upon our Black Hills lands after we had made peace with the whites and had settled there on our reservation given to us by the treaty. White Geese and some other Cheyennes had been finding little pieces of gold in the sands of Red Water Creek. They took them to the white man trader store and exchanged them for powder and bullets and other goods. They would not tell him where they got them. When the soldiers came, they found White Geese and his companions camped beside the creek. There was a fight, and one Cheyenne was killed. As White Geese was getting away on horseback he lost a leather bag containing gold. The soldiers picked it up. In that way all of the white people learned of gold being in that country. Before long there were hundreds and thousands of them crowding in upon our lands. The Cheyennes had to go away from there.

There were also tales of Americans prospecting in the Hills as early as the 1830s. Few of these prospectors ever lived to tell of their experiences, but the remains of some of their ill-fated ventures were found in the Hills by later miners in the form of rusted picks, shovels, and other artifacts (Brown and Willards 1924:28-30; Palais 1941:6-7; Spring 1949:22-25; Parker, W. 1966:11-16; Sundstrom, J. 1977:12; Friggens 1983:13). After the 1850s, local tribes were rumored to have actively prevented whites from entering the region, even those who were related to them by marriage, for fear that the gold would be discovered (Palais 1941:13; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:150). When J. W. Wham (1871:698), the Special Indian Agent, met with leaders from the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho nations at Fort Laramie in 1871, he recommended that their agency be moved forty miles north near Rawhide Butte Creek in order to remove them from the heavy emigrant traffic along the Overland Trail. Tribal leaders were adamantly opposed to this recommendation because of its closer proximity to the Black Hills and what was left of their bison hunting grounds (Olson 1965:124-128; Powell 1982:2:783-789; Lazarus (1991:63). Commenting on the response of the traders who were present at this meeting, Wham (1871:698) wrote:

When it became known to these that the policy of the Government was to exclude them from the reservation, and to prevent the indiscriminate traffic which had long been going on

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3 This is also reported elsewhere (Powell 1982:2:923).
between them and the Indians, they objected to having an agency north of the river, and offered every inducement to the Indians to remain where they were, telling them that the object of the agent and the whites generally was to get into the Black Hills, where there was much gold, and that their country would be overrun with adventurous white men in search of the precious metal.

However, before taking steps in this direction, I made another attempt to get their (the Indians) consent to establish a permanent agency on Raw Hide Creek, some forty miles north of Fort Laramie. But this request was flatly refused, on the ground that it was in the direction of the Black Hills.

Clearly, as subsequent historical events would demonstrate, the appraisal of what would happen to the region once the presence of gold became widely known was not wrong.

4. American Expeditions in the Black Hills

The rumors of gold and the fabled stories of the early prospectors fueled schemes to send private expeditions into the Black Hills to search for the metal (Olson 1965:172; Parker, W. 1966: 19-23). As early as 1861, the Black Hills Mining and Exploration Association was incorporated by white citizens from Dakota Territory, and on numerous occasions, the military had to prevent some of its members from crossing the Missouri River and entering Sioux territory (Parker, W. 1966:19-20; Lazarus 1991:67). In 1872, these Dakotans and businessmen from neighboring states began an active campaign to pressure Congress to open the Hills for mining, logging, and settlement (Lazarus 1991:61). At the same time, some of the civilian and military members of former government-sponsored scientific expeditions to the Hills were lobbying Congress to acquire the region (Lazarus 1991:68). According to Edward Lazarus (1991: 69), while the President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant, resisted amending the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 as a matter of strategy, he was not opposed to do so in principal.

In the wake of the financial depression of 1873, which caused widespread unemployment and bankruptcy in the nation, more pressure was put on the federal government to open the Black Hills as a site for development and settlement. Many of those who supported the opening of reserved tribal lands argued that Indians were impeding the progress of the nation and robbing it of the opportunity to achieve economic solvency, or else they argued, more defensively, that it should be taken over by whites because it had become a retreat for hostile Indians (Parker 1966: 124, 126-127, 138; Lazarus 1991:69). All of this served as a pretext, of course, for the federal government to authorize funds in support of another major expedition into the Hills under the leadership of General George Armstrong Custer.

a. The Black Hills Expedition

Even though the Hills were off-limits to Americans, except for the few traders who married into local tribes, they entered them illegally in the 1870s, either as representatives of government-sponsored expeditions or as private citizens. One of these illegal entries, as stipulated under Article 16 of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, was a military reconnaissance expedition in the summer of 1874 under the command of General George Armstrong Custer. With ten companies of cavalry, two infantry, an assorted array of scientists, engineers, and cooks, numerous freighters in charge of a train of 110 wagons, and several Arikara, Hunkpapa, and Santee scouts and interpreters, the expedition was ordered to explore, as the Engineer Officer Colonel Ludlow put it, the choicest and most valuable portion of the Sioux reservation (Jackson 1966; Keenen 1967; McAndrews 1974; McLaird and Tuschen, 1974c:286-290; Krause and Olson 1974; Frost
The expeditions itinerary, which the Lakotas would later call The Trail of Thieves, reached the Black Hills through Redwater Valley north of Inyan Kara Mountain, where Ludlow (1875:15) noted on July 22, 1876 a well-marked pony and lodge trail leading up the valley. On the same day, James Calhoun recorded in his dairy that Indian trails were visible in all directions (in Frost 1979:49). Three days later on July 25th, the expedition traveled through the valley of Cold Spring Creek, following a popular lodgepole trail, where evidence of old camps with drying racks for hides and meats was recorded. One of the guides also reported that this was an old pack trail used by trappers (Frost 1979:53n70; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:121; Forsyth in Krause and Olson 1974:255). Entering Castle Valley on the 26th, the expedition came across the remains of another abandoned camp, where lodgepoles had been cut and where fires were still burning (Calhoun in Krause and Olson 1974:53; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Powers in Krause and Olson 1974:90). Shortly thereafter, they come across the camp of One Stab, Slow Bear, and Long Bear, which consisted of five lodges and twenty-seven people, including one of Red Cloud’s daughters (Ludlow 1875:16; Calhoun in Frost 1979:53-54, 59; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:173-174; Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:250; Forsyth in Krause and Olson 1974:255-256; McAndrews 1974). According to Donaldson (in Krause and Olson 1974:61) and Ludlow (1875:16), this group had camped in the interior Hills for two months to hunt and to gather lodgepoles. That night most of the members of this small Lakota camp stole away in the darkness without waiting to receive the rations that Custer had promised them (Ludlow 1875:299). One Stab, however, was retained to assist the expedition as a hostage and a guide, but he was eventually released (McAndrews 1974).

As the expedition left Castle Creek, James B. Power (in Krause and Olson 1974:89), a correspondent for the St. Paul Daily Press, reported evidence of Indian trails everywhere and wrote: This valley seems to have been a thoroughfare for them supposed by some to be a trail from Red Cloud’s agency to the hunting grounds. From there, the expedition traveled over Reynolds Prairie where a huge pile of elk-horns was located, of which the Arikara guides disclaimed any knowledge (Grinnell 1875:8; Ludlow 1875:17; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:250). On the 29th of July, the expedition followed an old and well-traveled Indian trail to a location near present day Custer, South Dakota, where a large base camp was established (Forsyth in Krause and Olson 1974:256); it was here that members of the expedition discovered gold on the upper reaches of French Creek (Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:251). Some of the Arikaras who served as scouts for this expedition had other stories to tell about it, including one by Alfred Morsette (in Parks 1991:385-386), who claimed the Arikaras were the ones who actually discovered the gold. It was also from this location that smaller parties were launched to explore some of the surrounding regions, including Harney Peak and the southern Hills (see Figure 13). Custer led the party that traveled south to the Cheyenne River, striking a large Indian trail that James Calhoun (in Frost 1979:61) described as uninviting. This route followed Pleasant Valley to Red Canyon and from there to a point just east of Edgemont on the South Fork of the Cheyenne River. En route the party came across an old campground. On the return trip, the party moved north by way of Pringle and passed through Shirttail Canyon and Beaver Valley near the western border of what is now Wind Cave National Park (Ludlow 1875:19; Parker, W. 1966:25; Progulske 1974:18-34; Forsyth in Krause and Olson 1974:257; Burrows in Krause and Olson 1974:223; Frost 1979:44-45).

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4 Stacks of antlers did have ritual meaning for the Cheyennes and Arapahos, however (Grinnell 1972:1:276).
FIGURE 13. Routes of U.S. Military Expeditions

1. Black Hills Expedition 1874
2. Hinman Expedition 1874
3. Jenney Expedition 1875
Notwithstanding the fact that many on the Black Hills Expedition came across evidence of abandoned camps in the Black Hills, they reported that the Lakotas did not settle the area. Knappen (in Krause and Olson 1974:28) of the Bismarck Tribune wrote:

...the fact that the country abounds in everything that will make a great State prosperous and wealthy, will for a moment agree with those who think that this country should still be left in the hands of the Indians, who like THE DOG IN THE MANGER will neither occupy it themselves or allow others to occupy it.

In an article from the *St. Paul Pioneer* on August 26, 1874, Aris B. Donaldson⁵ (in Krause and Olson 1974:73) remarked:

It is not certain that a single hostile Indian has been seen. Many Indians visit the Black Hills but they have no permanent villages. Not a single permanent habitation has been found. In all our long line of travel and exploration, we have not seen the slightest evidence of any attempt to cultivate the earth.

These represented a long line of arguments to justify dispossessing the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapaho of the Black Hills, and they rested on a number of false premises that will be discussed momentarily.

### b. The Hinman Expedition

E. L. Howard (1875:253), who accompanied a group of Lakota leaders on a trip to the Hills in 1874, was well aware of their cultural importance to the Lakotas. Indeed, Spotted Tail had recommended the Buffalo Gap as the most favorable site for an agency (Hinman 1874:93). Later in the same year, Reverend Samuel Hinman was the leader of a government-sponsored party to explore the region in order to find a suitable agency location for the Sicangus who followed Spotted Tail. In late August, precisely the season of the year when many Lakotas moved west to the Powder River and south to the Republican to hunt bison, Hinman and his party, along with their two guides, one a Sicangu named Thigh and another of mixed-Lakota descent, Tom Dorin, approached the Hills interiors from the southeast (Ibid:91). It is worthwhile to give some attention to Hinman’s report because it represents one of the first official published reports of the southeastern Black Hills and their immediate surroundings (Ibid: 90-97).

In early August, Hinman and his party explored the South Fork of the Cheyenne River near the mouth of Box Elder Creek, where he reported:

As that location had been favorably mentioned by old trappers, voyageurs, and others, we decided to deviate from our easterly course and visit it, as it was believed to be only one hundred and twenty miles from the Missouri River at Fort Sully (Hinman 1874: 91).

While traveling the valley of the Cheyenne River, Hinman’s party found evidence of a recent trail made by a band moving towards the agency and another of a war party heading in the direction of the Black Hills (Ibid:91). Upon reaching Box Elder Creek, they found it had good timber, box elder and cottonwood, but it was too narrow for an agency (Ibid.).

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After exploring the tributaries of the Cheyenne and White rivers farther east over the next few weeks, they decided to explore the country of the Buffalo Gap, approaching it from their camp on the upper reaches of the White River (Ibid:93). As Hinman (Ibid.) wrote:

From this camp we proceeded northward, to examine further the valley of this stream to its mouth and if thought expedient to look at the country about Buffalo Gate, the South Pass into the Black Hill range, a country selected by Spotted Tail as the most favorable location for an agency in the Black Hill country. We found the valley of the White Clay toward the mouth not so good as the upper part of the stream. The benches are higher, and there is very little good grass. Timber, however, is in some places quite abundant. We saw near the valley a large hill fenced in with a double hedge of thorn-bush, made by the Indians many years ago as a place to drive and entrap deer and antelope, and from the carcasses covering the prairie I should think they had great success. Further on we found pits dug by them for entrapping eagles. A few Indians have planted along this stream but their corn is entirely destroyed by grasshoppers. We encamped at Bute Cach, below the mouth of the Big White Clay, to prepare for our trip northward.

Before departing, Hinman reported that the Sicangu leaders, Spotted Tail and Two Strikes, arrived at their camp and tried to dissuade them from traveling farther north, although he does not inform us why they had been so warned (Ibid.).

Traveling across the divide between the White River and the South Fork of the Cheyenne, Hinman described the vista of the Black Hills topped by Harney Peak and the Cathedral Spires. After encamping in the valley of the South Fork of the Cheyenne, they found many trails of families and war parties moving towards Red Cloud Agency, which was located at this point in time at Fort Robinson near present-day Crawford, Nebraska. The party then ascended into the Hills by way of Burntwood Creek (now known as Lame Johnny Creek). As they approached the Race Track, described as the great Indian trail leading around the hills, Hinman commented on the lack of human travelers, wood, game, and water (Ibid.). Given the season Hinman’s party entered the Hills, it is not surprising that they did not sight people or animals. This was the time of the year when humans and game animals typically inhabited the surrounding grasslands. Following the sandstone escarpments inside the Hogback, Hinman (Ibid.) reported that his party traveled through narrow valleys with abundant water, springs, green grass, stands of dwarf elder-berry and plum, strange flowers, and pine covered hilltops. Soon they entered gorges and ravines where they passed through forests of pine, streams filled with fish, and small grassy parks and finally ended up at the headwaters of French Creek where they found the remains of the trail the Black Hills Expedition had followed a few months earlier (Ibid:94).

On their return trip, they descended to the Race Track and followed it to a point just north of the Spotted Tail Agency, which was located near Camp Sheridan in Nebraska; their route may have included portions of Wind Cave National Park. From there, they left the Hills crossing over the broken prairie lands south of the Hills (Ibid.), probably by way of Hat Creek. In concluding his report, Hinman (Ibid:94-95) said this about the Hills:

The Black hills we found to be bleak, and except for its abundant growth of hard pine, a forbidding and sterile, mountain. Green from its springs and trees, it is a cool and pleasant retreat from the burning sun and baked soil of the desert plains around it, and only a garden spot when compared to and contrasted with the bad land and utter desolation that surround it. There may, indeed, be mineral wealth there, but, if so, we believe it to be yet undiscovered, and there are no evidences, either from location or character of rock, or soil, or sand, to

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6 Burntwood Creek is the original name of the stream now called Lame Johnny. It is found on Newton’s Atlas (1880) compiled from data collected on the Jenny Expedition in 1875.
warrant any expectation that a more diligent search would be rewarded with success. As an agricultural or grazing country, it is worthless. It is high, bleak, and cold, traversed by fearful storms in winter and spring, and in summer time almost truly said by the Indians to be inhabited by the thunder gods, ever angry at and jealous with hot displeasure of intrusion upon their sanctuary and mountain home. The cold weather is long and severe, the summers very short, and affording only time for a month or two of grazing in the parks and for the ripening of the smaller berries in the ravines. When civilization comes nearer and some railroad traverses these plains, the pine may be useful for rough lumber and for fuel; but now and for long time to come, its only use and value seem to be known to the Indians—for poles to uphold their teepees on the prairie, or to make *travois* for their ponies when they journey. An agency could hardly be located here, and to open the country would be a mistaken kindness to the whites and a great and uncalled-for wrong to the Indians. The country is theirs by solemn compact, and to take it from them will be wrong and robbery—an unwarrantable use of our great power to impose upon the simple and the weak.

Hinman’s comments about the suitability of the Hills for an agency, of course, need to be interpreted in light of the federal government’s interest in transforming the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos into farmers. This was a future that many of these tribal peoples did not embrace so long as bison and other game were still to be found, albeit at locations a considerable distance from their government agencies on the White and Missouri Rivers.

During this period, there was nearly uniform agreement among the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos about the value of the Hills for their own self-sufficiency (Allison 1875:188-190). There was less consensus among federal officials, however. While Samuel Hinman (1874:95) saw them as worthless for agricultural or grazing purposes, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs E. L. Smith (1875:8) wrote in his annual report that the Hills were naturally suited to agriculture and herding, and that they were one of all others within the boundaries of the Sioux reservation best adapted to their immediate and paramount necessities. He then went on to say:

> I doubt whether any land now remaining in the possession of the General Government offers equal advantages; but it will be found impracticable to utilize the country for the Sioux. So long as gold exists in the same region, the agricultural country surrounding the gold-fields will be largely required to support the miners, and to attempt to bring the wild Sioux into proximity to the settlers and miners would be to invite provocations and bloody hostility (Smith 1875: 8).

In the final analysis, the crux of the matter was who should have the opportunity to make use of the Hills potential for their economic well-being, the Lakotas and their Cheyenne and Arapaho friends or the Americans. Clearly, as the subsequent history of the area reveals, it was the future of the Lakotas and their allies that was sacrificed.

**c. The Jenney Expedition**

A year after the Black Hills Expedition in the summer of 1874, another expedition was launched under a presidential order ... to provide for the question of a fair equivalent for this country... (Smith, E. L. 1875:8). Led by two geologists, Walter P. Jenney and Henry Newton under Col. Richard Irving Dodge’s military command, several journals and reports were produced from this expedition (Jenney 1875; Jenney 1876; Newton and Jenney 1980; McLaird and Turchen 1974d:404-438; Dodge in Kime 1998). The expedition covered much of the same area as Custer did, and it also sent small parties to locations in the southern Hills to test for gold along Red Ca on, Minnekata (a.k.a. Fall River), and Amphibious (a.k.a. Beaver) creeks.
Walter P. Jenney and Henry Newton do not appear to have kept a dairy of the expedition, like the one written by Lt. Richard I. Dodge (in Kime 1998), but one or both of them wrote three reports: one published in the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Jenney 1875), another printed as a congressional report (Jenney and Newton 1876), and a third issued by the U.S. Geographical and Geological Service of the U.S. Department of Interior (Newton and Jenney 1980). Much of their writing, with accompanying maps, focused on the Hills geological, floral, and faunal resources. Of particular interest are their descriptions of Beaver Creek, which was named Amphibious Creek on their map (1880), the Red Valley, and the Hot Springs, which were called by their Lakota name, Minnekata. Henry Newton and Walter Jenney (1880:34) wrote that, along with Dr. McGillycuddy and Captain Tuttle, they were directed to form a party to explore the southeastern Hills, which they reached by traveling Beaver Creek and crossing a section of Wind Cave National Park. In their report (Ibid:141-142, 235), they describe the schist, slate, quartz, and the evidence of gold in the gravels on the creek’s headwaters and the formations of purple limestone, red clay, and white gypsum as they pass over the Red Valley towards the Buffalo Gap (see Figure 13). Of the Red Valley, Newton and Jenney (Ibid:136) wrote: The Indians recognizing its continuity and the regularity of its surface, have followed it with their great trails or routes of travel, and it is known to them as the Race-course. They went on to say:

It is generally well covered with the common short grass of the Plains but it is entirely destitute of trees, save that an occasional hill may sustain a few pines. The immediate valleys of the streams and dry washes which drain across it from the interior of the Hills are narrow and frequently lined with small groves or scattered individual trees. Their principal tree is the cottonwood, but there are occasionally dwarfed and stunted oaks and thickets of willow and wild plum. As already remarked, the majority of the streams sink in the canons of the Carboniferous, but many of them rise again in the Red Valley in unexpected places as springs or pools of water. They never, however, again become running streams (Newton and Jenney 1880: 136-137).

One of the spring areas he described were those along the Fall River, or as Jenney and Newton (Ibid.) put it, Minnekata or Hot Water Creek, so named by the Indians from the warmth of the water.

In another report, Jenney (1875:182) would conclude that:

No evidence was found that Indians ever lived in the hills, or ever visited them, except in the spring to cut lodge-poles, or occasionally to stop and hunt deer among the foothills while passing from the agencies to the Upper Missouri. The only reason advanced for their not living in the hills is the prevalence of severe thunderstorms and the frequency with which the trees are struck by lightning.

Beyond a few general remarks, Jenney and Newton offered few details on tribal occupation in the Black Hills. Dodge had more to say about this occupation in his journals, and it is important to include the details of his commentary here. More than any other author of the time, his writings played a critical role in perpetuating the false idea that the Black Hills were not inhabited by the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos.

Before departing to the Hills from Fort Laramie, Dodge (in Kime 1998:39) claimed that Red Cloud, Spotted Tail, and the other chiefs told him that he should expect trouble from the northern

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7 Dodge does not mention this part of the explorations in his dairy (in Kime 1998), although he does make reference to the Hot Springs area in the book (1965) he later published.
Sioux who occupied the Hills. During his tour, which took place over a four-month period from May 25 to October 13, 1875, he hardly met any Indian people, although there was much evidence of their presence. The expedition found the remains of several camps along the route of their travels west of the Black Hills near Beaver Creek in Wyoming (Ibid:54, 58, 60, 62-64, 102). On Branchwater Creek in the western Black Hills, they discovered more evidence of Indian camps (Ibid:75), and following an Indian trail, they descended the next day into the Floral Valley and traveled to Castle Creek where they located the remains from a large camp at which lodgepoles had been processed and a medicine lodge had been built (Ibid:79). Two weeks later, while camping at French Creek, they were alerted to the presence of Indians nearby (Ibid:96).

In late August, Dodge (Ibid:191-192) reported that while starting down Red Water Creek, Walter Jenney, the geologist on the expedition, found so many signs of an Indian presence that he decided to return to the main party. And in September, he described a number of Indian trails in the vicinity of Spearfish Creek and Rapid Creek (Ibid:214, 222, 224). On the 18th of July, Dodge encountered two Indian people south of Harney Peak who, along with some men of mixed Indian ancestry, were watching whites pan for gold. He never spoke with them, however. In another instance, a guide with the expedition, California Joe, purportedly told Dodge that he had met an Indian named Robe Raiser on Rapid Creek. As he wrote in a draft of a letter addressed to General Crook,

The old Indian told Joe that though fifty years old he had never been in the Black Hills before. He said that the Indians never come here, except occasionally to hunt, that when passing north or south in the fall the squaws come in for a few days to cut & trim lodgepoles. During this time the bucks hunt. The reasons given for the Indians not coming here, are, 1 that there is nothing to come for, there being but little game -3 that it rains very frequently & the Indians dont like the rain - 4 That it thunders & lightens with terrible force, striking & overthrowing trees, & setting fire to the woods - the Indians dont like this -2 that the flies are terribly bad, & torment their horses so they dare not turn them loose -- The old Indian said further that the Indians did not care at all for this country, & would have sold or given it to the white long ago, if it had not been for the squaw men about the Reservation, urging them to make a big fuss & get a big Price, C. (Ibid:139).

This account is located at the end of his third journal, which stops at an entry for July 20th and was probably written sometime between that date and the 29th of June when this journal begins.

Much of what is written here eventually appeared in the book Dodge (1965) himself published on the Black Hills. Other than the fact that it came to Dodge secondhand, there are many aspects of this narrative that don t ring true. For one, the idea that local Indians believed the region had little game was contrary to most everything else that was being written about local tribal understandings of the Black Hills in this and earlier decades, and it also doesn t correspond with some contemporaneous observations which called attention to the region s rich game resources (Brennan 1875:3; Tallent 1899:37; Knappen in Krause and Olson 1974:28; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:63, 69; Powers in Krause and Olson 1974:89; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:149; Burrows in Krause and Olson 1974:192). It even contradicts Dodge s own words, which he wrote in his journal on June 20th when the expedition was camped on Spring Creek about 10 miles west of Harney Peak:

In ten years the Black Hills will be the home of a numerous and thriving population & all the Administrations & Interior Departments cant stop it. It is not an Indian country. They can live in it for only a small portion of the year and being Plains Indians they do not like to go into a country where they cannot ride everywhere they wish to go. They use it as a nursery for game & a fine one it is. (in Kime 1998: 12).
Six days earlier, the expedition encountered a small party of miners near present day Custer, South Dakota, and this prompted Dodge (in Kime 1998:89) to write that the Indians do not use it, and at the end of the second journal, there is another letter to General Crook which reads:

The absurdity of turning over such a country [the Black Hills] to miserable nomads is too manifest for discussion - Besides the Indians don't want it. They never use it. There is not a trail of Indians in the whole interior of the Black Hills, except in the vicinity of the head of Spaulding Creek, where a few come in apparently for a week or two each fall to pick berries and cut lodgepoles. This portion of the country has not an Indian trail, and Custer was never more right than when he said they held on to it from a dog-in-the-manger spirit. My own opinion is that they do not hold on to it of their own accord (except from the natural indisposition by interested agents who hope to have the manipulation of the millions of dollars which the Govt may pay for the land if the Indians only make row enough)...The country is too glorious a one to be kept from development & while I will obey orders & arrest these men if necessary, I shall never injure one in person or property. None but a ring ridden nation would ever think for one moment of leaving such a paradise in the hands of miserable savages even did they use it, which is not the case (Ibid:105-106).

While he traveled the Black Hills in the summer of 1875, Dodge was well aware that the expedition had been ordered to appraise the value of the region and that a government commission had been sent to Fort Laramie to negotiate with the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos for their lease and/or sale. It is quite obvious where his sentiments lay on this matter from what he wrote in his journal. There can be no doubt that these influenced how he came to interpret the evidence of the Indian occupation he sighted or heard about during the three months he traveled the region.

When Dodge's book *The Black Hills* (1965) was first published in 1876, it contained much of the same commentary found in his journals. He wrote as an example:

My opinion is that the Black Hills have never been a permanent home for any Indians. Even now small parties go a little way into the Hills to cut spruce lodge-poles, but all the signs indicate that these are mere sojourns of the most temporary character...(Dodge 1965:136-137).

...Except in one single spot, near the head of Castle Creek, I saw nowhere any evidence whatever of a lodge having been set up, while old wickyups were not infrequent in the edge of the Hills. There is not one single teepee or lodge-pole trail, from side to side of the Hills, in any direction...(Ibid:137)

Several small parties of Indians, overcome by curiosity, and reassured by the presence of the soldiers, came into the Hills this summer...(Ibid:137).

He then makes reference to and embellishes his journal notes on California Joe's conversation with Robe Raiser (Dodge 1965:137-138), and goes on to write that:

These statements are borne out by those of every Indian communicated with, and by the observation of every man of our party. The Indians do not live in, occupy, or use the country in any way (except for lodge-poles as stated); they do not want it; the large majority would willingly give it to the whites, but for the exertions and influence of as rascally a set of white men as curse the earth.

It should be noted that California Joe, a.k.a. Moses Milner, who was a notorious figure in the early history of the Black Hills, was not regarded as a person of particular integrity and honesty.
It is also important to call attention to the fact that other than one encounter on Spring Creek and a meeting at Custer on the 9th of August with E. L. Howard, an Indian agent who accompanied a party of Lakota leaders to see the gold prospecting in the Hills, there is no evidence from Dodge’s journals that he nor any other member of the expedition, excepting California Joe, had any extended conversations with Lakotas. Not only was the source of his information about Lakota use of the Hills unreliable, but it was also clouded by his own biases regarding the future disposition of the Hills. Nevertheless, his remarks about the lack of a Lakota presence in the Hills have persisted, often uncritically, in later works about the region.

It is hard to reconcile the claims of people like Richard I. Dodge and Walter Jenney, who, echoing the words of members of the 1874 Black Hills Expedition, asserted that local Indians did not live in, much less use, the Hills. Obviously, the Arikaras and Lakotas who led some of the government expeditions into the Hills from the 1850s to the 1870s had considerable prior knowledge and experience in the region. All of these parties either sighted Lakota camps in the Hills or in their proximity, and many observed evidence of their recent travels and occupations there as well. That these expeditionary parties only came across a few actual camps, or the recent remains of them, had everything to do with their own presence in the area. As Henry Standing Bear (in DeMallie 1984:158) later recalled, his band avoided the Hills during much of the summer of 1874 because of the military presence there. Susan Bettelyoun and Josephine Waggoner (1988:108) also described some of strategies Lakota bands followed in these years to elude detection when traveling near military troops.

Another factor was the season in which military expeditions entered the Hills. According to the ethnographer Royal B. Hassrick (1964:156), the highest use and occupancy of the Hills typically took place when Lakota bands wintered there from November to April, and then again in late spring when they used them to procure lodgepoles, berries, medicinal plants, and flint. By mid-summer, the time when some of these expeditions arrived in the Hills, most Lakotas and Cheyennes would have set out for their bison-hunting grounds now located far to the north and west on the Powder, Tongue, and Yellowstone rivers. Indeed, Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:154-158, 164-165) recalls that in May of 1874, two months before Custer arrived in the area, his family encamped at several locations on the eastern side of the Hills, and in the fall of 1875, after Dodge’s party had left the Hills, his family camped on the western side en route to Crazy Horse’s winter camp on the Tongue River.

Also, the mid-1870s was not a time to judge how the Black Hills had been used traditionally, since many Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were now receiving government rations and staying at federal agencies some distance from the Hills. Moreover, the area had become a war zone where Lakotas and their allies were known to raid mining camps, emigrant wagons, and freighting trains taking cargo into and out of the Hills. After 1874, this was no longer a place where these tribes could safely camp in small groups with their elders and children as was their custom in the late spring and early summer. In fact, E. L. Howard (1875:254), the Indian Agent at Spotted Tail Agency, noted in his annual report to E.S. Smith, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the following:

A lesser number of Northern Indians have visited this agency than during the previous year, and more of ours have remained near the agency than formerly, for the reasons that they did not go south to the hunting grounds this season, and the excitement about the Black Hills has kept them together.
For this and the other reasons, already mentioned, the Black Hills were not utilized by many local bands during the times they were being explored by the civilian and military forces of the U.S. government.

It also needs to be mentioned that most of these early observers held a basic misunderstanding of tribal adaptations to the region. As described in greater detail in Chapters Seven and Ten, these involved transhumance patterns of movement and settlement, often covering several hundred miles of territory during the course of a single year. While it is true that none of the local bands established permanent year-round settlements at any sites in the Black Hills region, they certainly occupied and used a wide range of locations in the area on a regular and recurring basis, especially during the months of winter and early summer. Indeed, few of the populations who lived around the Black Hills maintained permanent, fixed settlements anywhere in their territories. These groups were mobile: they followed the movements of the game and the growing cycles of plants and changed their locations accordingly. Even when some early observers conceded that tribes used the region as a hunting reserve, they dismissed this activity as a form of summer sport (Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974: 136). This was an old rationale that European Americans commonly used in dispossessing American Indian people of their lands. 8

5. The Gold Rush and American Settlement

After news of the Black Hills Expedition's gold discoveries was leaked to the press, the private American companies formed to colonize the Hills believed the time was now auspicious to launch their own expeditions (Olson 1965:172; Parker, W. 1966:28-30). One of these was formed by Charles Collins, a newspaper editor in Sioux City, Iowa, who had schemed to enter the Hills as early as 1869 (Tallent 1899:6-8). His first expedition was organized in the summer of 1874 and led by John Gordon. Annie Tallent, who accompanied this expedition and was presumably the first white woman to enter the Hills, wrote about it in her book, The Black Hills or The Last Hunting Grounds of the Dacotahs (1899). According to her narrative, the expedition left Sioux City, Iowa on October 6, 1874 (Tallent 1899:21-22) and arrived on December 3, 1874 at the Cheyenne River near Elk Creek where they encountered a band of Cheyennes moving to their winter campgrounds (Ibid:53-56). They reached the foot of the Hills near Sturgis on December 9th and set camp at Box Elder Creek (Ibid:56). From there, they entered the Hills and arrived on December 23 at French Creek where they built their fort and seven log cabins (Ibid:61, 66-71). In February of 1875, two members of the party set out in a southeasterly direction to reach the Niobrara River and follow it to Yankton to get supplies and send news of their arrival in the Black Hills to Sioux City (Ibid:76-77). Word of the party's presence in the Hills was soon published in the newspaper, and, according to Tallent, this prompted the government to be more watchful of whites entering the area. Two weeks later, when two other men left the stockade for Fort Laramie to get supplies, they were intercepted by the military. In April, the military arrived at the stockade and escorted the Gordon party out of the Hills by way of Red Canyon, where Tallent reports they met a small band of Indians whose tribal identity she fails to specify (Ibid:81-85).

Efforts on the part of the military to warn the intruders against trespassing and to remove them from the Hills whenever they were located, as happened to the Gordon party (Tallent 1899:96-100, 134-136), were largely unsuccessful (Tallent 1899:160-181; Parker, W. 1966:65-67; Lazarus 1991:77-78; Price, C. 1996:155). Well-armed gold prospectors continued to make their

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8 Historically, it was common to justify dispossessing American Indians of their lands on the grounds that they did not use them properly. American Indian men's hunting, fishing, and warfare activities were frequently represented as sport rather than as a form of work or labor worthy of any entitlement to a land base (Albers 1996b:261).
way into the Hills in 1875, and from the fall of that year to the spring of 1876, the big gold rush was on (Tallent 1899:115-129; Spring 1949:71-72). By the summer of 1876, more than 1000 miners had staked claims in the Hills (Tallent 1899:172-181, 264; Parker, W. 1966:53-68). Some of the early miners were novices from the East, looking to the Hills for a new start in life, but others were seasoned prospectors who came from the gold fields of California, Colorado, and Montana with renewed hopes of reaping riches (Sundstrom, J. 1977:116)

To provision the miners and the various businesses that supported them, roads were built and regular freighting operations brought in supplies from Bismark and Fort Pierre in Dakota Territory, Sidney in Nebraska Territory, and Cheyenne in Wyoming Territory (Tallent 1899:181-182; Spring 1949:69-70, 171-181; Palais 1950; Parker, W. 1966:108-113; Stewart 1967-70:70). Indeed, on December 1, 1875, the territorial legislature of Wyoming passed into law an act to establish a wagon road from Cheyenne to the Black Hills of South Dakota (Spring 1949:75). Stage lines and private mail services were established too and followed many of the same trails (Tallent 1899:189-198; Spring 1949:82-95;122-124; Parker, W. 1966:106-107, 111-122). Two of the most popular early routes traversed the southern Black Hills (see Figure 14). The one from Sidney to Custer took a route that entered the Black Hills at the Buffalo Gap, followed Beaver Creek, crossed the Race Track, climbed into the interior Hills near Wind Cave, and then went northward from Pringle to Custer City (Tallent 1899:647). Another popular route from Cheyenne, Wyoming entered the Hills at Red Canyon and traveled due north through Pleasant Valley (Spring 1949:81-82, 185) or through the area of Pringle near where the park’s water supply is located. Both of these trails and significant locations along their routes were recorded on a map made by Crazy Mule, a Cheyenne scout who surrendered at Fort Keogh with Two Moon’s band, sometime around 1880 (Fredlund, Sundstrom, and Armstrong 1996:7, 17-21; Sundstrom and Fredlund 1999:46-57).

By 1876, relay stations and stage houses were built to feed and shelter travelers at many different locations along these routes (Spring 1949:124-125; Biever 1982:4; Long 1992:59). Many of them were established at sites that had been popular camping places for local tribes. Even before such accommodations were built, wagon trains and travelers on horseback often selected the same locations as rest stops. The Buffalo Gap was one of the best known of these. One early settler account tells of a summer thunderstorm and flash flood at the Buffalo Gap that killed over sixteen people who camped too close to Beaver Creek (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:197). An early merchant of Custer, S.W. Booth (quoted from Sundstrom, J. 1994:28), wrote in his 1876 correspondence to the Times of Oshkosh, Wisconsin:

Tuesday, April 18th, we took dinner at Horse Head creek, and camped at night on the Cheyenne River. There were unmistakable signs of Indians; signal fires burning on the hilltops and our outriders found fresh trails on both sides of us. The pony express rider camped with us. He reported two trains captured between here and Custer. We all stood to our guns all night. The Indians came as near as they dared, but found us prepared and left. The next night we camped at Buffalo Gap where half a dozen battles have already been fought...

After spending the night at the Buffalo Gap, the party entered the Hills by a route that followed Beaver Creek, crossing Wind Cave National Park, and as the party ascended into the mountains, they came upon the remains of a wagon that had been captured by Indians (Sundstrom, J. 1994:28). According to Jessie Sundstrom (Ibid:28-29), these wagons were from a sawmill outfit whose members engaged in a heated battle with unidentified Indian assailants near the Rifle Pit, south of
Pringle. The command of General Crook also used this trail, passing through the Buffalo Gap on their way to Fort Robinson in 1876 (Bourke 1892:387). A year later in 1877, Edwin Curley (1973: 85) described this route as follows:

Still further on the road leaves the ca on [Buffalo Gap] and goes up and down over the steep hill-sides of an exceedingly rugged prairie country, which I judge to be eminently suited for the maneuvers of Indians. After some miles of this difficult travel, we emerged upon a nearly level, elevated plain in The Red Beds, whose dark-red earth and stone is relieved by dark-green patches of dwarf cedar or mountain juniper, while the bottom has the light emerald green of luxuriant grass, the whole giving a very peculiar and a pleasing, although somber appearance.
After 1875, the popular camping area at the Buffalo Gap and the well-traveled Indian trail into the higher elevation interiors along Beaver Creek turned into a war zone. Lakota warriors guarded this important gateway and trail to the Hills and attacked whites who followed it. The fact that early expeditionary parties did not see many Lakotas, Cheyennes, or Arapahos in the Hills at this time means that they were either off the well-trodden paths into or outside the area entirely because of the dangers posed by the presence of the military and other heavily armed white trespassers in the region. After the gold rush had subsided near Custer and shifted to the more northerly districts in the Hills, many of the major wagon and stage routes no longer crossed the Hills' southern interiors. Instead, they skirted the edges of the Hills and bypassed the discovery town of Custer (Spring 1949:203).

By 1876, a wide variety of commercial establishments had been built in the white settlements popping up in the Black Hills, especially around Custer, Hill City, Deadwood, and Rapid City. Bars and hotels were erected (Tallent 1899:183-184, 348; Parker, W. 1966:87; Sundstrom, J. 1994: 25, 29). Banks were open (Tallent 1899:274). Hardware stores, meat shops, saddleries, and dry goods stores were in operation (Tallent 1899:349-350). Newspapers were in press (Tallent 1899:269-270; Parker, W. 1966:97), and telegraph lines were laid (Tallent 1899:378; Spring 1949:158-160). Towns were being platted (Tallent 1899:264, 287, 304), and even federal taxes were assessed (Tallent 1899:359). Indeed, one early prospector, John R. Brennan (1875:1), who arrived at Custer in November of 1875, claimed that federal troops under General George Crook assisted in surveying and laying out plots for this town, although Jessie Sundstrom (1994:23) clarifies this and writes that it was a ploy to get the miners to vacate French Creek. The fact that seven miners were given permission to remain behind to protect the claims indicates that the removal was viewed as a temporary state of affairs and that the military had no intention of respecting or enforcing the law of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty.

In 1875, the military had largely abandoned its efforts to keep prospectors and settlers out of the Black Hills, and even before this, they never prosecuted any of the trespassers (Spring 1949: 67-71; Parker, W. 1966:66-68; Powell 1982:2:929). We now know from recently discovered correspondence that the military had no intention of arresting the miners. In the U.S. military files at the National Archives, an historian working for the legal counsel in the Sioux's Black Hills claims uncovered the proverbial smoking gun, a series of letters that indisputably prove that the President of the United States gave covert approval to miners trespassing in the Hills. In one letter labeled Confidential and dated the 9th of November 1875, General Philip H. Sheridan wrote the following to General Alfred H. Terry:

My dear Gen. Terry: At a meeting which occurred in Washington on the 3rd of November, at which were present the President of the United States, Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of War and myself, the President decided that while the orders heretofore issued forbidding the occupation of the Black Hills country by miners, should not be rescinded, still no further resistance by the military should be made to the miners going in; it being his belief that such resistance only increased their desire and complicated the troubles. Will you therefore quietly

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9 Although Barbara Long (1992: 6) argues that the Sidney route never crossed Wind Cave National Park but skirted the Hills along its eastern edge, our research indicates that this is not exactly correct. The Sidney route to Rapid City did not enter the Hills and cross over park properties, but one of the arms or spurs of this route certainly did, as Long (1992: 59) points out in a footnote. This shortcut to Custer was very important during the early years of the gold rush from 1874 to 1876, but it fell into disuse after the gold boom crashed in Custer and the most important mining developments took place around Deadwood.

10 Fred Nickelson, an historian at the University of Maryland, was the one who uncovered the three letters in which covert decisions were made to cease the arrest of miners (Lazarus 1991:343).
cause the troops in your Department to assume such attitudes as will meet the views of the
President in this respect (quoted from Wilkins 1997: 219).

Contrary to other opinions on the matter, it is now quite clear that the military had been
authorized by the highest levels of the federal government to refrain from interfering with the
miners' illegal occupation of the Hills.

In the face of these developments, the Lakotas and their Cheyenne and Arapaho allies stepped
up their raiding activity against the Americans. According to some of the early miners and
settlers who wrote down their recollections of the early years of white settlement, Lakota and
Cheyenne harassments and raids were frequent in the Hills between 1874 and 1876.\(^1\) Places such
as the Buffalo Gap in the southern Black Hills were considered especially dangerous (Tallent
Historical Society 1967-70:456; Sundstrom, J. 1977:28). Red Canyon was another southern
gateway where raids were frequent (Tallent 1899:243, 292-295; Brown and Willards 1924:74-75,
84-85, Spring 1949: 132, 135, 148; Hughes, R. 1957: 53; Parker, W. 1966: 133; Curley 1973:
45-46; McClintock 2000:58-60). Wagons and stages were attacked, horses and cattle driven off.
Even large teams of freighters were not immune from assault. So commonplace were the raids
that the miners welcomed the presence of General George Crook and his troops in the Hills
during the fall of 1876 (Hughes, R. 1957:185-186). All of this indicates that the Lakotas and their
allies were not passive when their beloved Hills were being invaded.\(^2\) Against the vacuum of
military inaction, the Lakotas engaged their own war against the miners from 1875-1876. Even
though the Battle of Little Big Horn has occupied center stage in historical recounts of this
period, an equally significant but less well-known battleground was the Black Hills including the
region of Wind Cave National Park.

It is also clear that the white intruders were not passive either. Vigilante and militia groups
were formed throughout the Hills to protect the miners and their settlements, even with the bles­
sing of the U.S. cavalry under General George Crook (Parker, W. 1966:132-133, 137). Military
detachments were called out to defend the roads into the Hills from Indian attacks (Spring 1949:
139-140), and professional hunters were hired to kill Indians (de Mandat-Grancey 1984:135).
Bounties were even offered from fifty to as much as three hundred dollars a head for Indians. In­
dian heads were pickled and displayed in local bars (Parker, W. 1966:162; McClintock 2000:109,
122). Although many of the reports of Indian headhunting are clearly sensationalized, it does
appear that such practices were not only going on but being sanctioned as well in the climate of
racial hatred towards Indians that prevailed in the Hills during this period (Williams, R. 1993).

There is also no question, however, that many of the raids and murders attributed to Indians
were the work of white thieves and bandits, popularly known as highway men. The famous
massacre of the Metz party in Red Canyon, for example, was probably an atrocity committed by a
gang of white men led by Persimmons Bill, although some still claim that Indians were among

\(^{1}\) See, for example: Goulette n.d.; Brennan 1875:7; Tallent 1899:145-146, 237-238, 244, 245-247, 290-299, 307-308,
368-369, 370-373; Brown and Willards 1924:62-63, 69, 77-79, 88, 91, 96-100, 103, 105, 106, 111, 113-115; Hughes,

\(^{2}\) Black Elk (DeMallie 1984:170) and White Bull (in Vestal 1934:183-184, 206-210) offer Lakota perspectives on
these raids, while Father Peter Powell (1982:2-927-928) describes some of the Cheyenne involvement in the attacks.
6. The Seizure of the Black Hills

Meanwhile, tensions between the federal government and the Lakotas, Cheyennes and Arapahos were escalating over the Black Hills and other issues surrounding the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. In the mid-1870s, government agents used Lakota middlemen to convince the non-treaty populations to permanently settle at their agencies on the Missouri and White River and to accept the treaty’s provisions. Many people from the non-treaty bands encamped at these agencies with kin who were members of bands whose leaders had signed the treaty, and they drew on their relatives’ food rations. Still, they refused to sign the treaty. This created internal dissensions within Lakota ranks, especially between some of the younger men and their tribal elders. There were also fights over government attempts at census taking and over its efforts to move the Lakotas to agencies on the Missouri. Tensions flared over the shortage and quality of the food being distributed. The government’s refusal to release ammunition and its ban on hunting along the Republican Fork added more fuel to the antagonistic mood of some of the young men at the agencies. In the face of all of this, federal officials threatened to cut off rations and remove the Lakotas to a reservation in Oklahoma if they did not comply with government orders (Olson 1965:171-198; Hannah 1993; Price, C. 1996:102-148). Tensions were also mounting among the Cheyennes and Arapahos who lived among the Lakotas and took their annuities at agencies on the Great Sioux Reservation (Powell 1982:2:921-923; Fowler 1982:52-56).

The movement of large expeditionary forces into the Hills and the growing presence of the miners and other settlers infuriated the Lakotas and their allies (Powell 1982:2:921-929, 933; Price, C. 1996:133-134). Iron Teeth, an elderly Cheyenne woman, shared her recollections of this with Thomas Marquis (and Limbaugh 1973:16-17) in 1928:

A few years after that, peace was made between the whites and the Cheyennes and Sioux. Our tribes were to have a permanent home in our favorite Black Hills country. We were promised that all white people would be kept away from there. But after we had been there a few years, General Custer and his soldiers came there and found gold. Many white people crowded in, wanting to get the gold. Our young men wanted to fight these whites, but there were too many of them coming. Soldiers came and told us we would have to move to another part of the country and let the white people have this land where was the gold. This action of the soldiers made bad hearts in many of the Cheyennes and Sioux. They said it would be no use to settle on any new lands, because the white people would come there also and drive us out. The most angered ones went to the old hunting grounds lying between the Powder and Bighorn Rivers.

My husband and I took our family to the Red Cloud Agency, known to us as the White River Agency, where all the Cheyennes had been told to go. He was in bad humor because of our having been driven from our Black Hills home country, but he thought it was best to do whatever the white people ordered us to do.

In response to their rising complaints, J. S. Collins told tribal leaders assembled at the newly established Red Cloud Agency that the President of the United States was powerless to stop the miners from entering the Hills and that their best course of action was to cede the land (Olson 1965:177; Price, C. 1996:141-142). Indeed, while Jenney, Newton, and Dodge were in the Hills exploring its mineral potential, the government had already sent a commission to negotiate the cession of the Black Hills (Olson 1965:202-206; Price, C. 1996:149). The chair of the commission, William Allison, was instructed to honor the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty in reference to Article 12, which required the consent and signatures of three-quarters of the adult male population. According to the commission’s own published proceedings and other documents that
recorded what happened, the government's initial request involved an offer to lease the Hills for mineral extraction only (Olson 1965:206-207).

During the course of the deliberations, which began on September 4, 1875, considerable confusion surrounded the meeting and the terms being negotiated. The commission initially proposed to lease the Hills which, according to Lazarus (1991:81), was a ploy to bypass Article 12 of the 1868 Treaty, requiring three-quarters of the adult male population to sign any agreement leading to the cession of land. The concept of a lease was not clear to many of the Sioux leaders who were present at the negotiations, and those who understood it, including Spotted Tail, considered the notion unsound (Ibid.).

When the negotiations were reconvened on the 23rd of September, after an extended adjournment, the Sioux delivered their positions on the matter. The Lakotas and their allies were divided on how to respond to the government's request, however. Those who considered the possibility of negotiating a monetary settlement not only demanded a large sum of money, enough to provision their peoples over many generations, but they also placed restrictions on what areas of land they were willing to negotiate -- namely, the interior regions inside the Race Track (Allison 1875: 88-190; Olson 1965:207-213; Hyde 1961:206-214; Powell 1982:2:931; Price, C. 1996: 150; Arnold in Crawford and Waggoner 1999:209-214). According to Price (1996:151), the commission was astounded by the demands of the Lakotas, and while they expected a lengthy discussion and debate over the matter, they weren't prepared to haggle over the price of the lease. Although the commission extended an offer of $100,000 per year for mineral rights to the Hills, and $6,000,000, if the Lakotas agreed to sell it outright, the proceedings fell apart when many of the leaders suddenly left the negotiations in anger and disgust over the willingness of some of their relatives to put a price on the Hills (Ibid:151). Those who opposed the sale held the position that the Hills were not negotiable, and as Crazy Horse is purported to have said, One does not sell the land the people walk on (quoted in Lazarus 1991:81).

The Cheyennes, according to Father Peter Powell (1982:1:930-936), were similarly divided in their opinion. Most of those who followed Box Elder and Little Wolf held the position that it was unthinkable to sell the Hills, especially the locations that held their most revered and sacred sites. They would never have agreed to the sale of the Race Track and their sacred mountain, Bear Butte, under any terms. Many of these Cheyennes inhabited areas north of the Hills in close association with Lakota bands under the leadership of Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, who were also opposed to any sale of the Hills. Even though these allied bands of Lakota and Cheyenne faced extreme hardship during the harsh winters of the early 1870s, they were still able to maintain their independence and follow a way of life wedded to the movements of a declining, but still extant, bison population. Like the Lakotas, the Cheyennes who were willing to negotiate over the Black Hills had become increasingly dependent on the agency system once bison were extirpated from their aboriginal territories. Most of the populations who wintered at the edge of the southern Hills or at the agencies along the White River continued to hunt elk, deer, and antelope in the region, but much of this hunting supplemented and complemented a diet based on food rations distributed at the tribal agencies. By 1875, many of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were no longer in a position to completely refuse the government, as Edward Lazarus (1991:82) put it. Their leaders clearly recognized the value of the Hills and attempted to use it as leverage to ensure the livelihood and survival of their peoples in perpetuity.

Judging by the speeches of Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho leaders who spoke before the Allison Commission (Allison 1875:188-190), there was uniform agreement among them in the value of the Black Hills to the continued well-being and livelihood of their peoples. Some, like Stabber (in Allison 1875:189), believed that the Hills would support the Lakotas for seven gene-
rations to come. Spotted Bear (Ibid:188), said: Our Great Father has a big safe and so have we. This hill is our safe. That is the reason we can’t come to a conclusion very quick. Another Lakota, Fast Bear (Ibid:189), remarked that the Black Hills were not a small thing but very valuable. While Red Cloud was willing to relinquish areas above the pines in return for fair compensation, he was not ready to give up the lands that stretched between the agency and the Race Track, the area with the richest reserves of game (Ibid:188) (see Chapters Seven and Nine for more detailed discussions on this).

Many Lakotas and Cheyennes did not appear at Red Cloud for the negotiations and remained in the Powder, Tongue, and Yellowstone areas. Even the bands settled at the northern agencies on the Grand and Cheyenne rivers were reluctant to come. According to John Bourke (1875:246), the Indian Agent at Standing Rock:

The expedition to the Black Hills by the military, and subsequent invasion of that country by parties in search of the precious metals, caused much dissatisfaction and bad feeling among the Indians. They emphatically expressed their belief that the Government was trifling with their rights in permitting the treaty to be violated, and asked the pertinent question, How can the Great Father expect us to observe our obligations under treaty stipulations when he permits his white children to break it by coming into our country to remain without our consent? The lawless invasion of the Black Hills by white men, in violation of the intercourse laws of the United States and treaty stipulations with Indians, and the apparent tardiness or inability of the Government in removing them, caused great distrust and lack of confidence among the Indians towards all white men and the white man’s Government. When asked to go to the grand council at Red Cloud to participate in treating for the sale of the Black Hills, they very intelligently reviewed the whole condition of affairs, and finally refused to go, saying it was no use in making treaties when the Great Father would either let white men break them or had not the power to prevent them from doing so. Notwithstanding that these Indians promised the commissioners who visited them here in August last that they would attend, yet when the time arrived for their departure they refused to go, assigning as the cause the reasons stated. I finally succeeded, however, in prevailing upon all of the principal chiefs and headmen, with a number of their head soldiers, to go. They are now in attendance at the council, participating in the deliberations, and favoring a sale of the Black Hills as a measure calculated to promote their best interests.

While it is clear from this and other reports of the time that some of the leaders representing the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were resigned to the fact that they had little power to avert the government’s seizure of the Black Hills, there still was not enough consensus at the meeting to get three-quarters of the adult male population to sign the agreement.

Lacking enough signatures, the commission abandoned further deliberations and the estimated 20,000 Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos in attendance at the negotiations went away angry, confused, and uncertain about the future of the Black Hills (Price, C. 1996:152). After breaking camp, many returned to their respective agencies, but some in the younger generation moved to winter camping grounds at locations near their bison hunting grounds along the Tongue and Yellowstone rivers (Olson 1965:215-217; Price, C. 1996:152-153). Alarmed by this movement, the military issued orders in December for all Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos to return to their respective agencies and warned them that if they failed to appear they would be considered hostile and subject to military arrest. This was an unusually severe winter. Some of the messenger bands that tried to reach the followers of Crazy Horse and other warrior groups were forced to spend the winter in the Black Hills because the blizzards made travel impossible (Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:107). Although some of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos returned in compliance with the order, others refused to come in or were unable to obey it because of the inclement weather (Mekeel 1943:190; Powell 1982:2:934; Price, C. 1996:153;
Arnold in Crawford and Wagonner 1999:239-240). In spite of these conditions, the military engaged its forces in a massive mobilization that culminated in the Battle of Little Bighorn in June of 1876. The rest, as they say, is history: the American army was defeated at the Battle of Little Big Horn against an allied force of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. Within a few weeks of the defeat, Congress issued a directive ordering federal agents to withhold rations until the Lakotas relinquished the Black Hills country (Price, C. 1996:155).

With the death of General George Armstrong Custer and his battalion at the hands of the combined forces of Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas (and Dakotas) encamped along the Rosebud and Little Bighorn rivers in Montana, the United States government abandoned any pretense of fair play in future negotiations over the sale of the Black Hills (Lazarus 1991:89-92). In August of 1876, George Manypenny was appointed chair of a commission to recommence negotiations for the acquisition of the Black Hills (Olson 1965:224-226). Every possible pressure was put before the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho leaders who gathered at Red Cloud Agency to cede the Black Hills, from the threat to remove all the tribes to Indian Territory in Oklahoma to an order to withhold rations until an agreement was signed (Lazarus 1991:92; Price, C. 1996:155). Even though there was still little consensus among the tribal nations who had been forced to gather for the proceedings, some of the leaders, under great duress and in the face of a military armed with bayonets, stepped forward to sign the agreement (Hyde 1961:230-235; Olson 1965: 225-227; Arnold in Crawford and Waggoner 1999:209-210). The parties to this agreement were different bands of Northern Arapahos, Northern Cheyennes, and the Lakotas, including those affiliated with Red Cloud and Spotted Tail, the Lakotas at Cheyenne River, Standing Rock and Lower Brule, and Dakotas from Crow Creek and the Santee reservation (Lazarus 1991:458, 462-463).

The speech of one tribal representative, Black Coal, a member of the Arapaho tribal nation, expresses the seriousness with which these deliberations were being taken. He said:

My friends, you that have come here to counsel with the Indians at this agency, I remember the same thing that took place with my father at the treaty of Horse Creek, when the Arapahoes, Cheyennes, Ogallallas, and Brules were all represented. You have come here to speak to us about the Black Hills and, without disguising anything that we say, and without changing anything that we say, we wish you to tell the Great Father when you get back that this is the country in which we were brought up, and it has also been given to us by treaty by the Great Father, and I am here to take care of the country, and therefore, not only the Dakota Indians, but my people have an interest in the Black Hills that we have come to speak about to-day. This is my country and the Great Father has allowed the Arapahoe people to live here, and he told them that they must not be foolish, and they have never been foolish or behaved badly since they have been in this country, and therefore, they have in interest in whatever becomes of it, the sale of it...(U.S. Senate 1876:35-36).

Other published speeches from the proceedings and unpublished documents of the public and private debates that surrounded them indicate that there was still no consensus among the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos regarding the disposition of the Black Hills (Hyde 1961:230-235). Indeed, one Lakota leader argued that no decision could be reached on the matter without consulting the other Lakotas who were not in attendance. The reluctance of the Lakotas and their allies to relinquish the Hills was not only based on their importance to these tribes, but also on the history of broken promises and bad faith by which the federal government had conducted itself in its dealings with them. As Two Strikes said, The reason we are afraid to touch the pen and are silent before you is because we have been deceived so many times before, and as another Lakota exclaimed, since the Great Father promised that we should never be moved we have been moved five times...I think you had better put the Indians on wheels and you can run them about wherever
you wish (in U.S. Senate 1876:43, 52). Nonetheless, on the 19th of October, various leaders, including Red Cloud, Young Man Afraid of His Horse, and American Horse, stepped forward and signed the agreement (Olson 1965:225-227). To this day, many people believe that the Lakotas and other tribal leaders did not understand the agreement to which they affixed their signatures. Despite the fact that three-quarters of the adult men had not signed the agreement, it was concluded on October 27, 1876 and ratified the following year on the 28th of February by the Senate. Notwithstanding the illegality of its actions, the United States formally seized the Black Hills, claiming that the Lakota people had ceded it under the 1876 Black Hills Agreement (Price, C. 1996:155-157).

It is clear, however, that the parties to this agreement had a very different interpretation of what it meant. Red Cloud is purported to have believed that he had signed a lease agreement, as introduced to him and others by William Allison during the negotiations of 1875 (Olson 1965:227). Whether this is the case or not, it is clear that he was firm in his belief that the United States was obligated to provision the Lakotas indefinitely. As he told a government agent, The white man can work if he wants to, but the Great Spirit did not make us to work. The white man owes us a living for the lands he has taken from us (quoted in Lazarus 1991:103). Of course, the intention of the government, whether it was clear to the Lakotas and their allies or not, was to enter into a purchase agreement in which there was a definite but open-ended conclusion to the payments. It is also clear that whatever concessions the tribal parties to the agreement may have retained in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 were stripped from them in the 1877 agreement. This included the loss of their off-reservation hunting rights to the Republican and Powder River countries.

7. Tribal Resistance and Surrender

Even as tribal title to the Black Hills was being relinquished, many Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos continued to remain out of the reach of the agencies and the soldiers, traveling, camping, and hunting in isolated locations in the vast country of the Powder, Tongue, and Yellowstone rivers. After the battle with Custer's forces on the Little Bighorn in Montana, many of these bands continued to follow their independent way of life, notwithstanding the considerable hardships they endured during the harsh winters of the 1870s (Powell 1982:2:793, 923, 926-928, 933). Cheyennes under Little Wolf and Dull Knife (a.k.a. Morning Star) and Oglalas under Crazy Horse and Lame Deer resolutely refused to sign any agreement or to stay at the agencies along the White River. Before the famous fight with Custer in the summer of 1876, they constituted the nucleus of the populations who lived in the regions between the Black Hills and Big Horn Mountains. In the summers, their ranks swelled when their kin from the agencies joined them in hunting and on raiding expeditions against American miners, the Crows, Shoshones, and other enemies. In the aftermath of the Battle of Little Bighorn and the threat of further hostile action from the U.S. military, they remained determined to hold their northern territories. In July and August of 1876, some of these bands camped near Bear Butte, while their younger warriors raided white settlements on the northern side of the Hills for horses, cattle, and other commodities. The policy of many of the older leaders, at least among the Cheyennes, was to avoid the whites and stay out of harm's way (Powell 1982:2:1047-1051).

Over the next few years, facing starvation and sickness among their peoples, the non-treaty northern bands associated with Crazy Horse started to surrender themselves at agencies on the White River in the spring of 1877. Contrary to previous and very small estimates of their population size, the Oglalas, Minneconjous, Itazipcos, and Cheyennes who surrendered numbered well over four thousand people (Hyde 1937:292). With the surrender of Crazy Horse, his followers and associates, only one small band under Lame Deer remained outside federal jurisdiction.
When Lame Deer was killed by Colonel Miles troops, the band fled but eventually surrendered at Spotted Tail Agency in the fall of 1877 (Hyde 1937:245). Although all of the Lakotas were now effectively under federal control, it would be another two years before the remaining Cheyennes were subdued and eventually settled either at Pine Ridge among the Lakotas or on their own reservation in Montana (Eastman in Graber 1978:28, 132-134; Powell 1982:2:1245-1261; Striata 1995:60-69).

After their forced removal to Oklahoma in 1877, the Northern Cheyennes under Little Wolf and Dull Knife made a return trek to the north with their people in 1878 (Grinnell 1956:359-414; Weist 1977:80-81; Striata 1995:34-37). Even though they shared a common heritage with the Southern Cheyennes, they were no longer a part of the same community. As Father Peter Powell (1982:2:1067-1070, 1125-1131) writes, their long history of intermarriage, territorial sharing, and political alliance with the Lakotas made them closer socially and culturally to this tribe, and it was with these relatives and friends that they sought shelter. Many of Dull Knife’s people, however, were killed by the military when they tried to escape capture after being imprisoned at Fort Robinson (Grinnell 1956:414-427; Weist 1977:82-83). Some of those who lived were eventually settled at Pine Ridge (Striata 1995:74-76).

III. THE WIND CAVE AREA IN TRANSITION

In less than two decades, after the U.S. government began to impose boundaries on tribal territories, the Black Hills changed from being a camping ground, religious sanctuary, meeting place, plant nursery, game reserve, and mineral storehouse owned, occupied, and used exclusively by the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho nations (except for a few white traders who lived in their midst) to a land populated and controlled by European Americans for their own settlement and development. The demographic transition was swift and brutal. In little more than two years, the Hills turned from a region largely devoid of European Americans to one of the most densely populated areas of Dakota Territory. Almost overnight, towns sprang up with full services and amenities from saloons and banks to bakeries and churches. Major stage lines and freighting services quickly crisscrossed the region bringing people and supplies to the gold-rich towns of Custer and Deadwood.

Before 1875, the Black Hills remained an important area of occupation for the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. The bands of these tribes wintered at campsites that nearly encircled the Hills, they traveled into the interiors to fish, hunt, gather plants and lodgepoles, and they camped at various spots to conduct their religious observances and political deliberations. Their wintering locations stretched from the Fall River and the Buffalo Gap to the valley of Rapid Creek, from there to Red Water, and then along Stockade-Beaver Creek to the South Fork of the Cheyenne. In the summers, their camps were observed, among other places, at Reynolds Prairie and Castle Creek. This all changed in 1875, when scores of miners and settlers illegally entered the Hills and took control of the mineral-rich interiors. As the Lakotas and their allies waged war on the trespassing whites, the region became too dangerous for their own families and settlements. But even in the winter of 1875-1876, at the height of the illegal emigration, some Lakotas were reported to have camped in the Hills to escape the blizzards and bitter cold of one the harshest winters in the region’s history. Even though these tribes were permanently exiled from the Hills through the passage of the Black Hills Act in 1877 and were no longer able to live among them on their own terms, they would continue to embrace the area and use it for a wide variety of cultural purposes in the coming years.
In the midst of this change, the southeastern reaches of the Hills, where Wind Cave National Park is now located, remained largely isolated. Two of the federally sponsored expeditions to this area, Custer’s and Hinman’s, may have crossed portions of the park’s land, or, at the very least, lands that bordered park properties. The Jenney Expedition of 1875 sent parties to the southeastern area of the Hills and developed a fairly detailed map of the region that included the Beaver Creek drainage from its headwaters near Pringle to its mouth east of the Buffalo Gap on the Cheyenne River. From some of their descriptions, it is clear that they entered the park along Beaver Creek en route to the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs.

In the years before 1875, the southeastern area of the Black Hills was used and occupied primarily by Lakotas and the Cheyennes who remained in their midst. The Buffalo Gap was a favorite wintering area, especially for some of the Sicangu, Minneconjou, and Oglala bands, a location where people stayed from the late fall through the early spring. Neighboring areas along the Fall River, French Creek, and the South Fork of the Cheyenne were also popular winter camping areas, close enough for small parties to travel to park lands in search of food. The area was also probably used by the Masikota Cheyennes, and perhaps some of the other Cheyennes associated with the Oglalas and Sicangus. It was reported as a location where Lakotas temporarily encamped in the spring or fall when traveling between their buffalo-hunting grounds on the Powder and Tongue rivers and their agencies on the White River. In a variety of different sources, which are described in later chapters, the region was widely regarded as a hunting ground where small parties of men came to hunt deer and elk in the late fall from their settlements on the White River and even as far away as the Platte. It was also known as a place where people came to draw on the healing waters of the neighboring hot springs. Finally, it was reported to be the location of three major Indian trails, one which entered the Hills at the Buffalo Gap and followed Beaver Creek into the higher elevation interiors near present day Custer, South Dakota, another which followed trails to Custer on the park’s western border, and a third, known as the Race Track, which encircled the Hills, and also covered park properties.

The Buffalo Gap was the area that Spotted Tail recommended in 1874 for the establishment of a permanent agency for his followers. The historic record does not tell us why he singled out this site, but as the discussion in Chapter Seven reveals, this was a logical choice given the transhumance migratory patterns of the game on which local tribes depended. The area extending from the Race Track through the Hogback to the grasslands were included in the lands that Red Cloud and other Lakotas did not wish to give up when the cession of the Black Hills was being negotiated in 1875 and then again in 1876. The historic record does not reveal why the Lakotas wanted these lands reserved for them, but again, as subsequent discussion reveals, they occupied a critical place in the ecological adaptations of local tribes to this area.

We can also be certain that many early prospectors traveled across park lands to reach the gold fields near Custer. Two of the major trails into the gold mining areas in the Hills interiors passed through the southern Hills. One of these, the Sidney-Custer Trail, entered the Hills at the Buffalo Gap and crossed sections of the park along Beaver Creek. The other, the Cheyenne-Custer Trail, followed Red Canyon and Pleasant Valley, or the Pringle area, along the western edge of park properties. While thousands of European Americans traveled these routes on foot and horseback or by wagon and freight team, very few appear to have stayed in the area before 1877. Indeed, during much of the period between 1874 and 1876, the trails into the Hills at the Buffalo Gap and Red Canyon were war roads that the Lakotas attempted to defend against outside encroachments. The intensity of Lakota military activity along these routes reveals, at least in part, how important this area was to them and how it would not be easily surrendered to incoming whites. Because of its lack of mineral wealth, isolation, and vulnerability, this region was
largely devoid of any white settlement. It would take another decade for European Americans to establish a substantial presence in this part of the Hills.
After 1877, the Black Hills historical record turns on the European American prospectors, merchants, ranchers, farmers, and developers who came to the area to stake out a new life for themselves. Much of the story speaks to the drama and legend of the frontier West with its cast of notable characters, including Wild Bill Hickock and Calamity Jane. Indeed, a large portion of the published history, popular as well as scholarly, focuses its attention on the early decades of white settlement and their romantic link to epic tales of discovery, struggle, and survival on the American frontier. With the passing of the halcyon days of the cattle industry, following the disastrous winter of 1886-1887, the history of the Black Hills turns to more prosaic stories woven out of the fabric of national events from the Depression to the Vietnam War. In fact, comparatively little attention is paid in popular and scholarly writings to what happened in the Black Hills after World War I except for developments at Mount Rushmore.

Until the 1970s, when the American Indian Movement began its occupations in the Black Hills, tribal relationships to the area were essentially erased from the region’s history. Most historical writings on the Hills abandoned any consideration of an American Indian presence after 1877, except as a reminder of the now well-known stories of the wars between the U.S. military and local tribal nations. The continuing ties of the Lakotas and their allies, the Cheyennes and Arapahos, were obscured, and even when glimpses of them appeared, it was in the context of events unfolding around the white settlers who came to occupy center stage in local histories. Although largely invisible, there is an important tribal history here, one that involves a complex and continuing relationship to the Hills, and it needs to be told.

Another story that remains hidden in some of the better-known historical accounts of the Black Hills is the emergence and development of the area where Wind Cave National Park is now located. After 1878, the park’s lands became wedged between two very different kinds of American settlement. At locations to the north in Custer County, much of the settlement was built around mining and logging and the services that supported these industries, while areas to the south in Fall River County were developed around ranching and farming (Geores 1990:41-42). Although the histories of the northern and southern districts of the Black Hills moved in divergent directions at the end of the nineteenth century, their paths started to meet after World War I through their common ties to the region’s rapidly growing tourist industry. The southern Hills can be credited as the pioneer in the region’s leisure and recreational development. The town of Hot Springs, in particular, supported the growth of a lavish resort and spa industry at the end of the nineteenth century. A commerce built around travel and leisure did not develop farther north, however, until the early decades of the twentieth century when the Hills’ spectacular wilderness scenery and its legendary mining frontier started to be promoted. By the middle of the twentieth century, tourism had become one of the cornerstones of the Black Hills economy.
I. HISTORIC REFERENCES

In reconstructing the post-1878 history of the Black Hills, especially the region of Wind Cave National Park, several different kinds of source material were relied upon. Most of the secondary sources entail general histories of the region, while the primary materials include the oral and written accounts of the people who resided in the area at different points in time. Some unpublished archival material was also drawn upon to reconstruct events and trends from 1878 to the present.

A. Histories of American Settlement and Development

There are a number of general histories of the Black Hills, but most of these pertain to the era before Wind Cave became a national park. These include the early writings of pioneer settlers, including Annie Tallent’s *The Black Hills or the Last Hunting Ground of the Dacotahs* (1899), Jesse Brown and A. M. Willard’s *The Black Hills Trails: A History of the Struggles of the Pioneers in The Winning of the Black Hills* (1924), Richard B. Hughes’ *Pioneer Years in the Black Hills* (1957), and John McClintock’s *Pioneer Days in the Black Hills* (2000). There are the accounts of Le Baron de Mandat-Grancey (1981, 1984), who wrote about his travels in the area during the 1880s. More recent works, such as Watson Parker’s *Gold in the Black Hills* (1966), Paul Friggsens *Gold and Grass: The Black Hills Story* (1983), and Hyman Palais various writings (1941, 1942, 1942b, 1942c, 1950) chronicle the early history of the region as well. Bob Lee and Dick Williams’ *Last Grass Frontier: The Stock Grower Association* (1964), Herbert Schell’s *South Dakota History* (1961), and Howard R. Lamar’s *Dakota Territory, 1861-1889: A Study of Frontier Politics* (1996) are three works that place Black Hills history in the wider context of what was happening in the state of South Dakota. Finally, Martha Geores’ recent study, *Common Ground: The Struggle for Ownership of the Black Hills National Forest* (1990), offers interesting insights on the history of federal lands.

Several travel accounts, largely written for tourists and popular audiences, give a sense of the region’s tourism and its most notable attractions, including Wind Cave, during the first half of the twentieth century. These include R. Peattie’s edited volume, *The Black Hills* (1952), O. W. Coursey’s *The Beautiful Black Hills* (1926), Robert Casey’s *The Black Hills and Their Incredible Characters: A Chronicle and a Guide* (1949), Leland D. Case’s *Lee’s Official Guide to the Black Hills and the Badlands* (1949), and Albert N. Williams’ *The Black Hills* (1952). All of the more serious historical writings and popular travel accounts on the Black Hills include information on the southeastern regions where Wind Cave National Park is located, but this material is very general, except for Suzanne Julin’s article *South Dakota Spa: A History of the Hot Springs Health Resort, 1882-1915*, which appeared in the 1982 *South Dakota Historical Collections*.

Some of the best and most detailed information on the history of the southeastern Hills comes from the writings of local historians, many of whom wrote essays included in works that mark local town and county centennials (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-1970; Fall River Country Historical Society 1976; Sundstrom, J. 1977; Curl 1984; Oelrichs Historical Society 1984). Of particular note here is the exceptional historical work of Jessie Sundstrom, *Pioneers and Custer State Park* (1994), which describes events unfolding on state lands directly north of Wind Cave National Park. There is also the work of South Dakota’s poet laureate, Badger Clark, *When Hot Springs was Still a Pup*, originally published by the Kiwanis Club of Hot Springs in 1927 and republished in 1983 by Linda Hasselstrom of Lame Johnny Press.
Except for John Bohi’s 1962 article, Seventy Five Years at Wind Cave: A History of the National Park, which appeared in the *South Dakota Historical Collections* in 1962, there is little in the published literature that focuses on the park. Historical research (Long 1992; Western History Research 1992) has been conducted for the National Park Service, but it remains unpublished. These sources were consulted for material on European American settlement and cultural affiliations to the park. Unpublished oral history transcripts from the South Dakota Oral History Project at the University of South Dakota-Vermillion (Bingham 1973; McAdam 1973; Petty 1973; Smith, A. 1973; Williams, B. 1973) also give some insight into the relations of local European American settlers to the park.

### B. Accounts of Continuing Tribal Use and Settlement

Contained within the historical and popular writings on the Black Hills, in general, and Custer and Fall River counties, in particular, are glimpses of a continuing tribal presence in the Black Hills and the region of Wind Cave National Park from the late nineteenth to the early half of the twentieth century. A Lakota and Cheyenne presence is revealed in the writings of scholars and local white settlers (Mekeel 1932; Odell 1942; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70; Fall River Country Historical Society 1976; Sundstrom, J. 1977; Born 1994; Moore, J. 1981), in the documents of federal officials (Jones 1904; U. S. Senate 1904), and in tribal autobiographical accounts (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967; Fools Crow in Mails 1978; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988; Pourier et. al in Niehardt and Utrecht 2000). In addition, there are a few unpublished oral history transcripts from the American Indian Oral History Project (Brown Thunder 1971; Circle Bear 1971) and the South Dakota Oral History Project (Bingham 1973; McAdam 1973; Petty 1973; Smith, A. 1973; Williams, B. 1973) at the University of South Dakota-Vermillion that provide additional evidence for the Lakotas continuing relationship to the Black Hills. Most of these sources, however, contain only *ad hoc* references written in contexts devoted to other concerns. When taken together, however, they document a continuing but changing pattern of tribal relationship to the Hills after 1877.

II. TRANSITIONS

The transitional lands on which Wind Cave National Park stands, bridging as they do the prairies and sandstone hills of the Hogback with the high altitude coniferous forests of the limestone and granite interiors, continued to influence the course of the history of the park area after 1878. The park and its surrounding region stood on the margins of the Hills major centers of white settlement and economic development. It remained an area that people crossed to get to the gold fields in the interiors. Even after European Americans discovered Wind Cave in 1881 and developed it into a tourist attraction, the park’s lands remained largely unpopulated. Most of the small number of homesteads within park boundaries were not settled and patented until after the 1890s (Western History Research 1992:70). Grazing, hunting, trapping, and some farming were the primary economic activities settlers pursued on the lands that now encompass park properties.

As settlement increased and the cave’s popularity grew, the park’s lands became less isolated. In time, they came to occupy an important place in the history of the southern Hills, and after 1920, they contributed in not insubstantial ways to the growth of the local economy. In order to get a good sense of this history, however, we need to see it in the light of the wider region of which it has always been a part.

A. The Emergence of a New Social Order, 1878 To 1902

The decades between 1878 and 1902, the year before Wind Cave became a national park, were heydays in the history of the Black Hills. This was a time of rapid population growth and economic development, much of which rested on mining, logging, and ranching. It was a formative period when new and radically different kinds of political and economic relationships to the Hills were established by the European Americans who made this region their home. As their presence grew, they transformed the landscape in fundamental ways, redefined the uses to which its resources were put, and above all, imposed their own cultural meanings on its value and worth. In short, the newcomers created the foundations upon which a new social order would be built and the future course of the Hills would be navigated.

Once European Americans dominated the region, they also determined the conditions under which the Black Hills’ former residents would continue to preserve some of their relationships to the region. Although many of them were forced out of the area and placed on reservations far removed from the Hills, the Lakotas and Cheyennes of the neighboring Pine Ridge Reservation were still close enough to retain an ongoing relationship, based not only on certain limited patterns of traditional use but also on new kinds of association linked to European American adaptations to the region.

1. The Stories of European American Settlement

The early stories of European American settlement in the Hills, especially in the region where Wind Cave National Park was established, focus on three subjects. First, they typically consider the trails that emigrants took to reach various locations in the Black Hills and the history of their development from wagon roads and stage routes to railway lines and modern highways. Second, they chart the chronology of the area through the discoveries of the Hills natural resources and the industries that fostered their development. Finally, they give attention to the figures whose noteworthy accomplishments contributed to the Hills growth and its unique history. Here the rascallians and bandits, the likes of Lame Johnny, often receive as much attention as the scions of local industry.
**a. Trails and Crossroads**

Much of the popular romance of the region is told from the vantage point of the routes that prospectors and settlers took to reach the Black Hills in the 1870s (Spring 1949; Palais 1950; Parker, D. 1951). Initially, most of the emigrants came to the Hills on foot or horseback and by wagon, but as the region continued to boom and grow after 1877, stagecoaches and later trains brought people to the area. The newcomers came from all directions; they migrated from the mining fields of California, Montana, and Colorado, from urban centers and farms in the East and Midwest, from the cattle ranges of Texas, Kansas, and Oklahoma, and even from the foreign lands of China, Canada, Mexico, Sweden, Scotland and Germany (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:41-45, 55, 101, et. seq.; Bingham 1973:2; Petty 1973:1; Williams, B. 1973:1; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:10, 12, 28, 35, 48, 59, 70, 78 et. seq.; Sundstrom, J. 1977:261, 289, 362 et. seq). Bismark in Dakota Territory, Sidney in Nebraska Territory, and Cheyenne in Wyoming Territory were the major transcontinental railway stops from which travelers embarked to follow overland routes to the Hills. Fort Pierre on the Missouri River was the nearest stop for emigrants arriving in the region by steamboat. These were the four major locations from which throngs of prospectors and settlers started their journeys to the Hills and also the central terminals for wagon trains hauling cargo into and out of these mountains.

Two of the earliest trails into the Hills and to the bustling gold towns of Custer and Deadwood crossed the southern Black Hills. The land on which Wind Cave National Park now stands was situated along one of these important routes and bordered another at the location of the park s water supply area. The Buffalo Gap, as previously noted, was a major point of entry into the Black Hills from the town of Sidney in Nebraska, and the divides along Beaver Creek and Cold Brook Canyon became well-trodden trails, leading prospectors and earlier American Indians into the high elevation interiors where the town of Custer is located. Professor Walter Jenney, the geologist who led a federally financed expedition to the area in 1875, followed this route again on horseback in 1879. He was accompanied by Dr. Valentine McIllicuddy, also a former member of the 1875 expedition, and Col. William J. Thornby of Deadwood, South Dakota (Tallent 1899:645-646; Casey 1949:87-88; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:143). As Tallent (1899:647) described their itinerary, From Pringle, they took an old Indian trail along the divide towards the Buffalo Gap, for six or seven miles and passed within a short distance of the now famous Wind Cave. Even as late as 1881, emigrants traveled with wagon trains hauling freight to Custer along this trail (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:251). After 1877, most of the wagon and stagecoach traffic from Sidney to the Black Hills gold fields was routed along the eastern flanks of the Hills, although the Buffalo Gap remained a major rest stop along the route (Palais 1950:226-231). By the 1880s, the Beaver Creek Trail and others nearby were used primarily for local traffic or for hauling lumber and other freight (Long 1992:6). According to Donald Williams (in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:275), a descendent of one of the pioneer sawmill operators in Hot Springs:

Most of the lumber was hauled down Cold Brook Canyon over the hill south of Wind Cave Park and on to the Buffalo Gap. The hill out of the canyon was called breakneck hill, which could be accomplished without too much effort, then over Gobblers Knob and on down to Beaver Creek.

To the present day, local residents and historians are well aware of the history and importance of Beaver Creek and the Buffalo Gap, not only to the early miners but also to the Lakotas and other tribal nations who previously lived in the region (Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:3; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:14). Even foreign visitors knew of its importance. Gallot
Francois Edmond, Le Baron de Mandat-Grancey (1981:3-6), a nobleman born in Dijon, France in 1842 and a writer of popular western stories, traveled to the Black Hills in 1883, 1886, and 1887. While visiting the Fleur de Lys ranch in 1887, he had this to say about the Buffalo Gap:

It is in this region, at the same time so rough and so changeless, that we plunge, on leaving Buffalo Gap, which is situated at the edge of the great prairie. One can enter the massive bulk of mountains by three or four gaps--(breches). The former was well known at the time of the Indians. They had given it the name Breche aux buffles of which Buffalo Gap is the translation, because it was through there that passed each year the immense herds of buffalo which, having wintered on the southern prairie, came north in the spring. Innumerable Indian wars had as their objects the possession of this hunting ground; for the tribes who could claim it for themselves would have marvelous hunting there. It is said that certain days three or four thousand buffalo were slaughtered. Even now the ground is literally covered with their skulls (Mandat-Grancey 1981:11).

He also reported on the wonders of the water that flowed in Beaver Creek:

In the southern Black Hills all of the streams of the prairie have execrable water, but none compare with Beaver Creek, which flows at the Buffalo Gap. Its water has all the properties of the spring which, in our day, has made so celebrated the name of the Hunyadi. The good Flynn saw himself already associated with his name on the bottles the doctor would dispatch to the entire world (Mandat-Grancey 1981:7).

By the end of the 1870s, Buffalo Gap was a major stopping point along the route of the early Northwestern Stage Company line from Sidney, Nebraska to Deadwood, South Dakota (Smith and Willards 1924:48; Biever 1984:4), and it was also one of the locations where people changed stages to ride to Hot Springs and Custer (Sundstrom, J. 1994:25, 27). George Boland and his brother established a stage and relay station here with food and overnight accommodations for passengers and freighters (Stewart 1967-70:70). In the early 1880s, during the halcyon days of the cattle industry, the Buffalo Gap grew into a bustling community with over one thousand residents (Casey 1949:86-90). It became the most important shipping point and transfer location for people and goods destined to the southern Hills.

Another important route crossing the southern Hills came directly north from Fort Robinson, Nebraska, through Red Canyon and Pleasant Valley or, alternatively, Shirttail Canyon and Pringle to Custer (Sundstrom, J. 1994:25, Palais 1950:231-238). Like the Buffalo Gap, Red Canyon was an entrance into the Hills jealously guarded by the Lakotas and Cheyennes, who regularly attacked wagon trains and stages passing through its narrow passageway during the height of the gold rush between 1874 and 1876. Both of these early gateways were also the targets of highwaymen and horse thieves, who were known to maintain their hideouts at isolated locations in the southern Hills (Spring 1949:296). One of the more well-known thieves was Lame Johnny, Cornelius Donahue, who with his partner, Lame Bradley, shared a shack along the creek that bears his name; he was eventually hanged in 1878 on a cottonwood tree north of the Buffalo Gap, near the site where he and his accomplices purportedly robbed a stagecoach (Brown and Willards 1924:298-301; Case 1949:104; Federal Writers Project 1952:287; Bohi 1962:365; Stewart 1967-70:70; Sundstrom, J. 1994:66-67; Rezatto 1989:120-127).

Little more than two years after the gold boom, the placer mines in the discovery town of Custer played out. After 1877, when the region’s mining development and the locus of its population growth shifted to the northern districts of the Hills, the major transportation routes were diverted to roads around the edge of the Hogback. When the U.S. Post Office Department started to carry mail into the Hills in 1878, Luke Voorhees took it over a newly established stage route
that crossed the southern Hills from Raw Hide Buttes to Horse Head, just south of the Buffalo Gap, where it joined the Sidney line going north to Deadwood. This new route bypassed Hat Creek, Red Canyon, and Custer, a change that led to the loss of mail service for many settlers in the southern Hills.\(^1\) By 1880, the mail contract over this route was curtailed, although the passenger service continued from Cheyenne to Deadwood by way of Horse Head Junction (Spring 1949:292, 298-299, 303). In the 1890s, local mail was carried by stage on a route that started at the Buffalo Gap, included stops at Wind Cave and Hot Springs and ended at Edgemont (Petty 1973:13). Wind Cave served as the local post office for some of the region's homesteaders well into the twentieth century (McAdam 1973:3).

Within a decade of the invasion of prospectors and settlers, railtracks were being laid to destinations at the foot of the Black Hills. The Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad offered service between Sidney and Rapid City, following the old stage and wagon routes (Biever 1984:4). A railway station was built along Beaver Creek, and the town of Buffalo Gap was relocated farther south as a result. The first train arrived in 1885, and from there, passengers were taken by stage to destinations in the southern Hills (Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70). With the arrival of the railway, Buffalo Gap became the first major shipping point for locally raised stock, eliminating the time consuming, long distance cattle drives of earlier years (Palais 1941:43; Lee and Williams 1964:161). The railways not only made it more convenient but also more cost effective for ranchers to bring their stock to distant markets (Schell 1961:250), and this no doubt helped to make some of the land in and around the present day boundaries of Wind Cave National Park attractive for stock raising. The coming of the railroads in the mid-1880s also opened the region to tourists and travelers, and it played a central role in the growth of Hot Springs as a nationally acclaimed resort and the development of Wind Cave as a popular tourist attraction. Eventually, branch lines took passengers into the interior regions of the Hills, and by 1891, two railways reached Hot Springs (Clark, B. 1983:72).

1891 was also the year that Fred Evans hired Chris Jensen, a Danish emigrant, to run a coach to Wind Cave from Hot Springs (Sundstrom, J. 1994:28). Later, sightseers could reach the cave in a four-seated tally-ho bus drawn by four horses and owned by Jensen, who now ran a livery stable in Hot Springs. A competitor, Edmund Petty, who ran the mail service in the 1890s, took people to Wind Cave once a day on his stagecoach, which was later sold to a promoter for Deadwood's 'Days of 76' (Tallent 1899:672; Bohi 1962:392; Koller 1970:3; Petty 1973:13; Smith, A. 1973:10; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:146; Sundstrom, J. 1977:27-28; Clark, B. 1983:14).

### b. Towns and Settlements

Wind Cave National Park is situated along the southern border of Custer County. Originally, Custer County covered the entire southern Black Hills and the grasslands as far south as the Nebraska state line. The center of its government was located at the town of Custer. By the time Lakota title to the Black Hills was extinguished in 1877, the gold rush was over in Custer. The thousands of prospectors who flocked to the area were gone and with them went much of the town's commercial development. In subsequent years, Custer's population fluctuated between fifty and four hundred people (Tallent 1899:408-409). In the face of a dwindling population and reduced commercial opportunities, it neither had the economic strength nor the political clout to

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\(^1\) Before the U.S. mail was able to establish its service in the Black Hills, private individuals, such as Ben Arnold, carried mail from Sidney, Cheyenne, and Fort Crawford to the region's settlers. Until the Hills were officially relinquished in 1877, all traffic into and out of the Hills was illegal. Even though no one was ever prosecuted for this illegal traffic, some were detained by the military in the early years of European American occupation.
FIGURE 15. Early European American Towns and Settlements in the Black Hills
maintain control over the far-reaching county it served. When the southern half of the county expe-
rienced a spurt in its economy and population as a result of the region’s cattle boom, its local
citizens brought a bill before the territorial legislature to have the county divided. In 1883, a law
was passed to create a new county, named Fall River, with its seat at Hot Springs and its northern
boundary less than three miles south of Wind Cave National Park (Tallent 1899:641; Fall River
County Historical Society 1976:339). Even though the park is still situated in Custer County,
many of its most important economic links are tied to Hot Springs and Fall River County. There­
fore, the histories of both counties are considered here.

At the end of the 1870s, Wind Cave National Park and its neighboring environs were still
largely unpopulated. Some of the earliest European American residents were people who entered
the region to prospect, but when the mining boom was over, they turned to other economic
pursuits. Some made a living from hunting and trapping (Bingham 1973:2, 4; Fall River County
Historical Society 1976:164). A few started small-scale sawmills and logging operations at
locations north of Wind Cave and outside park boundaries (Lindsay 1967-70:899; Williams in
people who settled in the general region of Wind Cave as squatters and later as homesteaders
ended up running a wide variety of ranching and farming enterprises. Although some of
the earliest settlers were prospectors who turned to ranching and other occupations when the gold
fields played out, others worked as hired hands for the big cattle companies and struck out on
their own when many of these operations folded after the harsh winter of 1887. Many more,
however, arrived in the area for the express purpose of establishing homesteads and making a
living from ranching and/or farming.

As tribal residents of the area had done before them, European Americans selected the best
sites to homestead along Beaver, Highland and Lame Johnny creeks, the Fall River, and other
local waterways. While these locations afforded enough resources to make a living with modest
economic returns, there was rarely enough contiguous and open space inside the Hogback to sup­
port some of the larger market-oriented stock operations that had taken over the grasslands
outside the Hills. Still, a few sizable ranches were situated on park lands in the 1880s (McAdam
1973:27; Long 1992:8). Most of the land squatted on and later homesteaded in the southern Hills
involved family-run enterprises, which operated on a much smaller scale than some of the huge
commercial operations over taking the region outside the Hogback near Buffalo Gap and Oelrichs
(McAdam 1973:3; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:4, 5, 7, 14, 28 et seq.; Western
History Research 1992:81, 101). A few of the biggest cattle enterprises in the area, such as the
L7 at Lame Johnny Creek, ran some of their stock inside the Hogback too and on land that is
now part of Wind Cave National Park (Clark, B. 1983:17, 27; Long 1992:7-9).

Besides the thousands of people who came to the Black Hills to work the lands, mines, and
timber stands, many arrived to offer their services as workers and entrepreneurs in other busi­
nesses. The bullwhackers who hauled freight into the Hills by wagon, and the stage drivers who
brought passengers made up a significant portion of the labor force before the arrival of the
railroads. The freighters supplied local entrepreneurs with mining equipment, sawmills, printing
presses, furniture, fixtures, food, clothing, and caskets, which they hauled from railroad terminals
over two hundred miles away at Sidney, Cheyenne, and Bismark (Schell 1961:152-155; Friggens
1983:70).2 A variety of different people came to the area to open businesses from hotels, saloons,
and billiard halls to druggists, bakeries, and liveries. Skilled professionals quickly followed, in-

2 Fred T. Evans, who built Hot Springs famous luxury hotel, owned one of the biggest freighting firms in the region
(Schell 1961:154).
cluding doctors, lawyers, and school teachers (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:2, 12, 14, 16, 35, 48, 96, 189 et seq.; Sundstrom, J. 1977:258, 259 et seq). Finally, a few people came to the Hills primarily as investors with the necessary capital to build and develop some of the area's resources, including Hot Spring's thermal waters and Wind Cave's subterranean attractions (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:80-82, 141-145, 234-235; Bohi 1962:369).

The population that occupied the Hills at the end of the nineteenth century represented a diversity of ethnic groups. Although European Americans formed the dominant group, small numbers of Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, and African Americans also made this area their home (Casey 1949:348-349; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:84-86, 258-259, 301, 339-340; Sundstrom, J. 1977:27; Rezatto 1989:101-104). In Hot Springs, for example, the Joseph Chow family operated a laundry (Bingham 1973:13), and Fred Evans brought in African-American laborers from Chicago to work at his hotel (Petty 1973:21).

At the end of the 1870s, most of the mining and cattle towns at the northern edge of the Hills from Rapid City to Spearfish were well established, offering a full range of services and accommodations to their residents. The southern Black Hills were still isolated and barely developed until the 1880s when its cattle and resort industries started to flourish, attracting a wide range of merchants, professionals, and workers to the area. The 1880s was the decade when some of the towns surrounding Wind Cave National Park also began to come into their own.

The town of Buffalo Gap, ten miles east of Wind Cave, was the site of significant commercial development but only for a very brief period of time. During the halcyon days of the cattle industry, many of the towns bordering the southern edge of the Black Hills flourished. Edgemont, Oelrichs, and Buffalo Gap were bustling communities in 1885. Buffalo Gap had a population of over a thousand people, twenty-three saloons, seventeen hotels and eateries, two sporting houses, various retail establishments, and a bank. Fire destroyed the business section in 1895, and even though some of it was rebuilt, it never returned to its former glory days after the region's cattle boom went bust in the aftermath of the hard winter of 1887 (Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70-71). Small scale ranches were established all along the course of Beaver Creek from the Gap to the western reaches of Wind Cave National Park, while most of the larger operations held lands that hugged the Hogback and extended across the grasslands towards the Cheyenne River (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40-45, 55, 101, et seq).

To the west of Wind Cave National Park, the small community of Pringle, named after one of the early settler families, developed around the stage station known as Point of Rocks that served the traffic between Cheyenne, Wyoming and Custer, South Dakota. Its early residents wrestled their livelihoods from ranching, logging, and mining (Smith, A. 1973:8, 17-18). By 1890, it had become a train stop for the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincey railroad (Sundstrom, J. 1977:197), and it had two stores, which local ranch families from the western sections of Wind Cave National Park patronized every fall when they laid in their annual supplies (Smith, A. 1973:18; McAdam 1973:4). Henry Sager, Ed Van Dewater and the other ranchers of another western border community, Argyle, grazed their horses and cattle on some of the lands that eventually became part of the park (Henry Sager in Sundstrom, J. 1977:363, 364, 365, 404).

On the northern border of the park, small ranching communities, such as Bakerville, were established in the 1880s. The Smith, Hight, McVeigh, and Renner families were among those who established homesteads along Highland Creek on lands bordering Wind Cave National Park (Sundstrom, J. 1977:316, 384-385, 1994:37-38, 41, 57-63, 75, 76). As was the custom elsewhere, local families undoubtedly used park lands to graze their stock, to hunt, to collect timber for fuel, and to gather berries and other plants for foods and medicines. Over time, all of the
homesteads that bordered Wind Cave National Park were purchased by the state of South Dakota and placed within the jurisdiction of Custer State Park or reconveyed to the federal government and included within the land holdings of Wind Cave National Park (Sundstrom, J. 1977:384, 385, 1994:62; Western History Research 1992:100).

In the 1880s, seven miles to the south, the town of Minnekahta, later known as Hot Springs, began to develop. Although the Lakotas and Cheyennes had long appreciated the healing properties of its thermal waters, these were not widely known to whites until 1879 when Professor Walter Jenney, Valentine T. McGillicuddy (later, an agent on the Pine Ridge Reservation in the 1890s), and Colonel William J. Thornby relocated them while on a trip to explore the geology of the area. According to Thornby, who learned about the springs from Horatio N. Ross, a former prospector and member of the Black Hills Expedition, the trio found the Minnekahta Spring covered in frog spawn. They sighted the large rock basin that Indian people carved into the shape of a moccasin, and they found abundant evidence of lodgepoles and tipi rings in the vicinity, suggesting fairly recent occupation by local tribes. Later in the summer of 1879, Thornby returned with George Boland who was the owner of a ranch and the stage station at the Buffalo Gap, and the two located the spring where the plunge bath now stands. It was during this trip that Thornby staked the springs locations (Tallent 1899:648-651; Fall River County Historical Society 1976: 143; Julin 1982:200-204; Clark, B. 1983:17-19).

Shortly after this discovery, Thornby wrote an article in the Deadwood Pioneer that attracted the attention of a local physician, R. D. Jennings. In 1881, Jennings and another physician, A. S. Stewart, set out to investigate the springs. They were sufficiently impressed to form a stock company with other investors, including E.G. Dudley, Fred Evans, and L.R. Graves, and bought up much of the land surrounding the springs, a part of which was now owned by Joe and Edmund Petty who used one of the springs to irrigate their farm. These men acquired the site at Hot Springs from its original owner L.B. Reno by trading their ranch at the Buffalo Gap. In 1882, the northern Black Hills businessmen moved to Hot Springs with their families, built log homes there, and platted the original town site, which was called Minnekahta. The town was not incorporated until 1890 (Tallent 1899:649; Clark, B. 1983:20; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:143, 345; Julin 1982:205-211). In subsequent years, the entrepreneurs jointly acquired the capital necessary to purchase additional property, and in 1886, their Townsite Company was reorganized with a capital stock. The site Thornby originally staked at Minnekahta spring was sold to Joe Laravie and John Donaldson. Later, the property was purchased by the company and platted for a new town site. The site did not develop into a booming recreational center until five years later when the railroad arrived 13 miles to the east at the Buffalo Gap (Tallent 1899:652-653, 658; Julin 1982:205-210). In and around the town of Hot Springs, many families established farms and ranches (Clark, B. 1983:18-19), and many of them were related to people who held land patents on properties inside the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park.

In 1886, the Dakota Hot Springs Company was formed to spur local development. According to Badger Clark (1983:53), Fred Evans and other stockholders went confidently to work to make

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3 The thermal waters of Minnekahta were first recorded by a party of the Jenny Expedition in 1875, but the big springs were not uncovered by whites until 1879.
4 Ross is also credited with the discovery of gold on French Creek during the Custer Expedition.
5 According to Maude Petty (1973:2-3), the land was sold because it was subject to flooding. Having learned from local Lakotas of the Fall River's tendency to flood, many of the incoming settlers decided to stake their ranches and farmlands away from the river (Williams, B. 1973:14-16). Indeed, in 1920, after one of the heaviest snowfalls in decades, the river did flood (Bohi 1962:439; Smith, A. 1973:35; Williams, B. 1973:15).
FIGURE 16. Locations of European American Settlement Sites at Wind Cave National Park
a city out of a score of ramshackle log buildings, located in a lonely canyon 13 miles from a branch railroad. As part of the change, the town adopted a new name Hot Springs (Clark, B. 1983:54), built a lavish resort hotel, and established the town's first paper, the *Hot Springs Star*. When South Dakota became a state in 1889, Hot Springs was in the midst of its own boom (Clark, B. 1983:64-68). The State Soldier's Home and Black Hills College were completed in 1890 (Clark, B. 1983:64, 66), and within a year, the town grew from 583 in 1889 to 1500 in 1890 (Julin 1982:220-235; Clark, B. 1983:68). The next year, in 1891, the branch lines of two railways served the town (Clark, B.1983:71, 72).

Unlike the thermal waters at Hot Springs, there are conflicting stories about which of the early settlers found Wind Cave. One attributes its discovery to Edmund Petty, an early resident of Hot Springs (Tallent 1899:670) and another to the prospector, William Brooks, who mined iron ore in the region and who was also out hunting when he purportedly came across the cave in 1879 (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:220; Fall River County Historical society 1976:9). John Wells is also mentioned in conjunction with the discovery of Wind Cave (Western History Research 1992:32), and Cora Hawthorne Fingerlos (in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:508) claims her father, Horatio Hawthorne, uncovered it with some other ranchers when they were out looking for stray cattle. Some even claim that Lame Johnny, the notorious horse thief in the region, found it in 1877 (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:39; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:85; Clark, B. 1983:22; Sundstrom, J. 1994:66-67). Most assign its discovery to the Bingham brothers, Jesse and Tom, local cowboys, who supposedly located it with their friend, John Dennis, when they were out deer hunting in 1881 (Bohi 1962:365-366; Koller 1970:2-3; McAdam 1973:12; Sundstrom, J. 1977:105, 1994:68). With his usual flair, Badger Clark (1983:22) wrote of the discovery as follows:

> Wind Cave, with its ninety miles of passages, forms a sort of gigantic lung through which volumes of air are breathed in and out. Before the present entrance to the cave was opened with dynamite, the narrowness of its throat made the Cave asthmatic, as it were, and its deep-toned wheezing was audible for some hundred yards. It was this might bronchial trouble which attracted the attention of Jess and Tom Bingham as they rode near the spot and following the sound it its source, the astonished discovers felt the cold, subterranean air blown strongly into their faces from the black hole among the rocks.

Another brother, Matthew, may have played a role in its discovery too. According to his daughter, Mary Bingham (1973:3-4; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:33), her father not only lived and hunted with local Lakotas, but he was also a fluent speaker of their language. It doesn't take a leap of imagination to surmise that Matthew and his brothers, Tom and Jesse, may have learned about the cave from the Lakotas. Its discovery might not have been an accident, as widely reported in the literature. Although the brothers may not have known the exact location of the cave, they probably learned of its general whereabouts from Lakota sources. Indeed, Charles Stabler (in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:85), the son of John Stabler, who built a hotel at the site of the cave, wrote:

> The Indians who lived and hunted in the area that now comprises Wind Cave National Park, were probably the first humans to note the strong currents of air rushing in or out of a small opening in the rocks along side the gulch.

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6 John Dennis came to the Black Hills from Hill City, and he homesteaded an area in Hot Springs named after the Catholican Springs (Fall River County Historical Society 1973:144; Julin 1982:203).
In his history of Wind Cave, John Bohi (1962:365) also argues that local tribal people probably knew it before what he calls the first real discovery, that is, the recognition of the opening as something unique and interesting occurred only with the arrival of permanent settlers. The implication that local tribes did not recognize the uniqueness and significance of the cave can be easily challenged, but not the fact that the Bingham families were probably the first European Americans to find the cave. After the Binghams came across the cave, Jesse built a small cabin over the cave’s opening, but later, he was caught rustling cattle and eventually fled the area (Clark, B. 1983:86).

In the 1890s, during her childhood on a ranch inside the modern borders of Wind Cave National Park, Fannie McAdam (1973:18-19) recalled many people prospecting in the area but with little success. In fact, mineral claims to the lands where the cave sits had been abandoned, and in 1890, three new claims were filed on the lands around the cave and sold to the South Dakota Mining Company the same year (Bohi 1962:368-369; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86; Western History Research 1992:30-35). The owner of the company, J.C. Moss, assigned one of his employees, Jesse D. McDonald, to manage and conduct assessment work on cave properties. McDonald and his family took up a homestead near the cave and applied for homestead rights to the surface lands, which they agreed to deed back to their employer. With the help of two brothers, Bob and Larry McAdam, Jesse’s sons, Alvin and Elmer, began to explore and map out the cave’s passageways, making them accessible for tours, which turned into a very successful enterprise in subsequent years (Bohi 1962:370-394; McAdam 1973:11). In 1892, the Parrot Hotel, which John Stabler leased and ran in Hot Springs, burned down. That year he entered into a business arrangement with Jesse McDonald and acquired a sizable interest in cave properties. This led to the formation of the Wonderful Wind Cave Improvement Company. A year later in 1893, Stabler built and opened a hotel at the site (Bohi 1962:395-398; Koller 1970; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86; Sundstrom, J. 1977:105; Sundstrom 1994:68; Pisarowicz 2001:1, 2001m:2). The same year Moss filed a suit against McDonald and his company, and Peter Folsom filed another suit against the mining company Moss owned. In 1894, Folsom acquired the South Dakota Mining Company’s claims, and in 1895, the courts upheld his ownership of the cave. The next year, in 1896, the courts ruled in favor of McDonald’s homestead rights. The U.S. Land Office, however, maintained that ownership rights were uncertain (Bohi 1962:394-403; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86; Western History Research 1992:32-36). Meanwhile, McDonald and Stabler began to feud over shares in the ownership of their joint property, leading in 1897 to a local sheriff taking possession of the cave and turning it over to Peter Folsom who, in association with John Stabler and Peter Paulson, formed the Wind Cave Company (Bohi 1962:403-405; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86; Western History Research 1992:36-41).

When the time limit on McDonald’s original homestead expired, the U.S. Land Office was called in to investigate the competing claims. The special agent assigned to the case, C.W. Greene, recommended that the government cancel McDonald’s homestead entry, and in 1901, the federal government withdrew the land around Wind Cave from mining and agricultural development (Pisarowicz 2001:2). The cave remained open, however, and some of the families who had had interests in it, notably, the Stablers and McDonalds, worked as guides (Bohi 1962:400-403).

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7 There are conflicting reports about which Moss actually ran the company. Charles Stabler (in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86) and Jesse Sundstrom (1994) identify the owner as J.C. Moss, but John Bohi (1962:369) and the Wind Cave National Park Time-Line (Pisarowicz 2001:1) attribute its ownership to R. B. Moss.
John Stabler’s daughter, Catherine, who directed tours in her teens, was the first female guide (Smith, A. 1973:15). Chris Jensen, who ran a coach to the cave from Hot Springs, also became a guide. In 1903, Congress passed an organic act that set aside over ten thousand acres of federal land for the creation of Wind Cave National Park. The South Dakota representative Eben W. Martin of Deadwood introduced the legislation (Bohi 1962:416; Koller 1971).

According to Jessie Sundstrom (1994:68), the enabling legislation to establish a National Game Preserve on lands bordering the park was introduced to Congress, nine years later, in 1912 by W.C. Martin, whose family owned a ranch along Beaver Creek. The game preserve, however, was managed by the Department of Agriculture until 1935. A year after the game preserve was established, the American Bison Association’s donation of fourteen bison arrived on the reserve from the New York Zoological Gardens, and in 1914, elk were reintroduced to the area from Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and antelope were brought from Brooks, Alberta (Bohi 1962:430-432; Pisarowicz 2001:2-3; Sundstrom 1994:68). George Boland, who once ran the stage stop and the post office at the Buffalo Gap, was assigned the job of the first game manager (Bohi 1962:392-393). In fact, most of the early appointments relating to the management of the park and other federal lands in the Black Hills were given to locals. Joseph and Rufus Pilcher, two of the park’s early superintendents came from Custer, and they were followed by Abraham Boland (brother of George) and his son, William from Buffalo Gap (Bohi 1962:229-231; Sundstrom, J. 1977:178, 196, 242, 349).

c. Industry and Development

As with much of the rest of the Black Hills, the area of Wind Cave National Park was prospected for its mineral potential, but there was never any developed mining activity other than a small placer operation and a limekiln at the southwestern edge of the park (Bohi 1962:391-392; Western History Research 1992:56). In fact, by the time white Americans located the cave, the gold boom in Custer County was over (Parker, W. 1966:69-88). Although many mines were located with gold, mica, and tin deposits in Custer County, the necessary capital and facilities to develop most of them were lacking (Tallent 1899:401-403). The serious development of the Hills mineral potential took place much farther north in the vicinity of Deadwood and Lead, where the hardrock mines were located, although Custer remained the center of mica and tin mining in the Hills (Tallent 1899:404; Parker, W. 1966:184-198; Sundstrom, J.1977:45-68, 1994:28). To the east of Wind Cave National Park, the variegated colored sandstones of Calico and O Dell canyons, located in the Hogback near the Buffalo Gap, supported the development of an active quarry industry. At the end of the nineteenth century, the sandstone from these quarries and one at Hot Springs serviced local as well as national markets. Today, many of the old buildings still standing in local towns were built of sandstone from these quarries (Tallent 1899:415; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:317; Julin 1982:221-222). Gypsum was also mined in the area, and for some years, the largest plant in the Black Hills was located at Hot Springs (Schell 1961:376).

Another industry developed in Custer County was logging, which in its early days was largely a subsidiary of the mining industry. Timber was required to build the mines and sluices, and it was needed as fuel and shelter for the miners too (Geores 1990:37). Sawmills of large and small scale were operated near the town of Custer and in the area that now covers Custer State Park. In 1895, Custer County was the center of the Black Hills timber industry. It had more than twenty active sawmills and shipped more lumber than any other location in the area (Tallent 1899:411; Schell 1961:373-374; Lindsay, 1967-1970:899-900; Progulske 1974:120; Sundstrom, J. 1977:139-142, 1994:43-48; Geores 1990:29-56). Until the 1890s, when Albert Williams built sawmills along the Fall River, much of the lumber used in the southern Hills was produced at the
mills on French Creek, and as already indicated, transported over a road that followed Coldbrook Canyon, passing over a southern section of Wind Cave National Park (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:274-275).

At the dawn of the twentieth century, there was little interest in the sustainability of the Black Hills forests. Areas were clear-cut without regard to the environmental damage this practice might cause (Geores 1990:38). There is no question that some of the timbered areas near towns in the southern Hills were stripped early on to provide wood for fuel, shelter, and commercial buildings. Luther Standing Bear (1975:17) remembered the Buffalo Gap as a wooded location. It is quite likely when he was a child that this location was more thickly timbered. Given what we know about other sites, this area was probably denuded to provide wood for European American settlement. Even though Watson Parker (1985:590) mocks Standing Bear’s recollections of how the Buffalo Gap’s environment once appeared, he seems to have done so without considering how this area might have changed after the arrival of European Americans. According to Edmund de Mandat-Grancy (1981:11), the hills around the Buffalo Gap were stripped of much of their tree cover before 1886.8

Although mining and logging played an important role in the history of Custer County, where Wind Cave National Park is located, neither of them was a significant part of the development on the lands inside modern park boundaries. In contrast to the northern regions of the Black Hills, where European Americans continued to develop the region’s mineral and timber assets, early economic growth in the Hills southeast of Custer rested largely on agricultural enterprises. Cattle were first introduced into the interior regions of the Hills during the early 1870s by two early traders, Nicholas and Antoine Janis, both of whom were married to Lakota women (Palais 1942:9). Once the Black Hills were dispossessed from local tribes, the region was open to raise and pasture stock on its winter-hardy and drought-resistant native grasses (Friggens 1983:59-60). Entrepreneurs quickly grasped the advantages of developing a locally based cattle industry. As Paul Friggens (1983:59) wrote: When the Fort Laramie treaty was violated, it not only opened the way for gold miners, but it also launched a beef bonanza to feed the miners. Thousands of head of cattle were trailed up to the Black Hills in the summer of 1876 from Kansas, Nebraska, and even as far away as Texas. For many years, drovers brought cattle north to supply the army posts and Indian agencies surrounding the Black Hills, but, now, they brought even larger herds to supply the miners. The journeys took up to ninety days with crews of a dozen cowboys and thousands of head of cattle (Friggens 1983:59; Palais 1942:7-9).

In the 1880s, the cattle business thrived on the edges of the Black Hills, not only in the north at places like Spearfish and Belle Fourche, but also in the south where the towns of Edgemont, Oelrichs, and Buffalo Gap flourished when the industry was at its prime (Palais 1941:10-12; Schell 1961:155-157, 243-248; Biever 1981:3-4). The town of Oelrichs was named after the cattle agent, Henry Oelrichs, who managed cattle operations for wealthy investors from Wyoming, Texas, and even England (Friggens 1983:64; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:71; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:340; Biever 1981:3-4). One of the largest and most famous of these ranching operations was the Bar T on Hat Creek, but other large operations on the southern edge of the Hills included the Z Bar, TOT, and TAN ranches (Lee and Williams 1964:100; Clark, B. 1983:27; Biever 1982:4). In 1882, the Anglo-American Cattle Company, with Oelrichs as its representative, bought out the Bar T, TOT, and TAN ranches with a total of 34,000 head of cattle.

8 Many other areas of the Hills, however, became more heavily forested over time. Comparing photographs Illingsworth took on the Custer Expedition in 1874 with those taken a century later by Donald Progulske (1974), it is apparent that much of the interior region of the Hills is more forested today than it was one hundred years ago. Much of this recent growth has been the result of federal efforts to suppress naturally occurring fires, for which there was considerable evidence when the Jenny Expedition traveled the Hills in 1875 (Newton and Jenny 1880:322).
making it the largest cattle operation in the area (Biever 1981:4). For a short period of time in the 1880s, Oelrichs supported its own meat packing plant (Schell 1961:366; Lee and Williams 1964:164). While the cattle industry reigned on the southeastern slopes of the Hills, the sheep industry started up much more slowly farther west. Several local ranchers made an effort to raise sheep in the 1880s but failed. Although a short-lived woollen mill was built at Edgemont in 1890, it wasn't until the twentieth century that this industry took hold in the region (Palais 1941:55, 59; Schell 1961:367).

Stock was run on free and open ranges, lands that were technically not owned by anyone (Palais 1942a:24). Although none of the cattle barons held title or fee samples to the land on which they grazed their cattle, they certainly maintained control through a well organized and supervised division of the ranges into cattle districts, where the cattle barons held usufruct rights enforced by the cowboys and representatives who worked their ranges (Friggens 1983:64). Unlike the plains surrounding the Black Hills, which were soon taken over by corporate cattle companies and run by employed cowhands, the grasslands inside the Hogback were the focus of much smaller cattle operations, many of which were started by miners who moved out of the central Hills when placer gold mining went bust or by newly arriving emigrants. Indeed, some of the earliest settlers, who arrived in the area of Wind Cave National Park between 1878 and 1879 were prospectors who abandoned their mining interests near Hill City to take up cattle ranching in the southern Hills (Williams, B. 1973:1; Petty 1973:1-3; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:143; Julin 1982:203; Sanford in Clark, B. 1983:81-82; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:285-286). As one example, in 1882, August Sanson, a former prospector and freighter from Sweden, entered into a partnership with Robert Wittke and acquired property south of the park at the mouth of Wind Cave Canyon along Beaver Creek. After buying out Wittke, he held the lands through the 1960s (Sanson, F. and Sanson, A. in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40-45). According to federal and local land records, his son Adolph held patents on property inside Wind Cave National Park (Western History Research 1992: Appendix D). In the late 1880s and 1890s, a new wave of homesteaders arrived, most of whom came from Europe and locations in the eastern United States (McAdam 1973:3; Smith, A. 1973:1, 5-6, 9; Sager in Sundstrom, J. 1977:362-365, 1994:29-33, 57-63; Western History Research 1992:72). The McAdam family, who settled lands on the western edge of the park, had farming roots and came from Pennsylvania by way of Kansas and Nebraska (McAdam 1973:1). In the Wind Cave area, an exception to the small landholding pattern was the ranch operated by Charles H. Valentine from the late 1880s to the early 1890s, with support from New York and English investors (McAdam 1973:27; Long 1992:8). This was a sizable ranch that included a large herd of thoroughbred horses and a private racetrack (McAdam 1973; Smith, A. 1973:13-14).

Other large, corporate-style ranches, such as the L-7, bordered the park on its eastern boundaries. In the 1880s, some of these ranches not only ran cattle, but they also bred and raised horses. The famous Fleur de Lys ranch, established in 1885 on Lame Johnny Creek by R. Auzias de Turenne and M. Marion, imported Norman, Percheron, and Arab breeds from France. The horses from this ranch, which gained fame through the writings of Baron E. de Mandat-Grancey (1981,1984), were run on the open range, including lands that became part of the eastern extension of Wind Cave National Park (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:45; Sundstrom, J. 1977:161-164, 1994:48-51). In 1890, the ranch was sold to local homesteaders (Sundstrom, J. 1994:51). Another nearby ranch even raised polo ponies and invited youth from neighboring ranches to participate in games of polo (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:41).

In the early 1880s, the nation's prosperity combined with expanding railroad networks and skyrocketing cattle prices quickly led to ecological disaster. Throughout the west, the grasslands
became seriously damaged by overstocked ranges, as the prime buffalo and grama grasses were depleted and replaced by less desirable forbs and woody plants (Palais 1942a; White, R. 1991: 222-223). The undernourished cattle did not fare well on the bonanza ranches when the brutal winter of 1886-87 came. After a summer of severe drought, a hard winter followed with some of the coldest temperatures and worst blizzards ever recorded. Lacking shelter and feed, anywhere from seventy-five to ninety-percent of the open range stock died that winter (Palais 1942a:41; Lee and Williams 1964:154-166). All of the large and otherwise profitable cattle operations sustained huge losses, from which many never recovered (Schell 1961:244; Friggens 1983:64).

The final blow to the big cattle operators came a decade later, when the region was marked for homesteading. In 1897, the open ranges were closed and fenced off by the Honyockers, farmers and stockman who came to the area to develop the small plots of 160 acres allotted to them under the provisions of the 1862 Homestead Act (Lee and Williams 1964:126-127). The terms of this act required homesteaders to live on and work their land for a five-year period, after which they were able to acquire a private deed of ownership (Friggens 1983:87). Once the era of open-access to the range ended, stock raisers throughout the area managed smaller sized herds unless they were able to lease enough contiguous land under the jurisdiction of federal land-holding agencies (Lee and Williams 1964:127-128; Geores 1990:38-39).

Before much of the land in the region was surveyed in 1892 and opened for homesteading in 1897, the early settlers claimed it by right of occupancy as squatters (Bohi 1962:390; Lindsay 1967-70:899). Squatters rights could be and were sold as if the original owners possessed real title to their lands (Sundstrom, J. 1994:57-58). Inside the Hogback, much of the land supported modestly sized cattle operations, many of which survived the devastating winter of 1887 because the cattle had access to good shelter. As a result, many local cattle operators were able to literally weather the big storm and took relatively small losses. Also, most of them were self-supporting and sustained themselves and their families in other ways through subsistence hunting, gathering, gardening, and the raising of kitchen stock such as pigs, turkeys, and chickens (Bohi 1962:366, 391; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 72, 283, 419; McAdams 1973:8; Smith, A. 1973:25; Williams, B. 1973:3, 6, 20, 26; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:29, 36, 46, 128, 176, 178, 204, 232, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:103, 166, 189, 227, 261, 298, 209, 364, 365, 379, 1994:29-34, 75; Western History Research 1992:81, 88).

According to Annie Tallent (1899:642), nearly two-thirds of the land in Fall River County was capable of supporting homesteads for crops or stock-raising. The eastern regions of Custer County, including many areas in the vicinity of Wind Cave National Park, were similarly well-suited to these endeavors (Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70-71; Sundstrom, J. 1977:160). As early as 1877, farms were established along the Fall River and Beaver Creek where good crops of vegetables, corn, wheat, barley, oats, and rye were grown (Palais 1941c:67). The same also applies to some of the well-watered locations in Custer County that adjoined Wind Cave National Park (Sanson, F. in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:42-43; Sundstrom, J. 1977:160, 293, 282, 352). Inside the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park, most of the lands supported cattle grazing, although fields from four to sixty acres supported crop cultivation, especially along the park’s flat and well-watered bottomlands (Western History Research 1992: 80-81).

1897 was also the year the federal government created the Black Hills Forest Reserve under considerable protest from Black Hills landholders. According to Martha Geores (1990:43), when the forest reserve was established, property rights were frozen over much of the interior region of the Black Hills. After this date, squatters were able to file their holdings as homestead claims and gain title to the land. In the southern Hills, by contrast, federal lands appeared as a
checkerboard amidst larger sections of private land held and homesteaded by farmers and ranchers. When the government began to assert its regulatory control over the region, it scrutinized the legitimacy of mining claims and homesteads, and when these were fraudulent or contested, it repossessed the land (Geores 1990:43-45). This is precisely what happened to the area on which Wind Cave National Park now sits. Here ownership rights became so contested and legally entangled that they were eventually taken over by the federal government in 1901 (Western History Research 1992:38-41; Sundstrom, J. 1994:68). During this period, the government also began to exert its regulatory power in other areas; timber cutting and cattle grazing were now restricted by lease arrangements and no longer open-access resources (Geores 1990:46, 48).

While the government was regulating and restricting access to lands and resources inside the Hogback, it was opening the surrounding prairies to more homesteaders. Paul Friggens (1983:87) claimed that most of the land successfully homesteaded in western South Dakota was proved-up during the early decades of the twentieth century, a time that coincided with a moist climatic cycle on the plains, bumper crop yields, and unprecedented prices in regional commodities markets. Scores of additional people flocked to the region after 1887, when more lands were opened for settlement, especially after the breakup of the Great Sioux reservation into five smaller reservations (Schell 1961:247-248:253-257; Stewart 1967-70:71). As they had in the gold rush days, people from every sector of American life, and many foreigners too, paid the eighteen dollar filing fees and took advantage of the free lands to make new lives for themselves (Friggens 1983:89).

Inside Wind Cave National Park, homesteads were established over the entire area but particularly in the townships that did not become incorporated in the park until the 1940s (see Figure 16). Indeed, much of the land inside the present day boundaries of the park was patented during later land rush periods, most of which followed in the footsteps of new federal laws, including the Three Year Homestead Act of 1912 and the Stock Raising Homestead Act of 1916 (Western History Research 1992:70). The Western History Research report (1992:68) makes the important observation that the most desirable park lands, along the bottomlands with access to a good supply of water and closest to the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs, were patented in the 1880s, but those in the northern reaches of the park with the roughest terrain were not patented until after the 1890s and well into the twentieth century. Many of these homesteads came under the provisions of later homestead acts (Western History Research 1992:70).

By the first decade of the twentieth century, thousands of families laid down their roots in the Black Hills and the surrounding West River counties. Most of them ran modestly sized farming and ranching enterprises, and while some of them succeeded and stayed in the area, many others failed and moved on. Judging by the family narratives recorded in local town and county histories, it was not an easy challenge for the small-scale operators to survive and continue their agricultural pursuits against the erratic climate of the plains and the nation’s wildly fluctuating commodities markets. In good times and lean ones, families survived and made ends meet from food grown in kitchen gardens and orchards, by harvesting timber for firewood, by hunting local game and collecting berries and other wild crops, and by working as petty commodity producers and in a host of wage-labor jobs (Tallent 1899:414, 673; Lindsey 1932 in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-1970:899-900; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:71; Williams, B. 1973:3, 6; Mc-

9 Jewel Cave was also taken out of private hands by the government. Even though there was no contestation over the mining and homestead rights to the lands on which the cave sat, considerable pressure was placed on the Forest Service to acquire the lands and put them in a protective status. As early as 1908, the government studied the possibility of acquiring the cave but it didn’t have the means or interest to develop it. It wasn’t until 1965 that it was finally opened to the public under the auspices of the National Park Service (Geores 1990:74-75).
d. Leisure and Recreation

In the 1880s, the area around Minnekahta, the original name of Hot Springs, was still unpopulated. It was the resort, according to Badger Clark (1983:23), of adventurers, who came in hopes of relieving their rheumatism, or local tribespeople who still brought their sick to the springs to be cured. In the 1880s, accommodations were rustic, consisting of log cabins and tents (Cook 1888; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:289-291; Julin 1982:209-212). It wasn t until the last decade of the nineteenth century, when the railroads reached the area, that Hot Springs became a flourishing resort town, which Annie Tallent (1899:655) described as having numerous sanitariums and bathhouses equipped with all the best appliances for administering every kind of water treatment, including the plunge, the spray, the vapor, the salt, the Turkish and Russian baths. Its mineral waters were judged by reputable physicians as incomparable in value for medical treatment (Tallent 1899:644). Upwards of ten thousand people flocked to the springs each year during its heyday (Fall River Historical Society 1976:344). Some camped with tents near the more established springs, while others stayed in bathhouses and elegantly furnished hotels (Tallent 1899:655; Julin 1982:224-234). It was a celestial empire, as Tallent (1899:670) put it, forming copious springs in whose limpid waters the rheumatic, the dyspeptic, the neuralgic, the sciatic, the hypochondriac, and the hysterical may lave, and aided by frequent generous droughts of the tepid fluid be made whole. Visitors raved about the waters and the other scenic attractions of the area, which included Minnekahta Falls, Cascade Springs, and Wind Cave (Tallent 1899:670; Julin 1982:251).

Other areas near Wind Cave were associated with privately owned ranches and hunting lodges, which provided guides and accommodations for visitors interested in sight-seeing and game hunting. Fleur de Leys Ranch to the east of park properties was one of these (de Mandat-Grancey 1981; Sundstrom, J. 1994:50). Sylvan Lake and other locations in what would later become Custer State Park also became the sites of flourishing resorts in the 1890s (Lindsay 1967-70:899-900; Sundstrom, J. 1994:90-97).

By the end of the nineteenth century, Wind Cave had become a major side attraction for many of the visitors who came to Hot Springs and other locations in the Hills to vacation (Bohi 1962; Julin 1982:251; Long 1992:10-13). One enthusiast, E. W. Jamar (quoted in Fall River County Historical Society:346), said:

The great Wind Cave, out-rivaling the Mammoth cave of Kentucky in extent, the Cascade springs, the lofty pine-clad hills, grand canyons rippling streams, beautiful falls of the Minnekahta and the Cheyenne, make up a matchless group of attractions.

In the early days, people climbed down into the cave on ladders, carrying candles on wooden sticks, and laying down string to find their way back out (McAdam 1973:11, 14; Sundstrom, J. 1977:105). Before the McDonalds and the Stablers developed the cave, it was a destination for some of the more adventurous visitors in Hot Springs (Long 1992:11). This all changed after 1888, when regular tours of the cave were established. Soon, the cave’s attractions were advertised throughout the United States, souvenir specimens from its various caverns were marketed and sold, and many improvements were made to encourage more visitors to its subterranean sights (Bohi 1962:389-391; Long 1992:11-13). Other attractions were also incorporated into the
cave's early promotions, including the exhibit of a fake petrified man, and the arrival of a psychic, Paul Alexander Johnstone, who stayed in the cave several days searching for a hidden scarf pin (Bohi 1962:404-407; Long 1992:12).

Wind Cave was not only a leisure attraction for outsiders, it was also an important source of recreational pleasure for people who lived in the Hills (Bohi 1962:366-368, 407-408; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:14; Clark, B. 1983:61-62). As Jessie Sundstrom (1994:104) wrote:

When entertainment was lacking at home, outings were taken to the Needles area and Harney Peak and excursions were taken to Wind Cave. Before the advent of the train, families or groups visited these attractions in buggies and wagons rented from the livery stables, if none was available within the family or its circle of friends.

In the 1970s, descendents of the Pringle family from Pringle, South Dakota recalled hitching up their wagon team on Sundays and traveling with local railroad workers to explore Wind Cave (Sundstrom, J. 1977:353). Local ranchers often found themselves near the cave when they were out rounding up stray cattle or on threshing trips and took time out to visit its interiors (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:57, 508). Fannie McAdam (1973:11) remembered how the locals saved cord from store purchases and wound it into balls for the recreational spelunkers in their families. Local interest in the cave is also reflected in the custom of naming cave rooms after fraternal organizations, such as the Elks, Masons, YMCA, and Knights of Pithias (Bohi 1962:407). There were other caves throughout the Hills and at Wind Cave National Park that were never developed, but these also provided locals with many opportunities for amateur exploration (Sundstrom, J. 1977:309, 1994:55-56). Other outdoor amenities in the Hills, including the thermal waters at Hot Springs, offered the locals recreational pleasures as well. In fact, many local ranchers and townspeople built cabins or set up campsites in some of the remote and more scenic regions of the Hills interiors (Sundstrom, J. 1977:104-105, 1994:41; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:138).

2. Accounts of a Continuing Tribal Presence

In the years after 1877, many of the people who were members of the tribal nations that once occupied the Black Hills were settled on reservations far removed from the area. The Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Comanches, Poncas, Southern Cheyennes, and Southern Arapahos ended up on reservations in Oklahoma. Some of the Northern Cheyenne were also settled in Oklahoma, but many more were eventually located on the Tongue River Reservation in Montana. The Crow ended up on a reservation in Montana that carries their name. The Northern Arapahos were settled on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming with the Shoshones, and the Hidatsas, Mandans, and Arikaras took up residence together on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota (see Figure 18). The Lakotas, and some of the Cheyennes who continued to live in their midst, were settled on the Great Sioux Reservation, which bordered the eastern flanks of the Hills (see Figure 17). In 1889, this reservation was subdivided into five smaller reservations, and the lands were allotted to individual Indian families with the surplus open to white settlement. Except for Pine Ridge, the primary reservation for the Oglalas and some Cheyennes, Sicangus, and Minneconjous who remained in their midst, the other reservations were situated some distance from the Black Hills. The farthest removed was Standing Rock, which straddles the North and South Dakota border; it became the home of the Hunkpapa and Sivasapa divisions of the Lakota and the Yanktonai Dakota. Directly south is the Cheyenne River Reservation where most of the Miniconjous, Itazipcos, Oohenunpas, and some Sivasapas were located. Most Sicangus were enrolled on the
Lower Brule Reservation across the Missouri from present day Pierre, South Dakota or on the Rosebud Reservation, where some Cheyennes also lived (Moore, J. 1987:232).

It is critical to recognize that despite their loss of the Black Hills and their forced removal to reservations at near or far locations, the Lakotas and Cheyennes maintained a continuing, albeit changed, relationship to the area. The relative proximity of their respective reservations to the Hills played an important role in the ways in which and the degree to which the region was accessed by these tribes after 1877. Not surprisingly, the most intense and varied pattern of use became associated with members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe who lived on the Pine Ridge Reservation. In the days of travel by horse and wagon, many locations in the Hills, especially in the southeastern region, where Wind Cave National Park is now located, took less than a day to reach from this reservation.

After the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were forcibly confined to reservations in the 1870s, they were unable to leave them without special permission from their agents. Throughout the 1880s, the military was still rounding up bands who remained outside the reservation, bringing them to the agencies and instituting measures to keep them there (Hyde 1956; Utley 1963; Powell 1981). Scudder Mekeel (1932:278) indicates, however, that in these and later years requests were made and casually granted for Lakotas from Pine Ridge to gather plants and herbs off-reservation. This policy was also reported in government documents (Jones 1904:125-128; U.S. Senate 1904) and remembered by the descendants of early European American settlers (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:262). When government food distributions were late in arriving or insufficient to meet local needs, which happened with a fair degree of frequency, traditional patterns of food procurement helped local families stave off hunger and starvation. Many accounts from the descendants of early European settlers in Custer and Fall River counties report Lakota people traveling, camping, hunting, and collecting plants at areas in and around the Black Hills until the beginning of the twentieth century (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:12, 71, 730; Bingham 1973:4, 6; McAdam 1973:6; Petty 1973:23; Smith, A. 1973:16; Williams, B. 1973:16, 30-31; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:24, 33, 47, 72, 176, 213, 262, 264; Sundstrom, J. 1977:317, 379; Clark, B. 1983:68-69).

Although the Lakotas and Cheyennes successfully ran cattle on their reservation lands in the 1880s, they were plagued by the same disastrous weather conditions as their white neighbors. In the catastrophic winter of 1886-87, they also experienced losses in their stock, but interestingly, these were much smaller than those of white cattle operators because the Lakotas took care to shelter and feed their animals. Indeed, the agent from Standing Rock reported that Lakotas on this reservation only lost thirty-percent of their herds in comparison to the seventy-five percent losses sustained by neighboring white operators (Utley 1963:25). But this success was short-lived. Two years later, economic conditions on local reservations were deteriorating, and the federal government used this as an opportunity to force the tribes to relinquish more of their land. In 1889, the year the Great Sioux Reservation was divided, many Lakotas and Cheyennes embraced a messianic movement known as the Ghost Dance, some of whose followers broke away from the agency at Pine Ridge and tried to establish an independent camp at the Stronghold in the Badlands on the northeastern edge of the reservation. Facing hardship and starvation, some Lakotas began to raid local travelers and ranchers on the Cheyenne River near Edgemont, the Buffalo Gap, Hot Springs, and even in areas of Wind Cave National Park (Lee and Williams 1964:124; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:71; McAdam 1973:5; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:213; Clark, B. 1983:68-69). Fights ensued over the thievery, leading to the deaths of Lakotas and whites alike. During
FIGURE 17. Sioux Reservation Boundaries 1877 and 1889
For the Lakotas and Cheyennes who lived on the western edges of the Pine Ridge Reservation, the Black Hills were only a short distance away and easily accessible for various subsistence pursuits. It is quite likely that before and even after Wounded Knee, Lakotas entered the Black Hills surreptitiously to hunt, but it is difficult to determine how actively the Hills were used for this purpose. How much the Lakotas relied on the area for hunting must have been influenced by the rapid declines in local game populations. Through the end of the 1880s at least, whitetail deer and many small species of game remained fairly abundant in the southeastern Hills. However, other large ruminant species, including bighorn, elk, mule deer, and pronghorn had either been extirpated or were becoming scarce (Progulske 1974:123-124; McAdam 1973:17; Turner 1974:136, 137, 139, 144, 147-148; Clark, B. 1983:13). In addition, larger numbers of settlers and their domesticated animals were taking up more of the land, making it difficult for local tribes to use the area for traditional subsistence pursuits unless they had permission from local land owners. Given the Lakotas widespread belief, then and now, that the Black Hills were taken from them illegally, it would not be surprising to learn that some amount of hunting continued to take place in remote areas of the southeastern Hills with or without the government’s knowledge and permission.

The presence of Lakotas in the Hills from 1878 to 1902 is noted with some regularity in the published recollections of early white settlers. Members of this tribe, especially Oglalas from Pine Ridge, frequently visited the southern Hills, and they did so for many different reasons besides food procural. Some were employed in jobs that took them into the Hills. Many of the freighters who hauled cargo between Sidney, Nebraska and Deadwood, South Dakota were Lakotas from Pine Ridge (Utley 1963:26). They may have performed other kinds of jobs in the Black Hills too, including work as hired hands on local ranches, although few references to their early employment were uncovered in the primary or secondary sources reviewed for this report. Maude Petty (1973:24) emphatically stated that local Lakotas did not work in the town of Hot Springs until the early decades of the twentieth century.

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10 Work as farm laborers, freighters, domestics, and guides is part of the hidden labor history of the Lakotas and many other tribal peoples in the plains, a history that has been hidden because of the prejudiced view that Indians did not work. Indeed, considerable research has taken place in recent years uncovering their rich labor history. Further study would likely reveal that the Lakotas had a complex work history in the Black Hills, too (Albers 1996b).
Before 1903, many Lakotas still came to the Hills to gather their lodgepoles in the summertime (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:12, 730; Sundstrom, J. 1977:317). Fannie McAdam (1973:6) and Alice Smith (1973:16) both recall Lakotas traveling in wagon trains and camping along the roads in and around Wind Cave National Park to reach areas in the central hills where they processed lodgepoles. Many came to visit long-time friends, some of whom knew their language (Eastern Custer County Historical Society, 1967-70:727; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:261, 292, 418, 505, 506, 579, 594, 700, 727, 732, 760; Sundstrom, J. 1977:293-294; Clark, B. 1983:12-13, 15), or to see relatives who were married to non-Indians living in the area (Clark, B. 1983:70-71). More came to trade their moccasins and beadwork for goods and services from local businesses and professional people, or sell them outright to visiting vacationers (Jones 1904:126; Petty 1973:23; Sundstrom, J. 1977:334). Eva Streeter (in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:12), the daughter of Bert Bayliff, who ran a local meat market, remembers her father taking beadwork from the Lakota in trade for meat. Bernice Williams (1973:16) and the descendants of Thomas and James Ball (in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:14) recall Lakotas trading beadwork for the fruit and farm produce of their parents. Dr. William McRoberts of Edgemont provided medical services to Lakotas who gave him beadwork in return (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:170). Matthew Bingham, the brother of Tom and Jesse, lived for a time in the camps of Lakotas who stayed at Hot Springs over the summer months; he made a living from hunting and regularly supplied the Lakotas with hides, especially the antelope skins they commonly requested (Bingham 1973:4, 6). Descendents of early settlers also described times when Lakotas stopped by their homesteads to take a meal, to camp on their property for a short or extended stay, and even on occasion to remain over an entire winter (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:292, 418, 505, 579, 594, 727, 732, 760; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:24, 72, 213, 262, 264; Bingham 1973:7; Sundstrom, J. 1977:293-294, 317; Williams, B. 1973:16). There is clear indication as well that Lakotas continued to come to the region to bathe at the thermal waters in Hot Springs and Cascade Springs (Cook 1888; Rosen 1895:473; Casey 1949:284; Petty 1973:23; Clark, B. 1983:23; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:293-294). According to Mary Bingham (1973:13), Lakotas would dig deep into the mud near local springs until they found water, and then, sit in the water and mud for hours to relieve their aches and pains. Early Hot Springs residents, (Williams, B. 1973:16; 30-31; Bingham 1973:3; Petty 1973:23) recalled Lakotas camping all along the Fall River to bathe. Many stayed at a campground on the Petty addition at the lower end of town where a tourist court is now located, and some even remained there over an entire summer season.

Besides a few reports (McAdam 1973:6; Smith, A.1973:16) of Lakotas camping on and traveling across park lands enroute to other locations in the Hills in the late nineteenth century, there is another reference about them coming to the park. At least one Lakota party was reported to have toured Wind Cave, although Catherine Stabler indicated that most would not enter the cave, even though they were encouraged to do so (Bohi 1962:391). Her remarks imply that Indian people were commonplace visitors in the area of the cave. The one party who did take a tour, according to Stabler (quoted in Bohi 1962), chanted their Indian songs all the time they were in the cave. Both of these reactions to the cave, avoidance and song (most likely a form of prayer

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11 His daughter Mary (Bingham 1973:4, 6, 7) recalls that her father and family were especially close to Frank Bear Nose and Suzy Little Killer.

12 This and information documented in a senate report (1904) on the confrontation between a group of Lakota families and a Wyoming sheriff’s posse suggest that Lakotas were procuring some of their large game hides and meat from non-Indian suppliers in Hot Springs. One can only speculate why they were doing so. Aside from the fact that large ungulates were becoming increasingly scarce throughout the region, there were policies that prevented them from hunting, including various efforts to disarm them from the late 1870s to the early 1890s.
FIGURE 18. Modern Reservation and Tribal Locations
reveal the respect these Lakotas held for this subterranean location, which, as described in later chapters, was a sacred place to them.

Lakotas even lived permanently in the area and were among the first settlers of the town of Hot Springs in the 1870s (Cook 1888; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:293-294; Clark, B. 1983:23). According to S. D. Cook (1888) the town:

...was occupied by the Indians and their half breed allies until the year 1880 when the first white men were permitted to make settlement here. At this time the squaw men were in possession of the Hot Springs. They having obtained them from the Indians, or through the privilege of the knowledge derived from them...Tents and tepees had formerly been used for hospitals. They ran the springs as a resort for Indians and any others that might come. During that time many hundreds of Indians and scores of whites were treated for various chronic diseases.

Col. William Thornby told Annie Tallent (1899:651-652) that two men, Joe Laravie and John Davidson came from Pine Ridge to visit George Trimmer, who had a Dakota wife, whose name was Mary Lone Eagle.13 Laravie was suffering from rheumatism, and Trimmer took him to one of the hot springs to bathe. He and his friend Davidson, both of whom were married to Lakota women, decided to remain in the area, and they built log cabins, erected tipis, and became owners of land on which the town of Hot Springs now stands (Cook 1888; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:345; Clark, B. 1983:23). In 1881, they formed a partnership with George Turner and built a log hotel for patients near the springs (Sanford in Clark, B. 1983:82). Although the circumstances surrounding the sale of the land are not clear, the title was purchased from them in 1886 for the development of a resort (Tallent 1899:651-652; Clark, B. 1983:9).

The important point to be made from this discussion is that the Lakotas and the Cheyennes of Pine Ridge maintained a presence, albeit a diminished one, in the Black Hills after the area was seized by the government in 1877. In later years, as discussed momentarily, their use of the Hills increased substantially in association with the rise of travel and tourism in the region. Although there is little record of their presence on the lands that now make up Wind Cave National Park, other than their visits to the cave and their campsites on park lands en route to other locations in the Hills, it is highly likely that some Lakotas and Cheyennes may have used these lands for hunting and plant procurement, especially if they had close friendships with any of the park's early settler families.

B. The New Faces of Change 1903 to the Present

After 1903, the year that federal lands in and around Wind Cave were turned into a national park, the Black Hills region remained important to European Americans because it continued to support jobs in the traditional mining, logging, and ranching industries. By the end of the twentieth century, many of these industries no longer provided a major source of livelihood to local residents. With the growth of tourism and other service-oriented businesses, the nature of the

13 Mary Lone Wolf was born of French Canadian and Dakota parentage in the northeastern area of Dakota territory. When she was still a child, her family moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. She was held captive in the 1862 Minnesota Conflict but returned to her parents four years later. In 1871, she married George Trimmer and three children were born to the union. The two made their way to the Black Hills and came to Rapid City in 1876. In 1877, the couple moved to Hill City, and in 1879, they moved to Hot Springs. In 1887, the Trimmers separated. A few years later Mary married a man named Lone Wolf from Texas, and they resided on the Pine Ridge Reservation (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:164).
the work people performed in it changed as did the relations between Wind Cave National Park and its neighbors. The changing economy of the Black Hills not only impacted the European Americans who lived in the Hills or who visited them as tourists and recreationists, but it also affected local tribal populations who stayed in the Hills or on neighboring reservations and who continued to retain a visible presence in the region.

In the midst of this change, the Black Hills remained one of the most contested land areas in the United States. Beyond the political struggles that European Americans waged amongst themselves over the nature and status of their own user rights to the region’s federally-managed lands, the most contentious and long-lasting battles were fought with the Hills’ former tribal residents, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. European Americans continued to assert their rights in the Black Hills, not only as conquerers but also under constitutional laws that grant the United States the power of eminent domain over all lands within its boundaries. Since 1877, European Americans have claimed both a de facto and de jure sovereignty over the Hills. In doing so, they have developed and imposed their own forms of governance on the area, establishing laws for the ownership of private property and for the management of public lands, which comprise much of the Hills’ geographic space.

Throughout the twentieth century, various European American interest groups, from ranchers and miners to recreationists and environmentalists, have challenged the ways in which public lands in the Black Hills are used and managed. The battles have been fought with the understanding that much of the Hills are part of a public commons and a place in which competing American interest groups can establish different sorts of claims (see Geores 1990 and Chapter Seven). The American Indian tribes from whom the area was illegally seized, namely the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, were systemically denied access to this commons and its resources (Geores 1990:127). In time, they too challenged the laws and policies that restricted their rights to access the Hills. Indeed, one of the most famous and still unsettled Indian claims against the U.S. government in the twentieth century involves the Black Hills. The economic changes and political conflicts that marked the Hills during the twentieth century have had profound consequences for the position that Wind Cave National Park occupies in the region’s history and for its relationship to the diverse public constituencies it serves.

1. European American Interests

During the twentieth century, the face of the Black Hills underwent many changes, most of which were closely tied to national economic cycles and federal policy. After World War II, but particularly in the last decades of the twentieth century, there was a steady decline in the relative importance of traditional extractive industries in local economic development. Reflecting wider regional trends in the American West, a growing tension emerged between the needs and interests of the older industries and a new urban-based, recreational commerce built around the preservation of the region’s natural resources (Geores 1990:4-5; White 1991:496-534).

a. The Decline of Traditional Enterprises

Mining, logging, and ranching, the Black Hills’ three traditional extractive industries, maintained their supremacy in the region’s economy until the middle of the twentieth century when their influence started to gradually erode. In the case of mining, even though the boom days of the gold rush had long passed, the Hills continued to support various mining enterprises and the thousands of workers this industry employed. From the mining of mica, gypsum, and feldspar to the production of lignite, oil, and kaolin, mineral production remained a major industry in the
Black Hills through World War II (Montgomery 1957:56-65; Schell 1961:375-378; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:340; Geores 1990:92-93; Sundstrom, J. 1977:66-68). During the Great Depression, mining sustained the economy of the Black Hills when the neighboring plains and prairie regions of South Dakota faced economic collapse (Geores 1990:93). It also played a role in bolstering the local economy during World War II and during the national post-war economic expansion (Geores 1990:94-95), although jobs in the mines dropped more than fourteen percent from 1940 to 1950 (Montgomery 1957:24). In fact, mining occupied a favored status in the Black Hills relative to other industries. Geores (1990:52-54) argues that while the timber and livestock industries were being increasingly regulated on public lands, mining remained a privileged industry; it was the one industry for which new public lands were opened to extraction, not only for minerals but also for the timber and water needed to work the mines. Also, this industry was not subject to the same degree of law enforcement when its resources were taken through illegal means (Geores 1990:51-54). In the early half of the twentieth century, mining was so highly placed in the local economy that its interests even preempted the status of wildlife reserves (Geores 1990:93-94). After 1950, the favored status of the mining industry in the Black Hills began to decline. Increasing regulations imposed on the industry, the rising costs of extracting its resources, and a declining demand for its products led to the closure of many mines, including Lead’s famous Homestake Mining Company in the 1990s. In addition, stiff political opposition to the development of other mining industries, notably uranium, contributed to the reduced importance of this sector in the overall economic development of the Hills (Geores 1990:94-95).

Logging in the Black Hills was an important industry that directly supported the building and expansion of local mines. According to Herbert Schell (1961:374), the Homestake Mining Company used 2,000,000 running feet of lumber annually to support its mining operations. Over the course of the twentieth century, the timber industry became concentrated in the hands of fewer owners and its production and distribution were increasingly organized to serve outside markets over local ones. Even though timber from the Black Hills was hard to market because of its low quality and difficult to process in large quantities because of the lack of water, the prevailing direction of federal development policies for the forest continued to support the export of timber at the expense of local interests (Geores 1990:84, 85). In time, the interests of the large corporate timber companies were favored over those of the smaller, locally run mills and the domestic needs of local residents. While residents were still able to access timber for domestic purposes, the location, timing, and extent of their cutting was severely limited (Geores 1990:65-67, 81-85). Like the mining industry, the timber companies were subject to increasing restrictions in later years. As the importance of recreation and tourism gained ground in the local economy, the U.S. Forest Service came under increasing pressure to maintain the pristineness of the lands it managed and to protect the local wildlife. In 1969, the National Environmental Protection Act was passed, and henceforth, all federal agencies were required to assess and weigh the impacts of any user on public lands (Geores 1990:111-112). Since that time, federal policies regarding the management of the nation’s natural resources have increasingly moved towards a more diversified view of public lands and their users (Geores 1990:118-120).

The economy of the Black Hills, and the West more generally, thrived in the early decades of the twentieth century. Besides the profits to be taken in the local extractive industries of mining and logging, agribusiness was booming. After the catastrophic losses to the cattle industry in 1887, ranching rebounded in the West but on the much smaller scale of family-run businesses. In addition, farming became more important in the region, not only as a result of the continuing opportunities afforded by various homestead acts,14 but also in response to rising commodity prices in

14 More homesteads were served up in western South Dakota in the first decade of the nineteenth century than at any other time in that century (Friggens 1983:87).
the last decade of the nineteenth century (White 1991:272). In the early twentieth century, the agribusiness sector continued to serve as the foundation of the local economy in the southern Hills. In the neighborhood of Wind Cave and Hot Springs, cattle ranching dominated, although farming was important here too (Palais 1942c:90). Farther west in the vicinity of Edgemont sheep raising gained ground (Palais 1942b:53-60), even though it was prohibited on public domain lands (Geores 1990:50-51).

The region’s farmers and ranchers, however, continued to face the vagaries of the climate and the market. A severe drought in 1911 forced many of the smaller operators out of business (Schell 1961:257). The region’s agricultural growth was stalled in the 1930s, when thousands of people lost their farms and ranches to the economic calamity of the Great Depression (Schell 1961:281-284). As Jessie Sundstrom (1977:193) described the situation in the Black Hills:

The bright hopes and promises of Custer County which flourished in the mid-1900s were followed by times of trial and tribulation: first, World War I, then the stock market crash in 1929, and the gradual drying of the climate and the blowing, blowing, blowing of the soil depleted by overzealous farmers who were not thinking of the consequence of their overuse of the land. The Dust Bow days of the Dirty Thirties were born with anger, patience, or insanity by the pioneers. They were laced with grasshopper infestations and fires from which Custer County was no more immune than the rest of the state although, by comparison, the Black Hills continued to be an oasis in the barren, blowing dust bowl. Crops were meager, income was scanty, bills mounted and tried the fortitude of store owner and customer alike.

Many agricultural areas in the west never fully recovered from the Depression. Even though some small scale stock/farm operators were able to weather the economic downturn and rebuild their businesses in the years after World War II, many others either sold or abandoned their ranches/farms and left the region entirely. Because of the more favorable climate and environment inside the Hogback, many of the farmers and ranchers in the southern Hills were affected less adversely than their neighbors who owned lands on the surrounding grasslands (Palais 1941:100-105). Still, some suffered severe losses during the drought years of the 1930s.

The small-scale agricultural enterprises that operated within the old and expanded boundaries of Wind Cave National Park also experienced trials during the Depression Years, and a few faced foreclosure. Those who survived probably did so, as they had in the past, largely through their own self-sufficient food production activities (McAdam 1973:35). Also, as before, many supplemented their farming and ranching by seeking wage-work. Some of the women from ranch families in the neighborhood of Wind Cave National Park worked temporarily as domestics in boarding houses and hotels in Hot Springs, while many of the men worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps (Smith, A. 1973:20, 23). It was during the last years of the Depression, 1935 to 1940, that eighty percent of the private property holdings inside park boundaries were reconveyed to the federal government (Western History Reserach 1992:105). The process of reconveyance took place with little resistance, probably because it happened at a time when the agricultural sector and its producers were economically impoverished.

The post-World War II era brought federal safety nets for agricultural producers and improved prices for their commodities, allowing farmers and ranchers to liquidate their debts from earlier decades (Schell 1961:303). In the 1950s, the Sloan-Pick Act supported the development of huge irrigation projects along the Missouri, including the creation of the Angostura Reservoir on
the Cheyenne River, no more than twenty miles south of Wind Cave National Park. This reservoir provided irrigation water that made farming on the dry highlands directly south of the Black Hills more reliable (Schell 1961:305-307). In the same era, improved farm technologies and new agricultural practices brought changes to the ranching and farming industries. Increasingly, agricultural operators combined cattle raising with the cultivation of feed, notably alfalfa, to sustain their stock over the winter months. Also, the cattle industry became more specialized. In western South Dakota, ranchers raised and then transported their stock to feedlots in the eastern part of the state where they were fattened before being slaughtered for the national market (Schell 1961:349-351). Farmers began planting more drought-resistant varieties, diversifying their crops, and employing methods of tillage better suited to the region’s soils (Palais 1942:107). Despite these changes, agriculture gradually lost ground in the Black Hills. By the 1950s, it was no longer a principal source of income in the area, and the number of farms started to decrease (Montgomery 1957:38-49). These trends continued in later decades when a variety of factors forced more and more people out of the agribusiness.

Although many changes took place during the twentieth century in how the lands in and around the Black Hills were ranched and farmed, none of them raised the efficiency of operations enough to combat the vagaries of national commodities markets. When commodity prices for agricultural products plummeted in the 1980s and 1990s, more and more people were forced to give up farming and ranching. Throughout the plains, farms/ranches were foreclosed. The younger generations were no longer choosing to take up the hard and often unpredictable life of their forebears. Increasingly families left the region, and with their departure, the population of western rural South Dakota continued to decline. In the Black Hills, where there were other economic opportunities, especially in the travel and tourism industry, local counties did not experience such dramatic population declines. Pennington and Custer counties actually gained population during this period (U.S. Census Population Profiles 1900-2000).

One of the factors contributing to the hard times that Black Hills ranchers faced in the twentieth century were the increasing restrictions imposed on their public grazing rights. In response to the damages wrought by overgrazing on public lands, the open ranges were closed in the early twentieth century. Leases were let to ranchers for the use of public lands, and those who lived within the boundaries of federal land holdings were given priority on these leases (Geores 1990:48). In time, the Forest Service decided unilaterally to stop giving out permits to new users, restrict the number of permits extended to older users, and reduce the time under which contracts were let (Geores 1990:86, 90-91). Outraged by policies from which they were being excluded, local stockman began to organize, putting pressure on their political representatives to involve them in the decision-making on their access to and use of public lands (Geores 1990:88). As Geores (1990:88-89) points out, the tension did not just revolve around the quality of the range, but increasingly responded to another set of interests, namely the quality of the forest vegetation for deer, the prime interest of the region’s sports hunters. In fact, in the 1950s, the conflict escalated to a point where local ranchers were refusing sports hunters access to their property (Geores 1990:89-90). Overall, relations between ranchers and government agencies were becoming increasingly uncooperative and litigious in the twentieth century (Geores 1990:91). As more of the public land in and around the Black Hills was placed in a reserve status or became homesteaded by farmers who plowed and fenced their lands for crops, cattle operators were forced to downsize their herds but not without strong political opposition (Schell 1961:255-257; Geores 1990:46-51; Sundstrom, J. 1994:81-85). In the face of this change, some local ranchers simply sold out and pursued other endeavors to make a livelihood in the Hills (McAdam 1973:24).

Grazing rights were also now restricted on federal lands under the management of the National Park Service. Even though national policy had long dictated that park lands not be used for
agricultural purposes, exceptions were made especially in areas, such as Wind Cave National Park, with a prior history of homesteading. In fact, the first superintendent of the park, William A. Rankin, who owned land and grazed stock inside modern day park boundaries, complained in his first annual report about the park's open range, the loose stock, and the lack of fencing (Bohi 1962:421-422, 426; Long 1992:7). In 1909, a federal order authorized the park to give out permits for grazing livestock (Bohi 1962:421), but five years later, in 1914, this practice was severely restricted (Bohi 1962:434). In 1921, local ranchers who held grazing permits hired a range rider to monitor and manage the range (Bohi 1962:440). The continuance of grazing on park lands may have been a function of the fact that there was little federal support for the park's operations, so these leases may have been a necessary means for generating revenue. Also, many of the park's early workers and managers were local residents whose employment supplemented their own ranching endeavors. This work probably did not offer a living wage, and as a result, it was likely in their own best interests and those of their neighbors to make the park's range accessible to stock-raisers (Bohi 1962:430).

The Great Depression was a turning point in the American West. It began an era when the federal government played a much larger role in providing work and livelihoods for Americans living in the West (White, R. 1991:459-534). In the Black Hills, under the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the government's Works Project Administration offered thousands of jobs for the Hills' residents in construction and the arts (Schell 1961:292-293; Sundstrom, J. 1977:194). Numerous public projects were sponsored through the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps, and in South Dakota, most of these were located in the Black Hills (Schell 1961:293; Sundstrom, J. 1994:152-163). Wind Cave National Park was the site of one of the largest CCC camps in the Hills: its workers constructed bridges, improved roads, and built camp sites and the park's visitor center. Along with other CCC workers in the Hills, they helped to create much of the infrastructure for the robust development of tourism in the Black Hills (Schell 1961:186-187; Bohi 1962:449-460; Geores 1990:97, 101, 109; Long 1992:42-54; Sundstrum, J. 1994:152-163). Since this interesting period in the history of the park is well represented in park museum displays and on its web site, it does not need to be elaborated upon any further here.

After World War II, the basis of local livelihoods gradually shifted away from small-scale entrepreneurial ventures and wage-work in the logging, mining, and ranching industries to service-oriented jobs and professions. In 1950, only twenty-five percent of the people living in the Black Hills were employed in the region's traditional industries. Already most of the local populace was working outside the older economic sectors (Montgomery 1957:24-25). Fifty years later in 2000, less than half of the residents in Fall River and Custer counties worked in these sectors; the vast majority was now employed in public and private service-oriented jobs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Labor and Employment Profiles, Fall River and Custer Counties S.D). They were employed as wage workers in government agencies and in industries that serviced leisure, tourism, and recreation. As it had since 1903, the park service continued to represent an important source of employment for Custer and Fall River counties. With these economic changes, there was a shift in the population away from the rural areas to the towns and cities of the Black Hills. Although the population decreased modestly in some parts of the Hills, other areas gained population. Fall River County for example, dropped from a high of 10,439 people in 1950 to 7,453 in 2000, but Custer and Pennington counties both saw substantial increases in their numbers (U.S. Census, Population Profiles, 1900 to 2000). Generally speaking, the Black Hills fared much better than other parts of western South Dakota at maintaining their populations, and they have been able to do so largely because of their leisure and recreational assets.

By the end of the twentieth century, the traditional extractive industries associated with mining, lumbering, and ranching were no longer the backbone of the Black Hills' economy. Instead,
the leisure, travel, and recreational industry had become the mainstay and the centerpiece for regional development (Geores 1990:111). In the face of increased opposition from recreational and tourist interests, traditional users have seen their access to publicly owned areas reduced (Geores 1990:121; see also Chapter Seven). This shift is not unique to the Black Hills, however; it has taken place throughout the American West, and it has had a significant impact on the place of the national parks in regional economic development (White 1991:535-630). Like other areas of the American West with scenic landscapes and large federal land-holdings, the Black Hills have witnessed significant demographic shifts. As the work and livelihoods of the populations who live in their reach has changed, so have the expectations surrounding some of their uses. Many private holdings adjacent to public lands, especially national parks, are being subdivided to make room for what are popularly known as ranchettes, small acreages developed as recreational properties, notably for vacation and retirement homes. The people who purchase these properties usually support policies that maintain public lands in a natural state and oppose most traditional, extractive forms of development. These people typically derive their incomes from sources outside the areas in which they live, or they work locally in service-oriented professions. Most of them live off the land too, but the way they do so is passive and an extension of their leisurely, voyeuristic lifestyles.

The urbanization of the Black Hills and the movement towards a leisure-based economy have had profound impacts on the relative importance of national park lands to the local economies of the West and the Black Hills in particular. In the New West, the nation's national parks have become an increasingly valuable economic asset. Their unique and relatively pristine landscapes draw tourists and leisure residents to the areas in which they are located. Although Wind Cave National Park has not as yet experienced the kinds of recreational development taking place near some of its sister parks in the West, notably Yellowstone, Glacier, Rocky Mountain, Zion, and Capital Reef, there is strong evidence that this trend is beginning to take hold here. As it does, the park will continue to play an important and increasingly substantial role in the direction of local economic growth. It will also, however, have to contend with the effects of a growing population on its borders.

**b. The Growth of Travel and Tourist Enterprises**

By the late twentieth century, what maintained the economic viability of the Black Hills was not the mines, the timber business, or even family farms and ranches, but recreational tourism, which first got its start in the southern Black Hills at Hot Springs and Wind Cave in the 1890s (Geores 1990:30, 42). Since its inception, the history of Wind Cave National Park has been closely linked to the growth and development of the Black Hills travel industry and the interests of its consumers, most of whom come from locations outside the Black Hills.

With the arrival of the automobile and the building of improved roads in the early twentieth century, the Black Hills travel and leisure industry began to shift its focus. The popularity of spas, which made Hot Springs such a popular destination, was in decline and with it the fortunes of many local businesses (Williams, B. 1973:30-31; Julin 1982). Indeed, Cascade Springs, another resort community in the 1890s, was all but deserted by 1905: most of its stone buildings torn down to provide materials for building churches and hospitals in Hot Springs (Hamelstrom in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:344-345; Resatto 1989:129-131). Increasingly, the major attractions for tourism in the Black Hills were its legendary mining history, its wildlife, and its scenic attractions both above and below ground (Clark 1952b; Julin 1982:265).

To the north, Custer State Park, originally established as a forest reserve to support the state school system through the sale of its timber, was turned into a recreational area in 1914, two
years after the creation of a game preserve adjacent to Wind Cave National Park (Lindsay 1932 in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:900; Sundstrom, J. 1994:110-114). Other areas of the Hills under the management of the U.S. Forest Service were also becoming adapted to a growing demand for recreational use. The forest service and state park systems supported recreational interests by stocking non-indigenous sports fish, especially trout, in local streams (Sundstrom, J. 1994:73). Indeed, it is around the issue of water quality in the Hills that we begin to find early evidence of user privileges associated with the traditional mining, timber, and cattle industries colliding with the interests of recreationists who, as early as the 1920s, were starting to become a powerful lobby in the politics over public land use in the Black Hills (Sundstrom, J. 1994:94-95).

In its earliest years of operation, Wind Cave National Park remained closely tied to one of the region's traditional user groups: ranchers (Bohi 1962; Long 1992). Well into the twentieth century, as already noted, it continued to allow grazing on its land and issued permits to locals for such use. Perhaps because the primary focus of the park was its subterranean environment and not its above ground landscape, uses generally prohibited at other national parks continued here. Certainly areas surrounding the park were, and continue to be, devoted to traditional grazing uses. In later years, as more adjacent land became incorporated into the park, it carried with it a history steeped in the region's ranching culture. At least above ground, the park has never been a pristine landscape, but an area where the imprint of human activity is visibly marked on its landscape (see Chapter Seven).

As the twentieth century progressed, a dramatic shift was underway in the character of the groups with definable interests in the Black Hills. Besides the traditional mining, timber, and grazing users, there were recreationists and tourists whose growing presence would eventually reshape federal land policies. Following the successful boosterism of Hot Springs businessmen in the previous century, representatives of the railroads and local entrepreneurs started to launch massive advertising campaigns, extolling the region's scenic vistas, its unique geological formations, its wildlife, and its gunslinging frontier history (Lee 1987; Goeres 1990:94). According to Martha Geores (1990:96), the 1920s ushered in an era when public lands in the Black Hills moved from being a passive recreational resource to an active one. Before 1910, the natural assets of the Hills public lands were used primarily by local people who vacationed at cabins or campsites over the summer months, who hunted game commercially or for subsistence and pleasure in the fall, and who collected timber and gathered plants for food and other domestic uses. Thereafter, the area was increasingly opened to tourists and other recreationists from areas outside the Hills (Geores 1990:96-97). This was also true of Wind Cave National Park, where the number of outside visitors underwent a dramatic increase (Long 1992:38-39). In fact, there appears to have been a shift in the park's policy around this time -- away from local groups and their concerns to the new and rapidly growing tourist market and its interests. The park not only stopped issuing permits for grazing and other local uses, but it also began to actively work with the area's tourist boosters in promoting travel to the Black Hills (Lee 1987; Long 1992:39-40).

When President Coolidge\(^{15}\) spent his summer vacation at Custer State Park in 1927, considerable national attention was focused on the Black Hills (Sundstrom, J. 1994:136-139). Even though the stature of the presidency did much to legitimize the appeal of the Hills to potential vacationers, it was not enough to sustain a steady flow of tourists. In order to successfully com-

\(^{15}\) So important was his presence to the area's tourist aspirations that many local sites were renamed in his or his wife's honor. The south fork of Battle Creek, once called Squaw Creek, became Grace Coolidge Creek, and Sheep Mountain became Mount Coolidge. Even though he stayed at a retreat in neighboring Custer State Park, there is no evidence in the sources we came across that he visited Wind Cave.
pete with Yellowstone National Park and draw more tourists, a better infrastructure and more attractions had to be created in the Hills. In subsequent years, developments that took place in the heart of the Black Hills National Forest played a critical role in shifting the mother lode of Hills tourism from their southern reaches near Hot Springs to more northerly locations near Custer, Deadwood, and Rapid City. This happened in several different ways.

Beginning around 1907, automobile travel became increasingly popular, rapidly replacing the railroads as the primary form of transportation Americans used to reach tourist destinations in the West (Long 1992:38-41). The park began to arrange concessions with the owners of automobiles and tour cars to bring tourists to the cave from Hot Springs, where many still arrived by train (Bohi 1962:429). Within two decades, most of the visitors who came to Wind Cave did so by personal auto, with some of them camping during their visits to the park (Bohi 1962:442; Long 1992:38). Automobile travelers arrived in the Hills through many of the age-old routes developed along the region’s gateways and Indian trails. Over time, these became modern highways. From the west, U.S. Highway 18 and state highway 89 entered the Hills through Red Canyon, following the old trail to Custer by way of Shirttail Canyon and Pringle. From the east, U.S. Highway 18 and state road 385 reached the Hills along the Fall River near Horsehead Junction, one of the former stage stops, bypassing the Buffalo Gap as the customary southeastern access route into the Hills. To the present day, the old Buffalo Gap entry is still along a dirt/gravel access road and hardly used by the traveling public. Hot Springs now became the gateway town for the southeastern Hills. Through the 1930s, roads into and around the Black Hills remained poor, something Gutzom Borglum once described as their oxcart highway system (quoted from Geores 1990:100). In subsequent decades, dirt and gravel roads were gradually transformed into paved highways and scenic byways through the efforts of Peter Norbeck, one of the region’s most avid promoters of travel and tourism (Sundstrom 1994:118-126). Highway 87 connected Wind Cave National Park and Custer State Park, and in the course of its building, drained and destroyed a natural lake inside park boundaries on lands once belonging to the old Valentine ranch (McAdam 1973:28).

Notwithstanding Norbeck’s attempts to improve and build additional state roads in the Hills, the American Automobile Association advised its travelers in the 1950s to bypass the Black Hills and take other routes to Yellowstone (Goeres 1990:100-101). When U.S. 16 became the major travel route to the Black Hills and Yellowstone, Rapid City, Keystone, and Custer became its primary beneficiaries. The Hot Springs region lost ground and became increasingly isolated from the flow of the heaviest tourist traffic (Casey 1949:8). After the building of I-90 in the 1970s, it became even more remote. Today, many transcontinental travelers do little more than visit the sites and towns on the northern side of the Hills within easy access of the interstate, notably, Mount Rushmore and Deadwood. For travelers who take time to explore the Hills, Wind Cave National Park remains a popular attraction on their trip itineraries, and Hot Springs serves as the primary town providing accommodations for the park’s visitors. Still, the Hills south of Custer are no longer the locus of tourist activity in the Hills as they once were at the end of the nineteenth century.

Even before major highways routed traffic away from the far reaches of the southern Hills, the nation’s interest in recreational spas had declined. Other than Wind Cave, there was little to attract tourists to this area, especially when more spectacular sites were being developed farther north. In the central hills, the Work Projects Administration and its Civilian Conservation Corps, created lakes, including Stockade near Custer and Pactola Reservoir and Sheridan Lake near Rapid City (Geores 1990:97). With the lakes came new campgrounds and other facilities; hun-

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16 Plans are now underway to pave the road and make it a scenic bypass.
dreds were built and improved during the 1930s, including many of those at Wind Cave National Park (Bohi 1962:449-460; Sundstrom, J. 1977:145-150; Long 1992:48-54). More important than the lakes was the creation of Gustav Borglam’s colossal sculpture at Mount Rushmore, which forever shifted the focus of national attention to this site and its nearby locations (Clark 1952c; Larner 2002:89-125). Mount Rushmore was first conceptualized in the 1920s, but it was not completed for another two decades (Rezatto 1989:142-155). It has been an astounding success, drawing large crowds of people every year. In its shadows, an entire array of manufactured attractions started to dot the Black Hills landscape from Rapid City to Custer. Wax museums, reptile gardens, and other tourist traps existed alongside the region’s notable natural attractions, including the Needles and Cathedral Spires (Goeres 1990:103-106). The southeastern edge of the Hills largely escaped this form of tourist development, however, and retained an authenticity where travelers were still able to see landscapes and wildlife in a setting that at least appeared to approximate a more original condition.

During and after World War II, recreational facilities and attractions on federal lands deteriorated because of a lack of funding. In the 1960s, fees started to be charged or increased for the use of many facilities in order to raise sufficient operating funds for their maintenance (Goeres 1990:99). There were more recreational users too, locals as well as outsiders. With the building of Ellsworth Air Force Base in 1942, Rapid City quickly became one of the largest population centers in South Dakota, and many of its residents became active recreational users in the Hills (Goeres 1990:99). When automobile touring, as lampooned in Chevy Chase’s film Vacation, became the primary family-centered recreational activity of the postwar era, thousands of outside tourists, mostly from the Midwest, flocked to the region (Montgomery 1957:66). During these years, Wind Cave remained one of the featured stops on automobile itineraries of the Black Hills (Case 1949:8; South Dakota Federal Writers Project 1952). Although it remains so today, it still stands off the beaten path of the most frequented travel routes in the Hills.

Beyond the scenic attractions, providing the foundation for much of the sightseeing tourism in the Black Hills, there was another important leisure activity, sports hunting and fishing. Ever since dude ranches and hunting lodges were built in the late nineteenth century, these two sporting industries have drawn many outsiders to the area. But their greatest support has come from local residents. Throughout the American West, pioneer settlers and their descendants relied heavily on the native fauna and flora to supplement their diets and/or as a commercial endeavor (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:402, 419; Bingham 1973:4, 6; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:176, 232,243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:103, 261). Today, hunting remains an important and fundamental feature of life for many European American ranch families in the Hills (Sundstrum, J. 1994:69). Berries and other wild plants continue to be collected by local residents too (Bohi 1962:366; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 402, 425, 583, 585; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom J. 1977:227, 366). In recent years, a few small businesses have started to produce and market custom-made jams and jellies from the region’s stocks of currants, chokecherries, serviceberries, and raspberries (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 402, 425, 583; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:365, 379; see also, Chapter Eleven).

As discussed in much greater detail elsewhere, the state of South Dakota did not impose game laws on its citizens until 1911, a date that coincides with the time when game reserves were established in the Black Hills at Wind Cave National Park and Custer State Park. Unlike Wyoming, whose early game legislation appears to have been enacted to protect a lucrative sports hunting industry catering to a wealthy Eastern clientele, South Dakota’s game laws emerged in direct response to the overkilling of local game through the combined effects of market, subsistence, and sports hunting (Progulske 1974:123-124; Turner 1974:136, 137, 144). On federal
forest lands and in Custer State Park, where hunting was permitted in set seasons, poaching still
remained a serious problem for many decades after game laws were enacted (Sundstrom, J.
1994:69). Even though hunting was disallowed inside the boundaries of Wind Cave National
Park, game continued to be taken by poachers well into the twentieth century (Bohi 1962:462).
Much of this illegal activity was the work of locals who resented restrictions being placed on their
traditional open-access rights to the region’s public lands and who certainly resisted some of the
changes taking place to accommodate the interests of outside recreationists (Sundstrom, J. 1994:
69). Despite the problems with poaching, many of the game populations in the region rebounded
by the mid-twentieth century as a result of the enactment of game laws, conservation efforts, and
the creation of protected habitats. Today, the local wildlife is appreciated as much for its value in
the spectator sport of sightseeing as it is in the actual chase.

During the twentieth century, except for Wind Cave National Park, the southeastern Hills
lost much of its cachet and ability to attract large tourist audiences. Many of the classic architec­
tural structures along Hot Springs main thoroughfare, built during the bustling years of the spa
industry, are now boarded up. The town has the retro feel of so many other quaint western
communities long past their prime and outside the reach of trendy destinations that make up much
of the modern travel and leisure industry in the American West. Today, Wind Cave and the more
recent Mammoth Exhibit in the town of Hot Springs are the only attractions that bring a sizable
tourist audience to the area. With the gradual decline of the region’s traditional agribusiness sec­
tor in the last half of the twentieth century, these attractions have come to play an even larger role
in bolstering the local economy, a subject to be discussed in more detail momentarily.

c. Cultural Traditions

Over the past century, the Black Hills have become the home of thousands of European
Americans and smaller numbers of African Americans, Asian Americans, and Mexican Ameri­
cans.17 From the Hills, all of these people have made a living in mining, logging, farming,
ranching, tourism, and a host of other occupations. Through their own lives and the histories of
their ancestors, now reaching back over five generations, they have established strong ties to the
area. For many local residents, the attachment goes beyond the stories in their own family his­
tories and involves a deep appreciation of the region’s unique frontier history, its wildlife, and
the striking beauty of its natural landscapes. One only needs to read the praises of people like
Badger Clark (1952a, 1952b, 1952c, 1983) to understand some of the strong cultural feelings
local European Americans hold for this region.

Over the years, European Americans have imposed their own unique cultural understand­
ings on the Black Hills and their many diverse landscapes. Most of their cultural traditions are
linked to the halcyon days of the gold rush and the cattle boom during the 1870s and 1880s. They
are tied to the trials and struggles of the European American pioneers who settled the area or the
epic battles between the U.S. military and the region’s tribal nations. The cultural narratives uni­
formly focus on the adventures, exploits, and hardships associated with the taking and settlement
of the Hills. Much of the discourse celebrates whites conquering the Hills against all odds, and
Mount Rushmore stands as its quintessential expression (Clark 1952c; Geores 1990:102-108;

17 Asian American, African American, and Mexican American people are barely visible in the literature on the Black
Hills. Asian and African American peoples arrived in the area with the Gold Rush, while Mexican Americans probably
came here as early as the eighteenth century as itinerant traders (see Chapter Three). None of these ethnic groups are
associated, at least in the published literature, with any distinctive set of cultural traditions regarding the Black Hills
landscape and Wind Cave National Park in particular. Some of their family stories are found in local town and county
histories, however.
Dorst 2000; Larner 2002). With varying degrees of embellishment and exaggeration, most of these stories derive from actual historic events. Some of the narratives, however, have been transplanted from other regional folk traditions, including the tales of Paul Bunyon and the legends of lost gold (Rezatto 1989:57-70). Others derive their origins in ersatz traditions, often mistakenly attributed to the legends of local tribes who occupied the region before European Americans arrived. One example is The Legend of Old Scattergold (Rezatto 1989:73-75), but of course, the classic in this genre of storytelling is the widely retold Legend of the Rose (Brown and Willards 1924:24-26; Price, S. 1935:37; Hughes, R. 1957:7-8; Stone 1982:28-29; Rezatto 1989:70-72).

In relation to Wind Cave National Park, there are no mythical or legendary stories, at least that we were able to find in the course of our research, derived from European American cultural traditions. The culture of European Americans comes into play predominately in terms of how the park’s geology and wildlife are represented in park interpretive materials (Peterson 1929:149-153; Case 1949:9-10, 59-60, 89-90; Casey 1949:17, 28, 197, 283-289, 323-325; South Dakota Federal Writers Project 1952:16, 376-379; Williams, A. 1952:27-30). More broadly, it is reflected in the region’s tourism and specifically, in the ways in which the cultural values of European Americans are expressed in local travel discourse (Long 1992:18-20). Since Victorian times, visits to America’s unique and scenic landscapes have been considered a form of extraordinary experience, often described in a metaphoric language akin to religious phenomena and intended to invoke pleasurable emotions and morally uplifting attitudes (MacCannell 1976; Albers 1988; Sears 1989). This is certainly apparent in some of the travel writings that have described the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park in particular (Coursey 1926; Case 1949; Casey 1949; Peattie 1952; Williams 1952; Long 1992:18-20; Raventon 1994).

The only stories of historic importance to local European American residents, as revealed in some of their own writings about the area (Tallent 1899; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70; Koller 1971; Fall River County Historical Society 1976; Sundstrom, J. 1977; Clark, B. 1983), have to do with European Americans finding and developing the cave and the feuds that surrounded its ownership. These stories are worthy of interest and bear telling in popular travel writings (Case 1949; Casey 1949; Rezatto 1983) because they conform to wider legend-making traditions associated with the Hills. They speak to the mythological drama of America’s Frontier West, its discoveries, challenges, and above all, the conflicts and fights over access to its riches (see Chapter 15 for a fuller discussion of this). Yet, there are many other stories derived mostly from the histories of local families that give rich cultural evidence of their experiences in and attitudes towards Wind Cave National Park. Regrettably, little of this has been represented in park interpretive materials.

European Americans have also used the Hills to establish religious camps; today, New Agers flock to the Hills to seek their own spiritual epiphany. Certainly Mount Rushmore has achieved the status of a sacred shrine, a symbol of the nation’s democracy and above all, American sovereignty over the Black Hills (Geores 1990:103-104; Larner 2002:89-125). Today, it is a national icon, one of the most frequently visited and photographed monuments in the United States (Geores 1990:108). Standing in a contested relationship to this site is the equally significant sculpture of Crazy Horse, still undergoing completion outside of Custer. Responding to the request of Lakota leader Henry Standing Bear, Korczak Ziolkowski and his family devoted their lifetimes to carving a figure of Crazy Horse out of Thunder Mountain, an undertaking funded entirely with family funds and private monies collected from visitor’s fees and donations. Ziolkowski was able to purloin the use of the mountain by filing a mining claim, which, under the federal law of the 1950s, still superseded all other forms of use and interest on U.S. Forest Service lands. Initially, there was considerable opposition to the undertaking from local whites.
and the federal government, but, in time, this opposition softened and turned to support when it became apparent that the proposed monument had considerable benefit in attracting tourists and their revenue (Geores 1990:105-107). Opposition has also emerged among tribal people. Some Lakotas supported and even encouraged Ziokowski work (Rezatto 1989:179-180). Others, however, looked at his effort very differently: they saw this monument not only as a desecration of their sacred Black Hills, but also as another attempt to commercially appropriate their culture and the image of one of their most revered leaders (Geores 1990:107-109).

Whether European Americans developed their own cultural sense of the Black Hills through the appropriation of tribal symbols or their own cultural traditions, they have had little to say about the area of Wind Cave National Park. Other than its association with major pioneer trails and the discovery of its unique cave, this is not an area of the Black Hills that appears to have a highly developed and especially strong cultural attachment for European Americans. This stands in marked contrast to the tribal nations of the region.

2. Tribal Interests

In direct contrast to European Americans, several tribal nations, especially the Lakotas and Cheyennes, have a strong and continuing cultural attachment to the area of Wind Cave National Park. Historically, this relationship grew out of their ideas about the region’s animal, plant, and mineral life and its relation to particular landforms in the area, notably, Wind Cave, the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and the Hot Springs. Today, these traditions remain a vital part of their cultures, and a significant feature of their contemporary tribal identities. Their strong cultural ties to the area are revealed not only in the continuing practice of traditional religious observances at some of these sites but also in the persisting use of the area for traditional forms of procurement (see details in sections Three and Four). There are also associations linked to their historic involvement in the region’s tourism, economy, and politics, and some of these are summarized here.

a. In Tourism

When tourism began to develop its stride in the Black Hills, many local communities and entrepreneurs included Lakotas in their events and attractions (Casey 1949:291-296). As early as 1908, Lakotas from Pine Ridge were invited to participate in the Buffalo Gap Fair, where they entered various rodeo contests and camped at the edge of town during the event. Indeed, some of these Lakota were well-known and highly respected bronc riders and pickup men. According to Queenie Stewart (1967-70:70-71), who described this early fair, the most popular feature of the rodeo was the Tepee-Setting Race, which involved two women driving a wagon around the track and erecting their tipis in front of the grandstand. The winners took away a prize of five dollars (see also, Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:194). Similar festivities and competitions were held in Deadwood, Rapid City, Hot Springs, and Custer where local Lakotas were known to participate as well (Casey 1949:291-296).

Scudder Mekeel (1932:278-281) wrote that throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, prominent Lakota men were invited to organize a following to participate in the festivities of various Black Hills communities. Each of these leaders carried full responsibility for the people who accompanied them, and they commonly organized the excursions according to the protocol bands followed when traveling in pre-reservation times. They reached the Hills in caravans, with wagons and sometimes with travois carrying tipis and other equipment for their extended summer visits. Some of them passed through and camped at Wind Cave National Park on
their way to these festivities (McAdams 1973:6) or to secure lodgepoles (Smith, A. 1973:16). In
1930, White Man Bear was the leader of a group that participated in the Water Carnival at Hot
Springs, while Short Bull organized the people who went to the rodeo at Edgemont (Meekeel
1932:280-281). The town of Custer included Lakota participants in its Gold Discovery Days.
According to Jessie Sundstrom (1977:124), the Lakotas were provided meat as part of their pay­
ment for participating in the parade and given a place to camp during the festivities. In 1930,
Young Skunk was the leader of one of the groups who regularly attended this event (Meekeel
1932:280-281). These celebrations became part of a circuit that some Lakota families traveled
over the entire summer. Even as late as the 1960s, it was a common practice for Lakotas to parti­
cipate in the rodeos, stampedes, fairs, pageants, and celebrations run by local white communities
in South Dakota (Albers and Medicine, n.d). When Hot Springs developed its Crazy Horse
Pageant in the 1950s, Lakotas from Pine Ridge were featured participants as they had been in the
old Water Carnival (Danker 1963:37, 42). Participation in some of these events was not only
remembered as a pleasurable leisure activity by many Lakotas but also an important, albeit mea­
ger, supplement to their annual income (Albers and Medicine, n.d).

Also common from the 1920s to the 1960s was the practice of involving local Lakotas in
commercial ventures that featured native dances and craft exhibits. Indeed, Geores (1990:101­
102) notes that, after the 1940s, Indian involvement was welcome, and even actively solicited, at
local tourist attractions. The most famous of these was organized by the Alex Duhamel family,
who operated a large retail store in Rapid City (Born 1994:23-24). The Duhamels also owned
land on the road to Mount Rushmore at Rockerville Gulch, where Sitting Bull’s tiospaye once
camped every year to cut their lodgepoles. In the mid-1920s, the Duhamels decided to develop
the area into a tourist attraction (Born 1994:26). As Bud Duhamel told David Born (1994:24),
Nicholas Black Elk approached his father, with whom he had had a long trading relationship,
about the possibility of developing an Indian pageant at the site. It was Bud Duhamel’s impres­
sion that Black Elk supported the pageant idea as a way of educating white tourists and also pro­
viding employment for his people. When the pageant first started in 1927, the Lakotas built a
summer camp near Baken Park, and whenever the park’s hall wasn’t being otherwise used, the
Lakotas performed dances for the tourists. In 1934, it was moved to Crystal Caverns, and a round
building that seated several hundred people was built for Lakota dance performances (DeMallie
1984:63; Born 1994:25; Larner 2002:270). When the pageant was at its height, anywhere from
twenty-five to fifty families participated in the event, and they received a twenty-five percent
share of the gate sales. Pageant participants lived in a campground, which the Duhamels main­
tained, providing the campers with food and water. Their stays at the camp lasted from a few days
to several weeks each summer. Their performances included a variety of dances, demonstrations
of sign language, a peace pipe ceremony, and rope tricks. Crafts were exhibited at the camp­
ground for tourists to purchase, and a parade was held each day (DeMallie 1984:63-64; Born
1994:26). The granddaughters of Black Elk, Esther DeSersa and Olivia Pourier, fondly recalled
spending summers at the camp when they were children (in Neihardt and Utrecht 2000:134-135).
The pageant continued until 1957, but interest in it started to wane after Black Elk’s death (Born

Following popular local trends in this period, Wind Cave National Park established its own
Indian camp and exhibit in 1937. The park superintendent, Edward Dixon Freeland wrote a de­
tailed typescript of the camp after its first year that is liberally referenced here. According to
Freeland the park invited Dan Blue Horse from the Pine Ridge Reservation to assemble a group
to set up camp, perform dances, and demonstrate traditional buffalo processing techniques. A
group of nineteen families, fifty-five people in all, arrived on the 18th of July in a caravan of
wagons (Ibid:1). A large area was set up for the camp, which consisted of canvas-wall tents com­
commonly used by Lakotas at this time. Firewood and water for cooking were provided by the park (Ibid:2).

On the first day of their encampment, the rangers killed a buffalo and brought it to the camp where it was skinned and butchered in view of watching tourists. Raw kidney and liver were eaten by the older Indians and the children, delicacies that Freeland (1937:3, 7) was told would promote long life. The meat was cooked the old way in the paunch of a buffalo, filled with water and heated by hot rocks submerged into the liquid. After the meat was cooked, it was taken out and placed on a pile of psoralea leaves, the particular species not identified. Some of the leaves were also placed in the water to purify it. After prayers and song, the meat was divided evenly and distributed among the campers by the leader of the group, Dan Blue Horse, who also shared pieces of the meat with tourists (Ibid:4). The remaining meat was then cut into thin strips, soaked in an unnamed herb so the flies wouldn't touch it, and hung over a peeled pine pole to dry in the sun. The bones were broken up for soup to which wild turnips were later added (Ibid:5). The hide was staked out on the ground to dry with the hair side down, and after it dried, it was divided up among the elderly women (Ibid:6). The whole process, according to an article in the Hot Springs Star (July 22, 1937), was repeated on the second day of the encampment. In the evening, the group was dressed in their regalia for dances held around a bonfire. The dances drew a large crowd, arriving in seventy-five automobiles (Freeland 1937:8). On the last night of dancing, Freeland was presented a warbonnet, and he was given the Lakota name, Wicasa Tatanka [Buffalo Man]. The camp broke up on the 22nd of July with participants moving on to Custer's Gold Discovery Days and the Days of ’76 at Deadwood (Ibid:10).

Local newspapers reported the event a success. It was well-received by the locals and tourists who came to see the activities and by the Lakotas who danced and demonstrated traditional bison butchering and cooking techniques. One article from the Hot Springs Star of July 22, 1937 quoted eighty year old Left Hand Bear [Mato Chatka] as saying:

We should keep well and free from sickness this winter on the reservation because we have feasted on buffalo here in our old hunting grounds, and our squaws have much buffalo meat drying for us to use when the snow comes again. Buffalo meat is the medicine for the red man.

The same newspaper also described the next year's encampment, which again was led by Dan Blue Horse with fifty-three people participating. This time the event apparently lasted longer, over a seven day period (Hot Springs Star July 1938; Bohi 1962:458). One of the participants in the 1938 program, Charley Eagle Louse (1939), wrote a letter to Freeland to inquire about the forthcoming 1939 encampment and to thank him for the buffalo he sent to Pine Ridge in December of 1938. Eagle Louse wrote:

I am say very thanks for the Buffalo meat I had last Dec. and everyone said that (Tatanka Wicasa) Buffalo Man is best friend of yours, so I said, yes. Mr. Freeland is one of the best honest man in the Black Hills. He likes the indians and treat them right. Well Mr. Freeland I believe this is a Good Winter we had there was lot snow here and I think we will have lots of feed and berries for the coming summer and so I am chopping wood now so don't worry about my arms now Mr. Freeland and say Mr. Freeland my wife said ask Mr. Freeland see if we re going make the jerk meat again this summer. Well I am in condition now and I expect to see you some days and I will try to see you and have discussing in regards to 3rd Annual doings. If you believe we re going to have that Celebration. Well I will close here and I say goodbye to you and Mrs. Eagle Louse and my little boy Charlie Jr. both said hello and shake hand to you.
Eagle Louse and Left Hand Bear's remarks are important in light of evidence presented in later chapters; they support the prevalent idea among the Lakotas that this area was not only the sacred homeland of the bison and a place of health and renewal, but also a widely recognized traditional hunting ground and winter camping spot. The ability to come back to this place and feast on its bison must have been a moving experience for these Lakotas, one of whom mentions the good snow coverage of the past winter and his own well-being in a context that is widely linked in Lakota traditions to Wind Cave, the bison, and Waziyata, the North Wind, who brings the snow that heals the earth and brings new life to the people (see chapters Fourteen and Fifteen for further discussion).

While the encampment was well received by the Lakotas, the tourists, and the residents of Hot Springs, as judged by local newspaper accounts, it was not continued after 1938. Arno B. Cammerer (1938), the Director of the National Park Service, wrote Freeland that permission for future encampments, except for the one already planned during the coming summer, would not be granted because of the costs these incurred to the park and the precedent they might set pursuant to other groups seeking comparable accommodations. He also declined Freeland's request to slaughter four rather than two buffalo. This brief, but very successful, venture ended Wind Cave National Park's efforts to involve local Lakotas in the park's interpretive programming. Even though park lands were culturally significant to the Lakota people, and even though they were associated with a rich legacy of stories in Lakota as well as Cheyenne oral traditions, this was rarely incorporated into the promotional images and the educational materials that the park used to represent itself in the twentieth century.

Even Mount Rushmore, which had little to recommend it as a site of cultural importance to local tribes, maintained an active Lakota presence during the 1950s (Larner 2002:240-242, 262, 269-275). For many summers, Ben Black Elk and other Lakotas regularly greeted visitors to the monument (Larner 2002:269-275). According to his daughter, Olivia Pourier, her father became associated with Mount Rushmore after the death of her brother in 1948. Wearing his best Lakota outfit, Ben Black Elk took a horse and travois to the Hills, tracking his son's spirit in the area of Harney Peak and Hill City along the old Iron Mountain Road, and leaving the area by way of the Buffalo Gap (Larner 2002:271; Olivia Pourier in Neihardt and Utrecht 2000:40-41). At the encouragement of Carl Burgess, who ran the concession at Mount Rushmore, he was convinced to spend his summers at the monument interacting with tourists, an activity from which he was able to make a decent living (Larner 2002:271).

It is also curious that Wind Cave National Park did not receive permission to continue the involvement of Lakotas in special summer activities when comparable exhibitions were instituted in the same period and continued well into the 1950s at Yosemite National Park, although not without serious misgivings on the part of the Park Service (Spence 1999:102-107, 116-120). In fact, in the early twentieth century, a few tribal groups even lived within the boundaries of the nation's parks, some continued to hunt and collect plants on park lands, and temporary tribal exhibitions and performances were held at many others (Keller and Turek 1998; Spence 1999; Burnham 2000). Over time, however, major steps were taken by the park service to minimize and/or remove tribes from the nation's parks, and by the 1950s, tribal peoples were conspicuous by their absence in interpretive programming. This was also true at Wind Cave National Park, except for an event in November of 1953, when a delegation of Lakotas from Pine Ridge was invited to the park for festivities to celebrate the park's Fiftieth Anniversary. At this event, the Lakotas adopted the park's superintendent, Earl M. Semingson and named him, as rendered in

18 Indeed, some of the most popular and enduring images of Mount Rushmore to appear on the postcard in the 1950s and 1960s depicted Ben Black Elk in the foreground of the picture (examples in author's photograph collection).
the park's monthly report, Totonka To-kah Key, translated as Leading Buffalo (Bohi 1962: 465). Actually, this name refers to the first buffalo man or human of the Lakota origin story, Tokahe, who led people to the surface of the earth from their underground home at Wind Cave (see Chapter Fourteen for details on the story associated with Tokahe). Aside from this event, there is little evidence of any Lakota involvement in park activities after World War II. Whatever the reason for the Lakota's disappearance from Wind Cave's public presentations and events, it appears from park documents that no further efforts were made to involve them, even during the 1950s when the region's tourist promoters were extolling the virtues of including Indians in local tourist attractions (Geores 1990:102).

Living in the Black Hills over extended periods during the summer months afforded older Lakotas a context in which to pass on their knowledge of the area to the younger generations. Indeed, one might even argue that their growing involvement in the region's tourism provided an important context for them to reassert some of their traditional practical and spiritual ties to the Hills (Pourier in Niehardt and Utrecht 2000:134-135). It also presented them opportunities to carry on various kinds of procurement activities such as the gathering of plants for food and medicine. David Born (1994:26-27) writes about this from an interview he had with Francis Duhamel, who told him that when Henry Horse became ill, Black Elk took off to the nearby hills with a gunnysack to gather herbs and roots for a medicinal tea. He cured his patient who started to dance again three days later.

Watson Parker (1985:591) has argued that the rise of tourism in the Black Hills after World War I was the major force behind the Lakota's spiritual attachment to the area. Indeed, he even asserts that this spirituality was a fairly recent invention, created for the tourists by Black Hills publicists. In contrast to Parker's cynical interpretation of the sincerity and authenticity of some of the Lakota's religious performances at public attractions, other writers take the position that these were not fabrications but part of an overarching desire of people like Nicholas Black Elk to share their knowledge of Lakota traditions with others (DeMallie 1984:64-67,69-70, 71; Born 1994:29). It was not, as some cynics (Parker 1985:59; Worster 1992:113, 135-136, 141) have argued, a context for the creation of traditions that lack any link with the past. Even though their stays in the Hills and some of the economic opportunities that supported this presence were not entirely on their own terms, they did create a bridge across which some of their knowledge and use of the Hills would continue to pass to future generations. In fact, much of what was written by Parker's so-called publicists in the 1940s and 1950s was not new, and it follows what European Americans were writing about tribal traditions relating to the Hills as early as the 1870s. Reminiscent of the accounts of people such as Colonel Richard Dodge, Walter Jenney, and William Curtis, Leland Case (1949:5) wrote in his 1949 travel guide to the Black Hills:

Indians didn't live in them. These pine-covered hills were much too mysterious and sacred for that, for here the holy wakan spirit took the form of the Thunders. And The Thunders couldn't be placated by song or dance as could, say the Wakan of sickness, drouth, or a slain buffalo. The Thunders' blinding fire might with no warning strike a man dead.

In the same year, Robert Casey (1949:14) gave a more fantastical, and perhaps even absurd, assessment of Lakota perceptions of the Hills, when he wrote:

When the Sioux were pleading for their ghostly shrine, Paha Sapa -- the Black Hills--this place had been a place of inviolate holiness, the home of the Great Spirit, whose rocky corridors and tree-roofed halls had never been profaned by a human's prying eyes. The shamans and medicine men who had gone there on great occasion to pray had entered the Manitou's precincts only at night, with their eyes closed, feeling their way slowly along a
route made familiar by tradition. But Custer had come and the god, who wanted none of the face with his forked tongue and his gifts for destruction, had gone away.

Other than the fact that these statements acknowledge the Lakotas sacred attachment to the Hills, they bear only a remote resemblance to actual Lakota traditions about the area.

The growing involvement of the Lakotas in the tourist industry of the Black Hills was not without its own contradictions. There was still widespread racism against Indians in the region. There was also anger over the Lakotas persisting efforts to reclaim the Hills. Martha Geores (1990:102) quotes an editorial from the *Rapid City Journal* in 1955 that encouraged, although begrudgingly, Indian participation in local tourism. It bears repeating here: First, stop in Indian Country...and regardless of how you feel about them, Indians still have a romantic attraction to easterners and city dwellers. The efforts to involve Indians in local tourism, however, came to a screeching halt with the rise of the American Indian Movement and their political occupations in the Hills during the 1970s and 1980s.

The Lakotas, however, were not only performers at attractions and doings in the Black Hills, but they were also tourists themselves. Tom Giago (1999:276), the former editor of the *Lakota Times* and *Indian Country Today*, wrote in 1985 about the importance of the Hills for Lakota leisure activity, and how it was curtailed in the 1970s and 1980s because of the highly politicized takeovers and demonstrations during these years. The point he made was that Lakotas, like their European American neighbors, frequently took weekend outings to the Hills for recreational pleasure. Today, Wind Cave National Park is also a destination where school districts from the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations commonly bring their students on educational outings (Terry 1999, Personal Communication; Albers and Kittelson 2002). Local tribal organizations use the Hills to establish camps and retreats for their young people. In 1996, the Sioux Sans Alocholism Hope Lodge Youth Component of Rapid City sponsored a camp at Storm Mountain, aimed at preventing alienation among the youth and building their leadership and creative talents (Roach 1996: B1).

b. In Other Economic Pursuits

Throughout the early half of the twentieth century, the Black Hills remained a space that Lakota people continued to visit, and like many other Americans, they often accessed it in the context of tourism. There were other ways Lakotas used the Hills as well. Before and after tourism developed in the region, the Black Hills continued to be a location for food procural, especially for the Lakotas from the neighboring Pine Ridge Reservation. In the early twentieth century, the agent at Pine Ridge, John Brennan, customarily gave small groups of Lakota permission to camp and gather plants for foods and medicines in the Black Hills (Jones1904:125-128; U.S. Senate 1904). In October of 1903, passes were issued to two small parties for the purpose of visiting the Black Hills and vicinity to gather berries, roots, and herbs (Jones 1904:125). The parties included women and children, and each numbered about thirty-five people. They were headed by Charles Smith and William Brown, who were described as intelligent, law abiding, well disposed men. The two parties happened to meet by accident on the Wyoming side of the Hills, and they decided to return home to Pine Ridge together. While encamped on Dry Creek in Converse County, Wyoming, they were approached by Sheriff Miller of Weston County with a posse of seven men and a warrant for the group’s arrest for supposedly violating state game laws in Wyoming. The leaders, Smith and Brown, refused to be taken under arrest, denying that anyone in either of their parties had violated Wyoming law. The sheriff and his party remained to have dinner, which was served by Brown’s spouse. After the meal, the parties broke camp to return home and the sheriff attempted again to have the group follow him. The sheriff’s posse and
the Lakota party went their separate ways, and after traveling twenty five miles, the Lakotas camped. On October 31, their train of fifteen wagons traveled until noon, stopped for a meal, and then moved on along Lightning Creek where they came to a fence. A young boy who was guiding some ponies rode ahead, and a young girl opened the gate. After the boy and three wagons had passed beyond the gate, they discovered the Sheriff ahead of them with a posse of thirteen well-armed men (Jones 1904:126). The stories diverge, as to what happened next, but a fight ensued in which four Lakotas were killed and two wounded along with the sheriff and a deputy. A few days after the incident, nine of the Lakota were arrested and stood trial on November 13 but were acquitted. The federal investigation following the incident determined that the Indians were lawfully absent from the reservation and were justified in resisting arrest and defending themselves.

Other than this much publicized incident, which became the focus of congressional hearings (U.S. Senate 1904) and was recorded in two Lakota winter counts for the year 1903 (Kindle in Beckwith 1930:366; No Ears in Walker 1982:155), we know very little about tribal hunting in the Hills from published sources during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Badger Clark (1983:68-69), however, implies that Lakotas commonly came to the southern Hills to hunt game and stray cattle during this time. Recollections of early settlers in Custer and Fall River counties confirm this as well, and they report other kinds of food procural activity and the processing of lodgepoles in the area too (Smith, A. 1973:35; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:72; Sundstrom, J. 1977:293, 379). Clearly, the Black Hills and particularly the region near Wind Cave National Park were important hunting locations in pre-reservation times and singled out in scores of stories and references (see Chapter Nine). How much hunting actually took place here after 1877 will probably never be known. The passage of state game laws, declining game populations, increased European American settlement, and the creation of game reserves in areas closest to the Pine Ridge Reservation no doubt combined to substantially reduce tribal hunting. There is no specific evidence in the sources studied for this report on the Lakota’s hunting, legal or illegal, in this part of the Hills after Wind Cave National Park was established in 1903.

After 1877, but especially after 1903, when the National Park Service took over lands near Wind Cave, this area ceased to function as one of the Lakota’s favorite winter camping and hunting grounds. From the 1930s to the 1950s, however, Wind Cave would regain its reputation as an important source of game when the National Park Service began a program to distribute surplus game to local tribes. In 1934 and 1935, the park donated live bison to the Oglala Sioux Tribe to start their own herd (Isenberg 2000:190-191). Two years later, House Resolution 8773 was passed on December 20, 1937, authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to sell or otherwise dispose of surplus bison and elk from Wind Cave National Park to tribes in the region. In 1938, the annual report of the park superintendent reveals that 2 cows and 2 bulls were given to Pine Ridge (WCNP Annual Reports for January and May, 1938:3). Over the next two years, these reports document in some detail the numbers of bison and other game distributed to local tribes. In the fiscal year ending in 1939, eighty-nine bison were given to the Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Cheyenne River, Standing Rock, Crow Creek, and Wind River reservations (WCNP Annual Report 1939:2-3). The next year, 40 bison and five elk were given out to the same reservations and Fort Berthold (WCNP Annual Report 1940:2). In the following years, detailed breakdowns are not given. The 1941 report indicates that 21 elk were given to reservations (WCNP Annual Report, 1941:1), and for the fiscal year 1942, 30 elk were distributed at Pine Ridge and 1 buffalo was given to Standing Rock (WCNP Annual Report 1942:2). In 1943, Standing Rock again received 1 buffalo and 37 elk were given to various reservations (WCNP Annual Report 1943:2). 1946 lists 3 buffalo killed for Indian agencies, while 1948 indicates that all of the animals eliminated in the park were given to local Indian schools for food (WCNP Annual Report 1946:4). In 1953, it was reported that twenty percent of the game was being held in cold storage to distribute to Indian reservations for ceremonial, religious, and food purposes (WCNP Annual Report 1953:
9). And in 1955, the report (WCNP Annual Report 1955:7) states that Indian reservations re-
ceived 184 quarters of buffalo meat, 24 of elk, and 124 of deer and antelope. After this date, these
distributions are no longer reported. Whether this practice continued or not cannot be determined
from written park records. Ruthann Knudson (quoted from White, D. 2002:23-24), however,
claimed in 1997 that these distributions remained a standard policy of the parks in the Great
Plains; she also noted that Badlands and Wind Cave traditionally provided bison to the inter-
tribal council and directly to tribes annually or semiannually depending on the culling practices.
One thing is clear: this would have been an important and much valued gift for local tribes until
they began to play a more active role in raising their own bison herds. Custer State Park also gave
bison meat to local Indian families as reported by Olivia Pourier (in Niehardt and Utrecht 2000:
146).

While the importance of the Black Hills for hunting declined over the twentieth century, it
remained an important area for traditional plant procurement. In fact, there are a number of
sources which reveal that the Hills continued to be a preferred and frequently used spot for collect-
ing plants.19 As described in greater detail in chapters seven and Eleven, the Black Hills re-
main ed an important location for Lakotas and Cheyennes to find any of a variety of different
plants, especially those used in their medicinal practices and religious observances. Although
there are no direct published data on Lakota collecting plants on park properties, it is highly likely
that they did so in the early twentieth century when they camped here on their way to other
locations in the Hills.

In the early half of the twentieth century, Lakotas were not only entering the Black Hills to
perform at local celebrations and tourist attractions, or to carry on traditional procurement activi-
ties, but they were also employed in other kinds of work. Early on, Lakotas were hired out as
wage-laborers to work on ranches and farms owned by local whites. Raymond Brown Thunder
(1971) worked on a horse ranch in his younger years in the Black Hills. The CCC camps of the
Depression years were also a source of work for the Lakotas, and many worked on WPA projects
in the Black Hills (Lewis, L. 1980:135-136). In the 1930s, the Sylvan Lake Resort hired young
Lakota women to work as waitresses and domestics (Sundstrom, J. 1994:102), and in the same
period, Lakotas were hired as practical nurses and in other occupations at hospitals in Hot
Springs. There was also an Indian School in Hot Springs that maintained a staff of Indian
employees (Petty 1973:24-25).

Although the economy of the Hills has struggled to survive in the twentieth century, it has
always been wealthy compared to the reservations that surround it. Over the past century, reser-
vations in western South Dakota have ranked among the most economically depressed areas in
the United States (DeMallie 1978; Biolsi 1992; Pickering 2000; Christafferson 2001). The lack
of work opportunities on their home reservations forced many Lakotas to move to locations in the
Hills to find work during the twentieth century. Much of this movement took them to Rapid City,
where after World War II, the local Lakota population increased dramatically (White 1970). But
even other towns in the Black Hills, including Spearfish, Custer, and Hot Springs, became work-
figures reveal that more than 5000 people of American Indian ancestry live in the Black Hills. In

19 Although Martha Geores (1990:68-70) claims the Lakotas were prohibited from using lands in the Black Hills
National Forest, she does not identify any laws or policies that formally excluded them. Clearly, as she points out,
there was considerable sentiment in local newspapers to keep the Lakotas out of the Hills as residents and permanent
users. Yet, she does not address how the celebrations local white communities sponsored actively encouraged a Lakota
presence in the Hills during the summer months, and how they no doubt created some opportunities for procurement
activity on forest service lands.
Fall River county, they make up 6.1% of the resident population, in Custer 3.1%, and in Pennington 8.1% (U.S. Census 2000, Population Profiles).

Whether Lakotas lived in the Hills or on nearby reservations, it is clear that they maintained a continuing presence in the region during the twentieth century. In 1949, writing in reference to Lakota participation in the Days of 76 and other local celebrations, Robert Casey (1949:292) stated:

What comes out of all this backsighting is the realization that the Sioux are still a part not only of the scene but of the life of the West River country. When you see them meandering aimlessly through the streets of any of the Hill towns, they are more likely to be wearing faded blue jeans than bright blankets and ceremonial skins but you won’t mistake them for Scandinavian corn planters and you’ll know instinctively that you are somewhere on the far side of the Missouri.

Even today, Lakota people are ever-present in the Hills. They are permanent residents of the Hills towns and cities, working in a wide range of professions (Lamer 2002:21-23). They are also consumers, shopping, securing medical treatment, seeking entertainment, and pursuing a host of other services in towns on the eastern side of the Hills. Today, the Hills remain a fundamental part of their life and experience. Most of the Lakotas who live in or visit the southeastern Hills still come from the Pine Ridge Reservation. Many of the communities on Pine Ridge are less than a few hours away by automobile. Travel from other Lakota reservations is considerably longer, and this bears some consideration when looking at the modern use of the Hills, which, with the exception of Bear Butte and Bear Lodge Butte, has been reported and documented mostly for Lakotas from the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations. Certainly the area around Wind Cave National Park is most easily accessed by these Lakotas.

c. In Politics

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos began to seek legal avenues to reclaim their interests in the Black Hills. As described in much greater depth in Chapter Eight, these tribes started organizing their efforts as early as 1891 (Lazarus 1991:119-120). Twenty years later, in 1911, the three tribal nations sought legal ways to pursue their claims through the federal court system, and in the 1920s, they went to Congress to get jurisdictional acts passed to have their cases heard in federal courts (Fowler 1982:134; Lazarus 1991:138). Only the Lakotas, however, were able to get very far in this effort (Fowler 1982:165, 173). Through a complicated history of congressional acts and court decisions, which stretched over sixty years, from 1920 to 1980, the Lakota’s case, United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians, No. 79-639, sought monetary compensation for the illegal seizure of the Black Hills and reached its final hearing at the Supreme Court in 1979. The nation’s highest court ruled in 1980 that the Black Hills had indeed been seized illegally by the United States as a Fifth Amendment taking and that the Sioux were entitled to over one-hundred million dollars in settlement for this unconscionable theft (Lazarus 1991:378-379; see also Chapter Eight for more details).

While the Black Hills case was winding its way through the courts, the grounds on which the Lakotas chose to reclaim their interests in the Hills radically changed. After years of frustrating delays and with settlement terms many Lakotas were unwilling to accept, some of the tribe’s
elders and traditionalists aligned themselves with younger tribal members who were part of the American Indian Movement, and together, they launched a series of protests and land takeovers in the Black Hills and on the neighboring Pine Ridge Reservation (New Holy 1998:336-33). Supported by the belief that the Sioux Nation still owned the Black Hills under the provisions of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 and that they never actually extinguished their interests under the 1877 Act,21 some Lakotas began to hold demonstrations in the Black Hills to draw public attention to their case. Lee Wilcox led a protest at Mount Rushmore in 1970 that focused on Lakota land claims (Lamer 2002:278-279). Later, Lehman Brightman of United Native Americans as well as Russell Means, his brother, William, and other members of the American Indian Movement arrived to support Wilcox’s protest, which turned into an occupation that lasted four months (Means and Wolf 1995:167; New Holy 1998:336; Lamer 2002:280-289). Three years later, the American Indian Movement staged its highly publicized and now nationally televised takeover at Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation, using this as another forum to push their agenda on treaty rights forward (Matthiessen 1980; Means and Wolf 1995:257-93; Smith and Warrior 1996:198-199; New Holy 1998:337-338). According to Alexandra New Holy (1998:338), the occupation at Wounded Knee climaxed a reawakened treaty-and-land centered Lakota identity, one inspired by tribal elders who were descendants of and raised by leaders who had signed the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and who were familiar with the stories of how Paha Sapa had been taken illegally from the Lakotas. It marked a significant turning point in Lakota history, one which established the conceptual grounds for the Lakotas’ efforts to reclaim lands in the Black Hills instead of accepting a monetary settlement for their illegal seizure by the United States government (Lazarus 1991:325).

Frustrated by the continuing failure of the U.S. government to respect their treaty rights and refusing to take a monetary settlement for the Hills, the Lakotas began to launch another series of occupations in 1981, one year after the Supreme Court issued its ruling on Sioux claims. By this time, many Lakotas had become adamantly opposed to any monetary settlement. Proclaiming that the Black Hills are not for sale, a group of Lakotas (along with supporters from other tribes) who were associated with the American Indian Movement, left Porcupine, South Dakota on April 4, 1981 and established a settlement called Camp Yellow Thunder on National Forest Service Land in Victoria Creek Canyon west of Rapid City. This camp was viewed as a first step in reasserting Lakota rights to the Black Hills, and the legal basis for its occupancy rested on provisions guaranteed to the Lakota in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, and an 1897 federal law granting access to U.S. Forest Service lands by educational and religious groups. With the support of many local non-Indian groups, including the Black Hills Alliance and the American Friends Service Committee, tipis and other equipment were set up at the site for an extended occupation. The camp was named after Raymond Yellow Thunder, who had been brutalized and murdered in 1972 at Gordon, Nebraska (Egner 1982: C2; Matthiessen 1980:526-527, 608; Means, W. in Parlow 1983a:31-34; Cassells, Miller, and Miller 1984:114-115; Geores 1990:127; Means and Wolf 1995:410-418).

Two weeks after the camp was established, the Lakotas applied to the U.S. National Forest Service for a special use permit, which was denied as had all other previous and similar requests, according to documents released in subsequent court hearings (New Holy 1998:341). In August of 1981, the camp pursued an administrative appeal, and a month later, the United States filed an action to evict the campers (New Holy 1998:341). In the face of the U.S. Forest Service’s rejec-

21 Under the terms of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, Article 16, no additional lands were to be relinquished by the Sioux unless three-quarters of the male population agreed to a cession. Since the 1877 Agreement did not contain the required number of signatures for the sale of the Black Hills, it was an illegal act.
tion of their application for continued use, and its subsequent orders to disband the camp, the Lakotas refused to move, held onto the site, and filed suit against the government on the grounds that the campers had been illegally denied their legitimate right to a special use permit to 800 acres of forest service land (Matthiessen 1980:530-531; Cassells, Miller and Miller 1984:115-116; Wolf and Means 1995:15-17; New Holy 1998:341). The actions were consolidated, and in 1985, the first court opinion on the case in *United States v. Means* 627 F. Supp. 247 in the United States District Court for South Dakota, was given. The court held that the grounds on which the campers had been denied a permit were arbitrary and that forest service regulations violated the First Amendment and burdened the free exercise of Lakota religion. It further ruled that the plaintiffs were entitled to a special use permit for a religious camp (New Holy 1998:341). The case lasted another four years on appeal, and in the intervening years, the camp served as a site for traditional religious observances and also as a location for a spiritual youth camp where efforts were made to educate younger Lakotas in the traditional ways of their people (Egner 1982: C2; Means and Wolf 1995:417). In 1988, the Eight Circuit Court, in *The United States vs. Means* 858 F.2d 404, overturned the ruling of the district judge in Sioux City that had given AIM permission to establish a permanent religious camp at the site, and a year later, when the Supreme Court refused to hear the ruling of this court, the occupation was over (Kimball 1989:B2; Worster 1992:109; New Holy 1998:342).

During the years of its existence, there had been a great deal of public support and also opposition to the Yellow Thunder Camp. Dr. Larry Zimmerman of the University of South Dakota, for example, worked with some Lakotas to get the site nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, a controversial move among state archaeologists who argued in 1983 that a Multiple Resource Nomination should be pursued instead. There was also support for a petition to allow the establishment of permanent structures at the site under a Special Use Application that was signed by thirty eight members of Congress (Cassells, Miller and Miller 1984:115-116). The long occupation helped to focus national attention on Lakota claims to the Black Hills and to mobilize a widespread and rare consensus among the Lakota people and their tribal governments that stressed the return of public lands in the Black Hills rather than monetary compensation. However, legal impasses and internal disputes among the Lakotas over tactics for holding the Yellow Thunder Camp ultimately led to a lack of resolve on pushing the occupation any further and the use of this political strategy was largely abandoned (Worster 1992:109; New Holy 1998:343).

Two other occupations also took place in the Black Hills in 1981. One was led by the Tokala, or Kit Fox Warrior Society, and made up of people largely from the White Clay community on the Pine Ridge Reservation. This group occupied a site on Flynn Creek near Custer, South Dakota in early November of 1981, but the takeover was short-lived when the occupiers were arrested and jailed by a combined force of Custer County sheriffs and the state police (Matthiessen 1980:608). The other took place at Wind Cave National Park. This one was launched by the Tokala Society, Lakota Treaty Council, and members of the Oglala Sioux tribal council, who passed a resolution in support of an occupation that became known as the “Crazy Horse” encampment (Parlow 1983b: xv; Loud Hawk in Parlow 1983a:45 ). It was led by tribal chairman Stanley Looking Elk (in Parlow 1983a: 20) who, two years later, recounted how he and other members of the tribe applied for a ten day camping permit from the park. The occupation, began on the 25th of June, the 105th anniversary date of the Battle of Little Big Horn. More than two-thousand people showed up at this encampment, some of whom were tribal elders, including Nellie Red Owl who was in her eighties (Looking Elk in Parlow 1983a:20). Although originating with the Oglalas, it eventually drew other tribal supporters including Arapahos and Cheyennes (Parlow 1983b: xv). One of the leaders. Robert Fast Horse, a young Lakota lawyer, was very explicit about the reasons for the occupation, and as quoted in Edward Lazarus book (1991:412),
he proclaimed the takeover was a symbol of protest that the Black Hills are not for sale. The camp was set up in an isolated area on the northern edge of the park. As the occupation extended beyond the ten days allowed by the permit, representatives from Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs attempted to negotiate terms for removing the protesters. According to some of the Lakotas who participated in the takeover, various federal officials promised them that they would negotiate for the return of the Black Hills but this never happened. Instead, the promises were used as a ploy to disband the camp (Parlow 1983b:xv; Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a:20; Loud Hawk in Parlow 1983a:45). In the meantime, a power struggle developed within the encampment between the tribal representatives and some of the younger protestors over the proposed negotiations with the federal government. Eventually, many of the younger protestors abandoned the camp and moved on to occupy a site at Sheridan Lake (Looking Elk in Parlow 1983a:20). According to Stanley Looking Horse (Ibid.), the Crazy Horse encampment was eventually abandoned because of warrants issued by the state of South Dakota against the protestors who had taken over lands at Sheridan Lake. After sixty days, the takeover at Wind Cave National Park eventually ended without any legal intervention, but the occupation was an unmitigated disaster from a public relations standpoint. The debris left behind after the camp was deserted led the news media to mock the Lakota’s spiritual regard for the Black Hills (Matthiessen 1980:532, 543-546; Powers, M. 1986:206; Lazarus 1991:412; Young 2001). This occupation did not have widespread support among the Lakotas or its news media. Tom Giago (1984:295-296; 1999:236), the well known editorialist and owner of two American Indian newspapers, strongly opposed it and chastised the leaders of the Oglala Sioux Tribe for embarrassing the nation by its ill-advised, poorly organized, and self-defeating tactics.

Besides the occupations, the Lakotas launched other strategies to regain their proprietary interests in the Black Hills (Greider 1987:37-40, 60, 62, 64). In the 1980s, they attempted to secure title to public lands in the Black Hills through congressional legislation, but their effort, described in more depth in Chapter Eight, did not succeed. More recently, Lakotas and Cheyennes have started to take new steps to pursue their interests in the Black Hills. Notable among these have been their efforts to play a more active role in the public deliberations that surround the use of federally managed lands in the area. Along with other user groups, the Lakotas are demanding a place at the table when public policies and environmental impacts are considered that affect the Hills. In 1995, they opposed the Costner brothers plan to exchange their own real estate for forest service land, and they demanded to be involved in the consultative process (Melmer 1995b:A1, A3, 1995c A1, A3; New Holy 1998:348). In 1996, several groups representing Lakota tribal constituencies in alliance with the Sierra Club and Audubon Society filed for an intervener status in the revised management plan of the Black Hills National Forest. One group, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, asserted in a tribal council resolution that the forest service plan did not adequately weigh the balance of industrial timber users against wildlife, grazing, and tribal cultural interests (Porterfield 1997:A1; New Holy 1998:348-349). In addition, tribes have taken efforts to gain ownership of private lands in the Hills through gifts and purchases or as settlements in civil cases. The Northern Cheyenne and Southern Cheyenne-Arapaho tribes bought small sections of private land at the base of Bear Butte (Parlow 1983b: xiv-xv), while the Lakotas of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe sued the Homestake Mining Company for damages to the waters that flowed on their reservation and sought compensation in the form of land in the Black Hills (Porterfield 1997b: A1,A2; New Holy 1998:349-350).

Since the 1970s, the federal government has enacted several pieces of legislation (see Chapter Eight for more detail) to protect tribal cultural properties and religious freedoms especially on federally-owned lands. In the 1980s, the Lakotas and Cheyennes went to court to seek protection for sacred sites in the Black Hills under the provisions of one of the new statutes, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, but this effort did not achieve favorable results either. As
discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight, the federal courts have tended to diminish the intent and power of congressional laws governing traditional cultural properties and religious freedoms. In recent years, this has led to renewed lobbying efforts on the part of tribes to strengthen some of the laws protecting their cultural and religious interests. No matter how the courts have ruled in cases affecting traditional cultural properties and practices, federal agencies have been ordered to evaluate the impact of the new laws on their own policies and the lands under their jurisdiction. Increasingly, the managers of the nation’s public lands have had to consider how various tribal rights might be respected without jeopardizing other regulations and the interests of other user groups (Forbes-Boyte 1999). What this means, as Martha Geores (1990:112) argues, is that tribal interests can no longer be ignored by the agencies responsible for managing public lands, including those located in the Black Hills. Given current federal laws, the question of whether tribes have access to sacred sites on public lands is no longer a source of debate and contention. The central concerns now revolve around what kinds of protections are afforded these sites and what sorts of concessions are given to tribes to permit them to conduct their religious observances at these sites in culturally appropriate ways.

Much of the responsibility for making decisions on these matters appears to hinge, at least in part, on the local administrators who manage public lands. Devil’s Tower National Monument is a case in point. In 1995, local tribal representatives were parties to a consultative process with environmentalists and rock climbers regarding management plans for the use of this site. A decision was reached to place a mandatory restriction on this site in the month of June in order for tribal people to conduct their religious observances without interference from tourists and recreationists (Melmer 1996:A1, A3; 1996b:A1, A2; Dorst 2000:315-318; Larmer 2002:321-330). Some rock climbers challenged the park service’s decision on the grounds that it denied other legitimate uses of public property, and the courts declared the ban unconstitutional. In 1998, a voluntary restriction on climbing was instituted and upheld by the federal courts. Subsequently, most climbers and other visitors to the monument have respected the voluntary ban (New Holy 1998). Similar efforts to resolve conflicts between tribal and other users of public lands have surrounded Bear Butte (Forbes-Boyte 1996, 1999; Young 1996:A1, A2; Larmer 2002:331-333).

Wind Cave National Park is another example. Several times, between 1978 and 1982, the Lakotas performed a ceremony, identified as the Indian Oyate to the Paha Sapa, at Wind Cave National Park, and according to one of the park’s former cultural interpreters (Terry 1999, Personal Communication), requests were made and granted for holding Sun Dances and other religious observances on park properties. This is also confirmed by Lakota cultural preservation officers, who also note that most of the larger group observances have declined during the past decade. Still, they point out that smaller and more solitary observances continue to take place at locations in the park (Albers and Kittleson 2002). In the case of Wind Cave, the sites that have been chosen for these activities do not appear to have conflicted with or compromised the interests of other user groups in the way that they have at Devil’s Tower National Monument and Bear Butte State Park. Held in some of the more remote regions of the park, away from the cave entrance and the roads that carry the heaviest tourist traffic, these activities have not become a source of conflict between competing user groups, and as a result, little formal intervention, management, and negotiation appear to have been required on the part of park staff and administrators. Nonetheless, other issues relating to park regulatory policies require further discussion, and most of these are addressed in other sections of this report. What can be said here is that the use of sacred sites in the Black Hills, specifically at Wind Cave, Bear Butte, and Bear Lodge Butte, became increasingly common after 1970 (New Holy 1998:350; Larmer 2002:319-331).
Over the past four decades, the Lakotas and other tribal nations have attempted in various ways to secure their interests as rightful owners and/or users of public lands in the Black Hills. They have used legal and political means to achieve their ends. Whether or not these have succeeded, tribal peoples are commanding the use of the Hills public spaces on their own terms and for their own purposes. In recent years, various Lakota groups have started to organize new protest rallies in the Black Hills: one took place in 1994 at Bear Butte over the exploitation of the site by New Agers, another was held in 1997 at Mount Rushmore to call attention to Lakota treaty rights (New Holy 1998:349), and most recently, the Stronghold area of the Badlands became the site of an occupation in a controversy between the National Park Service and members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe (Lurie, J. 2002:12-14). Before 1970, much of the tribal access to the Hills was initiated by European American entrepreneurs, community boosters, and government administrators and defined by their interests. Now, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos are pushing their own agendas forward and doing so with full knowledge of the rights and protections afforded them under various federal laws.

III. WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK AND ITS MODERN MILEAU

In the years after 1877, the date when the federal government took possession of the Black Hills, the region where Wind Cave National Park is situated remained a backwater, largely isolated from developments unfolding elsewhere in the Hills. The private mail, stage, and freight traffic, which once followed trails crossing park lands along Beaver Creek and its tributaries and near the water supply area in the vicinity of Shirttail Canyon, were much reduced after the gold fields became exhausted around Custer and after transportation to the more populous and developed areas of the Hills was rerouted along the outer edge of the Hogback. Sections of the park, however, remained convenient routes for local travel between Custer and the southeastern Hills. Until the mid-1880s, some wagon drivers continued to haul freight along the old Sidney-Custer trail, and loggers still used neighboring Coldbrook Canyon to move lumber along trails on the southern edge of the park.

Other than an area to cross en route to other locations, much of the park appears to have been used by early European American settlers as it had been when the Lakotas and Cheyennes inhabited the area, as a location to hunt game. It was part of a range where the area’s dwindling herds of elk, mule deer, and pronghorn commonly browsed and where, in earlier times, bison grazed before they were extirpated from the region and replaced by cattle. The region’s rich native grasses made it a popular grazing ground for the livestock and horses owned by the European Americans who established homesteads within and around present day park boundaries. Once park lands came under a restricted user status, where most extractive activities were prohibited, including grazing, the park’s 180 square miles were returned to their original use as a shelter and feeding area for wildlife. Hunters still culled the herds, but these were government employees (often professionals trained in biology), not local tribespeople or non-Indian ranchers and recreationists pursuing the animals for subsistence or sport.

The park was also an area where mineral claims were staked but never really developed. Prospectors certainly searched the area for gold and other valuable minerals, but it was a group of hunters in pursuit of deer that came across the cave in 1881 and made its whereabouts known to other European Americans. When investors of the South Dakota mining company took out a claim on the cave a decade later, they hired Jesse McDonald to manage the property and encouraged him to homestead the surface lands around the cave. His two sons, Alvin and Elmer, and their friends, Robert and Lawrence McAdam, whose family homesteaded land a few miles west of the cave, began to explore and map its subterranean passageways. Two years later, John

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Stabler entered into a business partnership with Jesse McDonald to develop the cave as a tourist attraction for the scores of tourists who were starting to flock to the spas in the neighboring town of Hot Springs. In time, the partnership between McDonald and Stabler became a source of litigation that led the U.S. Land office to retake and reclassify the lands in 1901. Two years later the area was turned into a national park.

From the late nineteenth century to the present, Wind Cave and the town of Hot Springs have been umbilically connected to each other. Until the early twentieth century, the success of Wind Cave as a tourist attraction was largely dependent on the growth of the leisure industry in Hot Springs. Without its presence, it is unlikely that the cave would have been developed in any serious way during the early twentieth century, as was the case with Jewel Cave. By the second decade of the twentieth century, however, the tables had turned. Now, Hot Springs, whose spa industry was floundering, became dependent on the cave’s successful development for maintaining its place in the Black Hill’s growing leisure, travel, and recreational industry. Over time, and for a wide variety of reasons described earlier, Wind Cave National Park became the major attraction beyond the town of Custer to draw tourists to the far reaches of the southern Hills. Even though the area remains off the beaten path of the most heavily traveled areas, the Hill’s popular travel guides continue to route tourists along itineraries that lead them to Wind Cave.

Although the park’s development was closely tied to the region’s tourism, much of the area in and around park boundaries was ranching country. Local ranches were originally squatted on and then homesteaded from the 1890s through the early decades of the twentieth century. On its northern borders, the original homestead lands were eventually returned to public ownership and transferred to the park in the 1930s, creating a contiguous and unoccupied boundary with Custer State Park. To the west of its border, some of the land remains in private ownership, but most of it is publicly owned and part of the Black Hills National Forest. One tract of land and its water rights, located outside the main boundaries of the park, was purchased from the McAdam family to provide the park with a continuous source of water. Ranching, logging, and mining historically took place on some of the private, state, and federal forest service land not far from the northern and western sides of the park, but in later years, most of this activity took place at some distance from the park, near the town of Custer and in areas much farther north. Ranching has remained the primary activity on the park’s southern and eastern borders where most of the land has stayed in private hands. Over time, however, the boundaries of the park were gradually pushed farther east when public lands were reclassified or private acreage was purchased by the federal government for the park.

In direct contrast to neighboring lands under the management of the U.S. Forest Service and South Dakota’s Game, Fish, and Parks Commission, which have been obligated by law and policy to attend to the interests of multiple users and contend with the conflicts wrought by their competing interests, the park service has been largely insulated from this kind of contestation because of the reserved status of the lands under its management. But it has never been isolated and unaffected by the social and economic interests of the communities that surround it. Throughout much of the early half of the twentieth century, the park was embedded in a social environment where most of the residents in the area lived directly or indirectly off the land. Ranchers and farmers were the ones whose interests were most directly affected by park land/water management policies and actions, especially when these entailed the transfer of private and other public lands into the park’s more restricted user status. Until the 1920s, most publicly held land in the Black Hills was managed by people who were long-term, local residents, and this was true for Wind Cave National Park when the Pilcher and Boland families were employed in important administrative positions. Equally, the park was impacted by its neighbors’ land uses, including their legal access to grazing lands until the 1920s, the persisting problem with game poaching, and the
illegal taking of timber on park property. Most of these uses, both lawful and unlawful, did not
detract, relatively speaking, from the overall health of the park's environment. Nevertheless,
once grazing was prohibited, concerted efforts took place to rehabilitate and return the park's grasslands to a natural state. Fortunately, during most of its history, the park was located in an area largely removed from some of the most damaging ecological impacts of practices routinely followed by the mining and logging industries in other areas of the Hills.

With the exception of fishing, wild fruit collection, and limited livestock grazing, most forms of extraction have been prohibited on park lands. Since 1903, when Wind Cave National Park was first established, spectatorship has remained the primary legitimate use of park properties with the cave serving as its central attraction, closely followed by the bison and other wildlife. Like other units in the National Park System, a major and continuing function of Wind Cave National Park is to serve the national travel industry and its respective regional and local economies. Outside of protecting the spaces they manage from harmful development and preserving the local landscape and wildlife, the original purposes for the park's creation, park staff and administrators are there to serve the interests of their visitors, both local residents and tourists who arrive from distant locales. Over the years, Wind Cave National Park has played a substantial role in capturing a sizable portion of the tourism in the Black Hills and bringing its revenue to the neighboring town of Hot Springs. Indeed, it can be said without exaggeration that after the collapse of the spa industry, Wind Cave remained the central, if not the only, attraction drawing tourists to the far southeastern reaches of the Hills. It can also be said that, after 1950, when the role of agriculture and other extractive industries started to decline in the Black Hills, the relative importance and contribution of tourist attractions like Wind Cave to the local economy increased. Today, the leisure, travel, and recreational industry is the backbone of the Black Hills economy, and in the southeastern Hills, Wind Cave National Park occupies a position that is not inconceivable to the economic health and vitality of its neighbor, Hot Springs.

Wind Cave National Park has not only been part of the ongoing relationships that sustain the well-being of Black Hills tourism and the European American interests that these support, but it has also occupied a place in the lives of local tribal people. It is difficult to know exactly what kinds of onsite activities the Lakotas carried out in the immediate area of the park before it was established and in the decades immediately following its creation. There are few records of a tribal presence here between 1877 and 1930, although there are several reports of Lakotas camping, hunting, and gathering plants in the Black Hills and also staying at nearby Hot Springs, where they continued to return every summer to bathe in its thermal waters. Most of the reports on Lakota food procural activity in and around the Black Hills are recorded for the years before 1920. Since Wind Cave National Park sits on lands that were once a popular winter hunting ground for the Lakotas and Cheyennes, and one that remained close to the western boundaries of the Pine Ridge Reservation, it would not be surprising to learn that some amount of subsistence game hunting and plant gathering continued to take place here until the early part of the twentieth century. After 1911, when the state of South Dakota started to impose game laws, Lakotas would have been subject to arrest for hunting without a license outside the borders of their reservations.

In the same period, the federal government was placing restrictions on timber cutting on its lands in the interior regions of the Hills. Before 1910, there are numerous reports of Lakotas processing their lodgepoles at various locations in the Hills interiors, especially along the upper reaches of Spring Creek. There are records of them picking berries, digging turnips, and collecting a host of other plants at various locations in and around the Hills. In addition, there is also evidence of Lakotas camping on and traveling across Wind Cave National Park on the way to the places they procured their lodgepoles. It is highly likely that they used these travels as opportunities to procure other plants used as food or medicine and in manufacture or ceremony, and
some of this procural probably took place on park properties. As the twentieth century progressed, some of this activity was reduced because permits were now required to take timber on U.S. Forest Service lands. As the government began to privilege the big timber companies in its leasing policies, the access of local domestic users to the forest was restricted. This not only impacted the Lakotas, but it also affected local ranchers who depended on an unfettered access to the forest to acquire timber for their fuel and other domestic uses.

After 1920, Lakotas were still coming to the Black Hills in the summer months, but now they were largely doing so to participate in the rodeos and celebration festivities of local white communities, and/or to perform at privately run tourist attractions. Once again, there are references to Lakotas traveling to these events along routes that crossed Wind Cave National Park and camping along the way. For a brief period of time between 1937 and 1938, the park involved Lakotas in some of its interpretive programming. Because of opposition from the Director of the National Park Service, Amo Cammerer, the participation of the Lakota in future park activities was never pursued or encouraged, even during the 1950s when the region’s tourist boosters actively promoted the presence of Indians in the area’s various tourist attractions.

Since Wind Cave, the Race Track, and probably other sites too were of considerable religious importance to the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, it would also not be surprising to learn that unobtrusive forms of ceremonial observance (for example, fasting and other prayerful observances) were still conducted in the park and that plants and minerals used for medicinal and religious purposes were collected here as well. Between 1903 and 1936, we uncovered only two accounts (Stabler in Bohi 1962:391; Pilcher 1964) about Lakotas coming to the park to visit the cave for ceremonial purposes. It is hard to know what to deduce about the lack of any other evidence confirming their onsite use, except to say that the Lakotas may have stayed away, fearing the consequences of practicing ceremonies that were no longer sanctioned either on or off their reservations. Whatever traditional religious practices the Lakota maintained during these years were typically held in remote reservation locations where they would not draw the attention of outsiders. Nonetheless, many accounts (see Section Four) from the same period reveal that the Lakotas and the Cheyennes continued to hold important traditions about the cultural meaning of Wind Cave and the Race Track, as well as the neighboring Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs.

Whether intentionally or unintentionally, the park largely ignored the cultural interests of its tribal neighbors after the 1930s. The park did embark on a program, however, to supply surplus wild game meat to tribes from 1938 until the mid-1950s, when park reports cease to record these distributions. As elaborated upon in greater detail in Section Four, one of the Lakota’s continuing and fundamental attachments to the park centers around the animals, especially the bison. In the twentieth century, this entailed an interesting, and perhaps ironic, set of exchanges. In the 1930s, Wind Cave National Park supplied the Oglala Sioux Tribe with bison to start their own herd (Isenberg 2000:176). Two decades earlier, bison captured by a Lakota of mixed ancestry, Frederick Dupree, from the Cheyenne River Reservation became part of the famous herd of Scotty Philips and his Oglala wife. This herd provided the original stock for Custer State Park (Schell 1961:247-248; Sundstrom, J. 1994:112), and one source (Casey 1949:17) claims a few of the animals ended up at Wind Cave National Park as well.23

After the 1950s, as reported in Section Four, a rich body of stories about Wind Cave, the Race Track, and other nearby sites in the Black Hills appeared in the published literature based

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22 Other sites within park boundaries have cultural significance too, but these have not been identified in any of the published and unpublished sources consulted for this report.

23 We have been unable to find additional evidence to corroborate this claim.
on tribal oral traditions. While some of these traditions became an integral part of the way in which Europeans advertised and interpreted the Black Hills landscape for tourists, especially from the 1930s to the 1950s, they were hardly present in the park’s own promotional and interpretive materials.

With the revitalization of tribal religious beliefs and practices in the 1970s, Wind Cave and the Race Track were among a number of different sites in the Black Hills that were singled out as holding significant spiritual values. Beginning in 1978, the same year the American Indian Religious Freedom Act gained congressional approval, Lakotas began to approach the National Park Service to gain permission to hold some of their ceremonial observances inside park boundaries. In 1981, the Oglala Lakota Tribe received a two-week permit to use park lands for an encampment which turned into a politically engineered occupation, whose motives and tactics created considerable dissension within the ranks of the Oglala people. In the same year, other takeovers took place in the Hills, and all of them served as a pretext to raise public awareness about Lakota treaty rights. They represented one of many strategies the Lakotas pursued in the 1980s to regain ownership of and/or access to the Hills. In more recent times, the Lakotas have launched other efforts to work with federal and state agencies, which manage much of the land inside the Race Track, to make their cultural interests in the area known and respected. Using the power afforded them by several recent pieces of federal legislation, they are now playing a more active role in the advisory processes that surround decisions governing the protection and use of culturally significant and sacred properties managed by the federal government. These consultations have become part of the standard procedure of the offices of the National Forest Service in the Black Hills, and they are required of the National Park Service as well.

What has been presented in this section, and what appears in the forthcoming ones as well, is aimed at providing a strong evidentiary background for such consultation in the future. More specifically, it will be argued that the involvement of the Lakotas and Cheyennes in park consultative processes is necessary not only because these are the two tribes with the longest continuing relationship to the lands that make up the park, but also because these tribes share important historical attachments to the area and significant cultural affiliations with many of its resources, some of which also hold religious significance to them.
Part 2
Part Two

THE BLACK HILLS
AS A COMMON GROUND
AND A CONTESTED TERRAIN

Last summer all of our tribes attended a council about the Black Hills. We have held a council among ourselves and we now want to tell you what are our conclusions. We were born and raised here. Last summer our Great Father sent us very hard words. These hard words were about the animals in the Black Hills, the game that is there. The hills are full of deer and buffalo, and also plenty of good water. We look toward the Black Hills because there is plenty of money, plenty of gold, and plenty of grass. All kinds of minerals and timber are also abundant there. My Great Father wishes to have our land for his folks, for his people. We are all here and have many children. We all have families and wish to live well with all of them. I shall tell you to-day words that will make your heart glad, and I expect to hear some words from you that will make my heart glad. We give the land to our Great Father. This is the same as I said last summer. We give the Great Father part of the Black Hills from the Racing Ground (meaning the road that runs along the eastern base of the mountain). The country once belonged to us from Sioux City to this place. This country is where we were born and raised, and we told you years ago that we were going to stay here... (Iron Nation in U.S. Senate 1876:77-78).

The fact that gold and other mineral deposits exist here has been verified, but still further, the fertility of the soil and the healthful fragrance of the atmosphere has been found to equal any locality on Uncle Sam's farm. And from all indications we have seen, it does not appear that the Indian need be jealous of this portion of his titled estate, nor will it be robbing him to deprive him of it. We have found no settlements in the Black Hills. All we have seen have been hunting parties for the Missouri agencies, who came up here for a little summer sport. There are a few traces to show that they make their home any portion of the year, or ever did, and the only temptation to draw them are the herds of elk and deer, which a few years of active hunting would exterminate. They cannot mine the gold or iron; the timber does them no good, and they will never make any use of the rich soil that has been waiting centuries to be utilized. But I am meddling with a question it is not my province to discuss. I will state the facts, and let other people formulate the theories. The great fact here is: one of the most valuable landscapes on the continent fenced in from all civilization --one of the richest storehouses ever filled with the gifts of the Almighty locked and barred by human legislation from those for whom it was meant... (William E. Curtis, September 5, 1874, Chicago Inter-Ocean in Krause and Olson 1974:136).
Although these two men came from very different situations and held divergent interests in the Black Hills, Iron Nation and William E. Curtis were equally aware of the Hills immense value. They understood what the area’s rich gold, grass, game, and timber reserves meant to each of the peoples they represented, and they obviously held very different views about who deserved to benefit from this wealth. Iron Nation, reflecting the sentiments of the Sioux people, spoke of the Hills as a homeland, a place that nourished his people and that offered hope for their future well-being. Although he was willing to give up some portions of the Hills in exchange for having the needs of his people met, he did not want to part with the lands that extended from the Race Track to the outer edges of the Hills. This was the area where most of the game was located and where some of his fellow tribespeople lived and camped over the winter. It was the area of the Hills most critical to their survival. Curtis, like so many other writers of his time, dismissed the significance of the area to its native inhabitants. Not only did he deny they lived in their reaches or used them in any serious way, other than for summer sport, but he also claimed they did not have the capacity to harness the Hills resources as the Almighty had intended. Curtis argument for dispossessing the Hills from their tribal occupants reveals a lack of understanding of how this region, particularly the area of the Race Track, fit into the annual subsistence cycles of local tribes. Even if he had comprehended the importance of the area for tribal patterns of adaptation, it probably would not have made much difference in altering the determination of European Americans to possess the Hills. European Americans were bound to take the Hills at any cost, and in the process, to sacrifice the lives and futures of the peoples who held it under U.S. treaty law.

Until 1877, when American Indian title to the Hills was illegally extinguished, the Black Hills were not only renowned for the richness of their game, and therefore, considered a prime hunting territory, but they were also seen as an important place for local tribes to fish and to collect plants and minerals. Throughout certain periods of their prehistory, they sustained a diversity of peoples who inhabited their outer reaches and their interiors on a year-round basis. In historic times, however, the Hills high elevation interiors were no longer a place of permanent habitation, but a location where groups came for brief periods of time on a regular and recurring basis to carry on various task-specific activities. In contrast, the peripheries and some of the low elevation interior regions along the Red Valley were occupied either by tribal populations who wintered in these areas or who visited them for specific kinds of procurement activity at other times of the year. The general environs of Wind Cave, the Buffalo Gap, and Hot Springs was one of the areas native populations used as a wintering site, a hunting location, and an area to camp in other seasons as well.

For much of the nineteenth century, the combined forces of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos jointly and cooperatively established their presence in the Hills. This was a common ground, where these tribal nations lived peaceably with each other, shared in the area’s rich resources, and jointly claimed access to its sacred sanctuaries. There were also times when it became a contested terrain, a site of struggle where these nations fought to gain and/or preserve their use of the area’s sacred spaces and material bounty. After the 1860s, the Black Hills became increasingly engulfed in confrontations with the United States and its citizens. Ownership was challenged militarily at first, and then, after 1876, by legal maneuver.

Yet, even before the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos lost their de facto claim to the area, it was a resource procurement area for European Americans. By the early nineteenth century, French trappers and traders were wintering in the Hills and trapping its waterways for fur-bearing animals. When Americans arrived, they also used the area to feed their commerce in furs and hides. The initial presence of European Americans generally melded with local tribal interests. Many of these men married into local tribes and carved out an interdependency between
themselves and the tribes with whom they traded and on whose lands they lived and trapped. Generally, their presence did not stand in competition with local tribal interests. Some of these men probably trapped near Wind Cave along Beaver,1 Highland, and/or Cold Spring creeks. Even though no written records were left of their activity in the region of Wind Cave National Park, we can deduce from circumstantial evidence that they were in the area.

This all changed in the 1870s, when Americans came to the Hills to seek gold. After 1874, as described in Chapters Five and Six, the area following Beaver Creek near Wind Cave became a well-trodden travel route for gold seekers entering the interiors of the Hills through the Buffalo Gap. Within less than a decade, an area that had been largely remote and off the beaten path of European American travel, quickly become a center of American economic activity and resource procurement. Logging, ranching, and tourism soon followed mining. Although neither of the first two activities was heavily pursued in the area of Wind Cave, ranching and tourism eventually became the economic mainstays of this region. As the Wind Cave area and the Black Hills more generally came under American control and domination, tribal interests were rapidly compromised. Nonetheless, many tribal peoples continued to come to the area to conduct religious observances, to gather plants for medicinal uses, and to hunt as well.

After European Americans secured control over the Black Hills, much of the area remained in the public domain. It became part of a large commons, regulated either by the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, or the National Park Service (Geores 1990). As it had been when the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos held sovereignty over the Hills, the public land inside the Hogback was shared and open to multiple user groups. Managed by federal agencies, much of this access took place under an umbrella of consensus, but at various points in time, competition and conflict erupted over its use. The strife typically followed in the footsteps of wider demographic and economic transitions in the Hills and the nation at large.

Throughout the twentieth century, the one group that was generally excluded from making use of the Black Hills’ commons were the original tribal occupants of the area. Despite this, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes have struggled since 1877, in various ways and degrees, to reclaim their political and cultural sovereignty over the Hills. Today, the Black Hills remain a site of contestation where legal wars, political struggles, and cultural battles are being waged over their ownership. The fight over the Hills continues in the courts of the nation, in the halls of Congress, and in the media that capture the attention of the American people. Wind Cave National Park has not been unaffected by this conflict. In 1981, it was the site of a political occupation organized by the leadership of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, and since then, it has remained a focus of Lakota efforts to reassert their cultural and proprietary interests in the Black Hills.

In light of a history where the Black Hills is both a site of cooperation and conflict, this section has two separate but related goals. On the one hand, it considers the different ways its human inhabitants cooperatively established their relationships to the Black Hills from early historic times until the present, and in the process, it shows how diverse patterns of adaptation came to mark their use. On the other hand, it examines the political struggles and legal battles that continue to surround the question of ownership and a cultural legacy for the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park in particular.

1 In earlier times, before 1880, it was called Amphibious Creek (see Newton s 1880 map).
Chapter Seven

THE SOCIAL RELATIONS
OF LAND USE AND ADAPTATION

Throughout much of their history, the use and occupation of the Black Hills was organized around the social and economic practices of the tribal nations who lived in their reaches. Many of the early fur traders and the engages in their employ followed the lifestyles of local tribes, creating an existence that was adapted in one way or another to the customs of the country. It was not until the 1850s, when European American emigrants started coming to the area in large numbers and when U.S. military personnel arrived to safeguard their passage, that qualitatively new sorts of ideas about occupancy and utilization started to press on the region. It was during the treaty-making era, after 1851, that a European American influence was felt most strongly on land use and occupation. Under the terms of the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty, the United States established a friendship agreement that established a protocol for the conduct of tribal nations in their dealings with each other and with the European Americans passing through their territories. It also defined tribal land boundaries and patterns of occupation, but it did so in foreign terms and in ways that completely misrepresented how local tribes actually distributed themselves across geographic space. In the next two decades, additional treaties would be entered into. These were not simply pacts of friendship but legal agreements for the relinquishment of vast tracts of tribal territory. In 1868, more treaties were negotiated between the United States Government and the Lakotas (and some of the Cheyennes and Arapahos in their midst) that reserved a huge tract of land known as the Great Sioux Reservation for their ownership and occupancy. In addition, two other vast territorial tracts became reserved hunting ranges for their shared use. In these treaties, the Black Hills were considered territory exclusively owned and controlled by the Lakotas, although two other tribal nations, the Cheyennes and Arapahos, were given rights to the Hills as well. When the Black Hills Expedition entered the area in 1874, its forces were technically trespassing on tribally owned land and when a burgeoning mining and ranching population began to occupy the Hills shortly after what the Lakotas call Custer’s Trail of Thieves, they were making settlements in and claims to an area that were also illegal under U.S. treaty law.

When the federal government decided to take ownership of the Hills out of tribal hands, it forced an agreement in 1877 with the Lakotas and their allies that led to the seizure of the Hills. Unable to challenge the agreement through legal or political means, local tribes were powerless to stop the rush of Americans making settlements in the Hills. The newcomers to the Black Hills established new ways of utilizing the land and very different patterns of ownership that would remain in place until the present. Meanwhile, the Lakotas (at times with the participation of the Cheyennes and Arapahos) began organizing to press their claim to the Black Hills. In the twentieth century, this led to litigation before the U.S. Court of Claims, the Indian Claims Commission, and the Supreme Court. While the Supreme Court reached a decision to award the Lakotas a monetary settlement for the illegal taking of the Black Hills, this award was never accepted. In the 1980s, representatives of eight federally recognized Lakota and Dakota tribes unanimously pushed for land recovery, and from 1985 to 1993, they attempted to get legislation before Congress that would enable the return of public lands in the Black Hills to tribal ownership. None of the bills, however, ever made it beyond the hearing stage. Today, the ownership of the Black Hills remains in a state of limbo. The Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos believe they still
hold treaty and aboriginal property rights in the area, while state, federal, and private landowners think otherwise and continue to fight Native claims.

Since the Black Hills are a contested terrain and will likely remain so into the near future, it is imperative that this report take some time to consider tribal relationships to this land before 1877 and to contrast these with the patterns of land use evolving after American domination of the region. This serves as a background for discussing in more detail the political and legal challenges the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos launched to regain access to and/or ownership of the Black Hills.

I. AMERICAN INDIAN RELATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

From prehistoric times through the era of European American settlement, there were certain general patterns of adaptation that the tribal peoples of the Black Hills shared in common with their neighbors in the greater region of the plains. A few patterns disappeared, while some displayed remarkable stability over time. Many more, however, were modified after the adoption of horses in the eighteenth century and the involvement of Native peoples in the European American fur and hide trades. After their forced removal to reservations in the 1870s, the tribal nations of the Black Hills had to adapt their means of making a livelihood even more to the presence of European Americans who had taken political and economic control over the region. European American adaptations and land strategies, however, were built around a set of goals, relationships, and ideas very different from those of the region’s Native inhabitants.

In discussing tribal adaptive strategies and land use patterns, this chapter focuses largely on two tribal nations, the Lakotas and the Cheyennes. These are the two populations who had a continuous association with the southeastern region of the Black Hills, where Wind Cave National Park is located, from the late eighteenth century until the United States government took control over it in 1877. The Arapahos and other tribal nations who are known to have lived in this part of the Hills did so before the specific nature of their relationships was preserved either in oral traditions or written records. Although some information is covered on their associations to the southeastern Black Hills, it is not as detailed or as comprehensive as that presented on the Cheyennes and Lakotas.

A. Kin-Based Social Formations

Historically, American Indians from the plains region procured their livelihoods within systems of social relationship governed in large part by kinship or through associations modeled after kinship relations (Eggan 1937:35-98, 1966:45-77; Hassrick 1964:97-110; Maxwell 1978; Moore, J. 1996:145-173; Eggan and Maxwell 2001:977-979). Access to the lands on which local tribal nations settled and produced their subsistence was organized around kinship. Indeed, the language of kinship was pervasive in their lives, even defining the very nature of their relationships to the animals, plants, minerals, mountains, waterways, and other phenomena of the corporeal universe on whose existence their lives depended. It also extended to a spiritual realm whose numinous presence was manifested in all things and in all relationships in their living universe (Standing Bear 1978:193; DeMallie 1987:30-32; Detwiler 1992:239; Forbes-Boye 1996:103; Moore, J. 1996:182). In brief, kinship embraced the structures, actions, behaviors, and sentiments that united people and that brought them into relationship with the world around them. When Lakotas say, Mitakuye Oyasin, All my Relations, they are expressing their basic sense of connectedness to each other and to all that makes up the world around them. As Joseph Eppes Brown (1992:60) wrote: It is the custom of men when they finished smoking the pipe together
to say mitaku oyasin. Here is affirmed the pervading conception of an essential and mysterious bond, binding together the people, the animals, the earth, and all that is.

In the perspectives of the Lakotas and Cheyennes who inhabited the Black Hills and their surrounding environments in the nineteenth century, the land, sky, and waters were alive. They had an animate presence. Every life form was implicated in the existence of another. There was a basic unity to all that exists. In the Lakota worldview, as one example, a people's existence was dependent on recognizing this connectedness and in respecting and caring for their relationships to everything that lived and made their own existence possible (Standing Bear 1978:192-195). In this perspective, the land its landscapes, and life forms, were not inanimate things over which humans exercised their dominion (Hassrick 1964:205, 226; Powers W. 1986:153). Each living form had its own unique and autonomous qualities. Humans existed on equal ground and in a reciprocal relationship to all other living forms that made up the web of life, and they needed to understand the limits and opportunities that these associations presented in the unfolding of their own lives (Mirsky 1937; Goldfrank 1943; Deloria, E. 1944; Lee 1959:59-69; Standing Bear 1978:194; Powers, W. 1986:153; Black Elk, C. 1992:45).

Similarly, the Cheyennes believed that everything was alive and subject to a larger natural order, xamaetoz (Moore, J. 1996:182). From a Cheyenne perspective, when everything is in the place it belongs, the world is calm and at peace, but when things become disordered, there are consequences that are both tragic and comical (Moore, J. 1996:183). As with the Lakotas, the Cheyennes believe it is imperative to understand and respect where each life form is situated in the universe, and more specifically, how humans should behave properly in relation to life's myriad manifestations and the forces that stand behind and animate them (Schlesier 1987:4-12).

Given these philosophical premises, it is easy to understand why the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribal nations of the plains did not see their relationship to the land and its various living resources as a form of exclusive ownership. As Melvin Gilmore (1919:33) wrote, the Lakotas: truly venerated and loved the earth, they considered themselves not as owners or potential owners of any part of the land but as being wooed by the land which gave them birth and which supplied their physical needs from her bounty and satisfied their love of the beautiful by the beauty of her face in the landscape. Their rights to the places they lived and the resources whose lives they depended upon were based on ideas of usufruct. People had a right to partake of a particular space because they had established a proper relationship with the other living forms that occupied it. One of the best discussions of this kind of relationship is found in Karl Schlesier's work (1987:80) on the Cheyennes. Wherever they lived, the Cheyennes invoked a ceremony called the Massaum in which they established and renewed their kinship with a specific land and the animals, plants, and other life forms that lived there. Through this ceremony, the Cheyennes entered into a reciprocal relationship with the life forms on whose existence their own lives depended. It marked the territorial range in which the Cheyennes had secured permission to use the place for their own survival (Ibid.). Other ceremonies of the Cheyennes and their Lakota and Arapaho allies had similar meanings and consequences. In historic times, many of these were conducted in or near the Black Hills. One of them, the Sun Dance, is associated in a very special way with the region where Wind Cave National Park now stands, and this is discussed in more detail in Section Four.

In gaining rights to enter and use a specific area of land each tribal nation not only had to enter into relationships with non-human beings but also with the other peoples who resided there. As discussed very briefly in the last section, the tribal nations of the region formed complex and ever-changing alliances with each other. They did not distribute themselves across geographic space in terms of any sense of exclusive occupancy. Instead, they jointly shared the regions they
lived in, and this sharing was built in large part on ties created through kinship (Albers and Kay 1987).

Through common descent, intermarriage, and adoption, people of different tribes were joined together in complex and ramifying networks of kinship. In 1862, Ferdinand Hayden (1862a:277) wrote about the close connections between the Cheyennes and Lakotas as follows:

The Shyennes are a proud race, large and well-formed, more like the Dakotas than any tribe I am acquainted with on the Missouri. They are at peace with the Dakotas, and have become so intermarried now, that it is hardly probable that they will ever break their friendly relations. So many of them speak the Dakota language, that their own language is not used at the present time in diplomatic affairs.

The creation of a kinship tie established a reciprocal bond between the parties; it created obligations and responsibilities to share and care for each other’s welfare (Mirsky 1937; Goldfrank 1943; Deloria, E. 1944; Lee 1959:59-69). It enabled people to make claims on the living areas, support systems, and legacies of the people with whom they established a tie. As a result, it allowed them to move across the wide tracts of geographic space they shared in common (Walker 1982:16-17; Albers and Kay 1987; Albers 1993:112-122). Such sharing was contingent, of course, on the parties standing together in a spirit of cooperation and peace.¹

Conflict and competition, however, also marked the ways in which the tribal nations of the plains arranged themselves across geographic space. The absence of kinship ties or their erosion could and often did lead to hostilities, divisions, and even war (Albers 1993:122-128). Territorial and social boundaries were erected when large segments of tribes became engulfed in conflict. Gaining or defending territorial access was managed through the use of force. In situations where people of different tribal origins fought together against common enemies, they shared equal claims to the lands they mutually defended or conquered. This sentiment is clearly apparent in the words of tribal leaders, who spoke at the Fort Laramie Treaty Conference in 1851. Black Hawk of the Lakotas said:

Father, if there is anything I do know, it is the country for I was raised in it, with the interpreters and traders. You have split the country, and I don’t like it. What we live upon, we hunt for, and we hunt from the Platte to the Arkansas, and from here up to the Red Bute (sic) and the Sweet Water...These lands once belonged to the Kiowa and the Crows, but we whipped these nations out of them, and in this we did what the white men do when they want the lands of the Indians. We met the Kiowas and the Crows and whipped them, at the Kiowa Creek, just below where we now are. We met them and whipped them again, and the last time at Crow Creek. This last battle was fought by Cheyennes, Arrapahoes and Ogllahlahs combined, and the Ogllahlahs claim their share of the country (quoted from the Fort Laramie Treaty Journal, September 18, 1851 in Indian Claims Commission, Horr 1974:55-56).

What is significant about this quote is the recognition that the land areas being discussed were shared by the three tribal nations who had jointly fought to wrestle them from their former owners, the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Comanches, and Crows. As noted earlier, tribal nations did

¹ In aftermath of U.S. military hostilities at Ash Hollow, Agent John W. Whitfield was called to Fort Laramie to hold council with the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos to bring about a peace. Whitfield’s report of this council meeting reveals that one of the Cheyenne leaders set forth four terms for the possible conclusion of a peace which included a request that one thousand white women be sent to them as wives (Powell 1981:1:183). Although Whitfield did not reveal his reactions to this request, it probably seemed preposterous from an American perspective. Yet, it was perfectly sensible from a tribal point of view where marriages solidified relations between peoples, opening avenues for peace, trade, and the shared use of a territory.
not distribute themselves across this region of the plains as discrete ethnic blocs with clear-cut territorial boundaries. Instead, they formed complex alliances where peoples of different tribal origin held vast tracts of territory in common. The groups who jointly acquired and defended them also held rights to their shared occupancy and use (Albers and Kay 1987:80-82).

It cannot be emphasized enough that contrary to popular opinion, as evidenced in some of Edward Lazarus’s (1991:18) remarks on the subject, tribal occupancy of the Black Hills was not gained solely by aggression. When the Cheyennes first arrived in the region, they entered it peaceably by establishing strategic trade alliances with some of the Hills occupants, notably the Arapahos, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches. Although the Cheyennes fought bitterly with the Crows, as they gradually pushed their settlements towards the Black Hills, they intermarried, collaborated, and coexisted with the other tribal nations who lived in the region. The Lakotas entry into the Black Hills followed a similar path. Although they warred with the Kiowas and Crows, and for a short period of time battled with some of the Cheyennes, the Lakotas overall movement into and settlement of the Black Hills took place over many generations under conditions of intermarriage and peaceful coexistence with their close Arapaho and Cheyenne friends.

The settlement patterns and alliance formations that brought people of the same or different tribal nations together were organized in a number of different ways. The tribal nations whose subsistence was focused on hunting and the procural of wild plant foods were organized into bands, numbering between fifty to two hundred people. The bands were typically comprised of closely related families who lived and traveled together over a common territorial range. Among the Lakotas, this level is often identified by the expression tiospaye, which refers simultaneously to an extended family and to the residential camps families gathered in throughout much of the year (Deloria, E. 1944). In Cheyenne, the expression manhao refers to a bunch, implying a group of closely related people who gather together (Moore, J. 1987:179-180, 266-267).

Among the tribal nations who lived year-round in the vicinity of the Black Hills, bands functioned as semiautonomous entities. They formed the core settlement groups associated with the winter camps people generally occupied from November to April. At certain times, however, these groups broke up into smaller family or task-based groups to conduct any of a variety of specialized activities (Walker 1982:16-17, 28; Hassrick 1964:156-157, 164-165; Moore, J. 1996:68-69). In the spring and early summer, families often dispersed into smaller groupings for brief periods to procure their lodgepoles and to gather plants for food and medicinal purposes. Later in the summer and early fall, however, the different bands gathered together in larger encampments for communal hunts, trade, political negotiation, and ceremonial observance. In the case of the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, these encampments rarely, if ever, took in every member of the entire tribe -- that is, all the people who identified themselves either as Lakota or Cheyenne. Instead, they tended to be organized along mid-level divisional lines with, for example, bands of Oglalas coming together to hunt buffalo or hold a Sun Dance. Sometimes bands from other divisions, or even tribes, joined a particular encampment. In the largest of these encampments, such as the ones that took place for trade and political negotiation at the base of Bear Butte, tribes occupied separate camp circles (Moore, J. 1987:27-51).

The membership of a band or a larger multi-band camp circle was highly flexible, however. Families commonly shifted their band or camp circle allegiances on a circumstantial basis. A band or camp circle grew in size as people were attracted to its location and leadership, but it could also dwindle when members left its ranks over disputes, insufficient resources, or better opportunities elsewhere. The movement of people between bands and camp circles was facilitated through ramifying networks of kinship, which were created through band exogamy and the bilateral generational systems of kin reckoning so common in the area (Eggan 1966:45-77).
was these kin ties as much as tribal or band identities that determined where and with whom people lived. As a consequence, it was not uncommon to find bands dominated by Cheyennes with Lakotas in their ranks and vice versa. Indeed, tribally mixed bands were a common feature of the plains landscape in historic times (Walker 1982:30, 61, Albers and Kay 1987; Moore, J. 1987:117-121; Albers 1996).

The bands that occupied contiguous territories were the ones who typically came together in larger encampments over the summer months for buffalo hunting and Sun Dances. These bands sometimes shared the same tribal affiliations, but there were many instances when bands of more than one tribal origin, the Cheyennes and Arapahos or the Oglalas, Sicangus, and Minneconjous, for example, gathered together for these purposes (Hyde 1961:57, 106; Powell 1981:1:248-249). Indeed, tribally exclusive encampments appear to have been the exception rather than the rule after the mid-nineteenth century (Albers 1993:112-122; 1996). In the case of the Cheyenne Dog Soldier bands and the Sicangu Lakotas, who frequently traveled and lived together, each tribe formed their own camp circle at contiguous locations, and each ran separate Sun Dances that were jointly attended on consecutive days (Powell 1981:1:249). These encampments were generally organized under the supervision or leadership of the tribe who sponsored them with bands of other tribal affiliations standing in a guest relationship to the hosts. As described by James Walker (1982:22-23):

In aboriginal times a Lakota camp was an assemblage of tipis belonging to a number of families who made a council fire as a symbol of their autonomy. In the winter camp or a formal camp the tipis were placed in a circular form known as the camp circle. A short space was unoccupied towards the rising sun and this was known as the entrance. The space enclosed by the camp circle was the camp middle or arena. The ends of the camp circle next to the entrance were known as the horns, and the place in the circle opposite the entrance was the chief place. A tipi was placed on the area near the chief place, with its door towards the entrance, and this was the council lodge. It was the public lodge of the camp, where all communal gatherings were held, and all business of common interest to the camp was transacted. If business of importance was to be done, a fire was made on the fireplace of the council lodge, and this was known as the council fire. Business transacted about the council fire was of the nature of legislation and was binding upon all members of the camp. A temporary camp was made without formality, tipis being placed according to the convenience of their occupants.

There were also larger gatherings where bands from distant locations congregated for purposes of trade, political negotiation, and religious observance. These encampments might contain many thousands of people of diverse tribal origin who came together temporarily for a specific purpose. Bear Butte at the north end of the Hills and Horse Creek south of the Hills were two places where these large gatherings commonly took place (see Chapters Three to Five). Information on how supervision was managed and power shared by the participating tribes is hard to find. The gatherings were probably organized through a process of consensus and shared responsibility among participating tribes, with soldier societies from each tribe appointed to keep order in the camps.

The populations who practiced intensive forms of horticulture followed a kinship system based on lineage and age-grade principles (Eggan 1966:45-77; Holder 1970; Eggan and Maxwell 2001:975-977). Although their kinship systems appear to have created more stable, fixed, and well bounded social groupings, they still formed strong symbiotic ties with their neighbors in which marriage and fictive kinship created alliances that facilitated trade and joint territorial access (Albers 1993:100-112). Most of the populations who practiced horticulture maintained large concentrated, semisedentary settlements along the bottomlands of the Missouri River and some of its larger tributaries, such as the Niobrara and Cheyenne, where they grew their crops of
corn, squash, and beans over the summer months. Many of these villages became trade entrepots, in which many different tribes gathered to exchange goods in the spring and fall. During much of the eighteenth century, they were central locations in the vast intercontinental trade chains that connected the horse- and gun-supplying tribes (Ewers 1954; Wood 1973; Albers 1993).

Although these tribes were generally less mobile than their neighbors who lived in the high plains regions farther west, they abandoned their villages to conduct communal bison hunts on the open plains in the early summer after their crops were planted and before or after the harvesting season in the fall. In the late fall and over the winter months, the large villages broke up into smaller groups who set up another set of semi-permanent villages upstream along various western tributaries of the Missouri River. From these settlements smaller task-based groups, usually composed of men, traveled great distances for specialized hunting and procural activity (Lehmer 2001).

**B. Productive Orientations**

The particular ways Native peoples carved out a relationship to the Black Hills displayed considerable variability not only over time but also from one population to another. In reference to the Late Prehistoric period, Linea Sundstrom (1989:73) summarizes three of these orientations as follows:

> The picture suggested by research done in the area to date does not fit easily into any of the cultural sequences proposed for surrounding areas. The bison hunting dominated subsistence pattern of the open high plains, the mixed hunting-and-foraging pattern of the Wyoming basins, and the semihorticultural, semisedentary village pattern of the Missouri and Central Plains all may be represented in the Black Hills.

Except for the mixed hunting-and-foraging pattern, all of these orientations persisted in the region until the historic era. After the arrival of horses in the eighteenth century, aspects of the semihorticultural and the bison-hunting patterns were modified to accommodate the presence of this new animal. In many instances, the presence of the horse simply supplemented or enhanced preexisting productive arrangements, but in some cases, it brought about a very different orientation where the procural and raising of horses became the focus of production rather than a means to enhance other forms of production. In addition to the arrival of horses, the introduction of mercantile commerce by Europeans and later Americans also considerably altered the productive strategies of the tribal nations who lived around the Black Hills.

The place of the Black Hills in the size and scope of the territorial ranges that tribal populations covered in their annual productive pursuits varied considerably during the historic era. On the one hand the distances people traveled in and around the Black Hills differentiated these ranges, and this can be conceptualized along a continuum. On one end of the continuum was a localized pattern, where a people’s territorial range was largely restricted to the Black Hills and their immediate environs (extending not much farther than the north and south branches of the Cheyenne River). On the other end was a long-distance pattern where people covered ranges that took in several hundred miles of territory. Here, the Black Hills were used by groups who traveled great distances on a regular and recurring basis to reach them from winter or summer settlement locations on the Missouri and Platte rivers. In the middle of this continuum was a proximate pattern that covered smaller but still sizable tracts of territory. Groups either wintered in the vicinity of the Black Hills and traveled towards the headwaters of the White, Niobrara, and Powder rivers to hunt bison in the summer, or they wintered along the lower reaches of these and
other nearby rivers and hunted at the base of the Hills and entered their interiors for specialized procurement tasks in the late spring and during other seasons as well.

The territorial relationships of local tribal nations to the Black Hills can also be differentiated by the extent of their use. Following Leigh Syms work (1977) on this subject, territorial ranges can be divided into primary, secondary, or tertiary procurement areas. A primary range is the area in which a population conducts their central productive activities on a regular and recurring basis. It includes the preferred and predominant locations for settlement and subsistence. Secondary ranges are used more selectively for specialized but recurring activities or alternatively, as a safety net when resources temporarily fail in a primary procurement area. Finally, tertiary ranges include areas which groups enter only occasionally for irregular and limited procurement purposes but sometimes as a prelude to a more intensive cycle of use.

When temporal dimensions are added, an incredibly complex picture emerges in relation to the productive orientations and spatial movements of local tribes. This is true not only from the perspective of the use and occupation of the Black Hills as a particular geographic area, but also from the vantage point of the histories of the various tribes who were known to live in the Hills. In the historic era, considerable change took place in the productive orientations of tribes, in the locations and distances they covered when carrying out their productive activities, and in the spans of time they utilized specific areas. There was also variation within single tribal nations with respect to the productive uses their constituent groups made of the Black Hills at any given moment in time. Indeed, it is difficult to generalize some of this complexity without doing serious injustice to the distinctive features of local group adaptations, especially among populations as large and geographically dispersed as the Lakotas. But even among smaller populations, such as the Cheyennes, the variation was not inconsiderable.

1. Broad Spectrum Foraging Orientations

One kind of productive orientation represented in the Black Hills reaches back to prehistoric times. It was localized and involved a reliance on a broad spectrum of faunal and floral food resources (Sundstrom, L. 1989:66-68, 99-100, 107). In the Middle Archaic period, as described in Chapter Two, some of the populations who adopted this strategy lived in the interiors of the Black Hills and followed a pattern of transhumance movement, moving from habitats in the higher elevation central Hills in the summer months to the Hogback and Race Track areas of the southern Hills over the winter (Tratebas 1986:138; Sundstrom, L. 1989:107; Alex, L. 1991:51-53). These groups were especially dependent on the plentiful stocks of bighorn and deer in the region (Sundstrom, L. 1989:100). Other groups, however, traveled between their summer locations on the surrounding grasslands, where pronghorn and bison abounded, to winter campsites inside the Hogback (Tratebas 1986; Sundstrom, L. 1989). The territorial range of these populations appears to have been localized, with the Black Hills as the primary area for their procurement activity. Both of these locally based, broad-spectrum orientations largely disappeared by the end of the Late Archaic period. With their disappearance, data for a permanent year-round occupation of the Hills interiors by single populations also declines. There is some archaeological evidence, however, that certain features of these patterns persisted in later time periods, albeit in a much diminished form. Most of the data suggest that the interiors continued to be used on a recurring and seasonal basis by task-based groups from populations that followed other adaptive orientations and lived on the fringes of the Hills or even at locations as far away as the Missouri River (Sundstrom, L. 1989:99). This more specialized and seasonally based use of the Hills interiors persisted even after 1877, when local tribes were settled on reservations outside the Hills.
2. Semihorticultural Orientations

Another orientation was associated with the practice of horticulture and semisedentary village settlement in the valleys of the Missouri River and its larger tributaries, including the Niobrara, White, Cheyenne, and Little Missouri. Despite local variations, there were certain general attributes of this pattern that were commonly shared by the tribal nations who practiced it. The main feature was its focus on the cultivation of corn and other cultigens, including beans, squash, and tobacco. Hunting, fishing, and the gathering of wild plant foods supplemented local diets, but the defining focus of productive activity was horticulture. In the historic period, the tribal nations who practiced horticulture appear to have done so in two different ways.

One kind of horticultural adaptation was associated with fairly intensive forms of cultivation in which fields were placed along the bottomlands of some of the region’s larger waterways. Considerable amounts of labor (mostly female) were invested in growing crops, and a certain degree of sedentism was necessary to produce stable yields and a large surplus for subsistence and trade with neighboring non-horticultural populations (Wilson 1917; Will and Hyde 1964; Lehmer 2001). Much of this horticulture took place along the Missouri River and the lower reaches of its larger tributaries, although there is some evidence, extending back to prehistoric times, that certain populations attempted to establish this kind of horticulture along some of the higher elevation watercourses near the Black Hills, including the Cheyenne, White, Niobrara, and Little Missouri rivers (Alex, R. 1981:42-43; Sundstrom, L. 1989:99-100; Schlesier 1994:342; Wood 2001:192-193). The Arikaras, Hidatsas, Mandans, and Poncas practiced this type of horticulture throughout the historic era, and it also marked the Cheyennes productive orientation in protohistoric times (1965a:39, 50; Brown and Irwin 2001:418; Lehmer 2001:245-255; Parks 2001a:369-370; Stewart 2001:332; Wood and Irwin 2001:355). Some of the Lakotas, including the Minneconjous and the Oglalas as well as the Yankton Dakotas, apparently made attempts to practice this form of production too but for very brief periods of time (Truteau in Nasatir 1952:350-351; Howard, J. 1980:11).

Fairly typical of the populations who practiced this pattern of horticulture were annual communal bison hunts. The hunts generally took place twice a year, in the fall and the early summer, at locations a considerable distance from the villages where the fields were planted and maintained (Wedel and Frison 2001:60). During the time of the hunts, entire villages were abandoned as their residents took up settlements in proximity to their hunting grounds. The Arikaras, for example, left their villages for periods of a month or more in the early summer after their crops were planted and then again in the late fall or early winter after the harvesting season was over (Parks 2001a:370).

Besides the semi-annual bison hunts, other kinds of procurement activity took place at sites away from the villages. These commonly involved smaller task-based parties who set out for varying lengths of time to secure particular animal, plant, or mineral resources on a recurring or opportunistic basis (Tabou in Abel 1939:70; Bowers 1950:10, 1963:48, 50; 1965a:41; Maximilian in Thwaites 1966:2:346-348; Moulton 1983-87:3:234). The eagle-trapping expeditions of the historic Hidatsas and Mandans were of this order (Bowers 1950:206-254; 1963:238, 259; Wood and Irwin 2001:356). It was also common for some of these populations to establish winter villages away from their large summer settlements on the Missouri. The Mandan, for example, chose locations fairly close to their villages in densely wooded river bottoms, where fuel was abundant for their fires, where fodder was available for their horses, and where buffalo often found shelter as well (Stewart 2001:332-333). One account (Odell 1942:34), however, indicates that in the winter of 1844-1845 some of them wintered as far south as Bear Butte. Earlier, in the eighteenth century, the Arikaras apparently built some of their winter villages at
some distance from the Missouri, even as far west as the forks of the Cheyenne River (Parks 2001a:967-968), and so did the Hidatsas as far south as the upper reaches of the Little Missouri River (Lehmer 2001:248).

Another kind of horticultural adaptation was more casual and opportunistic in nature. It was practiced by tribes who depended more heavily on bison hunting and who lived in a wider range of environments, including some of the higher elevation river valleys near the base of the Black Hills. In the casual forms of horticulture, once crops were planted, the fields were typically abandoned until the harvesting season in the fall. Only marginal effort was given to maintaining the fields as the crops matured. As might be expected, this type of horticulture was associated with low and erratic yields. It functioned as a supplemental subsistence activity rather than a core adaptive strategy by populations whose patterns of residence tended to be more nomadic. For a variety of reasons, the practice of horticulture at these locations appears to have been casual and not sustained or intensive enough to produce yields sufficient for reliable subsistence and trade. In the protohistoric era, this kind of horticulture was associated with some of the Dismal River sites, often linked to the Padouca Apaches and found in regions immediately to the east and south of the Black Hills (Wedel 1959; Gunnerson 1960, 2001). It was also practiced by some of the Poncas, who tried to establish year-round settlements near the Black Hills in the early eighteenth century, and it was certainly followed by the Cheyennes from the late eighteenth century to the reservation era (Grinnell 1972:1:251-254; Moore, J. 1987:69-73, 140-141). There is some suggestive but inconclusive evidence that some of the Lakotas may have attempted it too (Hinman 1874:93; Standing Bear 1978:58). The populations who practiced horticulture appear to have had two distinct but related territorial relationships to the Black Hills, and some of these undoubtedly included the southern Hills where Wind Cave National Park is now situated.

**a. Long-Distance Connections**

This involved the long-distance territorial connections of village populations whose principal settlements were situated along the Missouri River and whose buffalo hunting grounds were typically located upriver along tributary streams in proximity to their villages. This pattern has been documented for the eighteenth century Poncas who followed the Niobrara, the White, and even the Cheyenne River to hunting grounds east and south of the Hills (1965a:20-21, 39, 50, 130-133; Jablow 1974:92-93; Brown and Irwin 2001:416, 419). The Arikaras were also known to follow the White, Bad, and Cheyenne rivers to buffalo ranges at the base of the Black Hills in early historic times (Tabeau in Abel 1939:70; Smith, H.1980:111-113; Parks 2001a:967-968). When the Cheyennes and some of the Lakotas practiced horticulture and took up residence at locations along the Missouri in later decades, they followed these rivers to hunting grounds near the Black Hills as well (Truteau in Nasatir 1952:310-311; Bent in Hyde 1968:16; Clow 1995). The Mandans, Hidatsas, and Crows traveled up the Little Missouri River to buffalo hunting grounds at the northern edge of the Hills, and there is plenty of ceramic evidence to support their presence in this area during the protohistoric period. They also traveled this route to trap eagles and hunt elk and bighorn in or near the Black Hills (Bowers 1950:10, 206-254, 1963:48, 50, 238, 259; Maximilian in Thwaites 1966:2:346-347; Moulton 1983-87:3:234; Lehmer 2001:248; Wood and Irwin 2001:356). Judging by the large and culturally varied collections of prehistoric ceramic material now found in or near the Black Hills, this was an old and long-standing economic orientation in the area (Sundstrom, L. 1989:65, 70, 99-100).

When horticultural tribes traveled towards the Black Hills in the early summer and late fall, they usually spent an extended period of time in the region. While they were present, they undoubtedly took the opportunity to pursue other activities. Some probably entered the interiors of the Hills to carry out other kinds of hunts, to collect various plant and mineral resources, and to
conduct religious observances. Even after the larger body of the population returned to the
villages to harvest their crops, smaller parties likely remained or came back to the Hills for
specialized tasks such as elk and bear hunting or eagle trapping, which typically took place in the
early spring or late fall (Rosen 1895:54; Bowers 1950:206-254, 1963:238, 259; 1965a:41; Wood
and Irwin 2001:356). The fall was also a season when some of the villagers met other tribes at
locations near the Black Hills to barter their surplus corn and items of European manufacture for
Bear Butte, already described in previous chapters, was a well-known location for gatherings the
Cheyennes, Arapahos, and Arikaras regularly attended in the late eighteenth century, but other
locations were probably selected as well, including French Creek and Horse Creek (Wood
1973; see, Chapter Three).

While the Black Hills unquestionably represented a primary territorial range for some of the
village tribes who wintered and planted along the Missouri River, they were secondary and
tertiary ranges too. Whether or not the Hills were the preferred and predominant place for
horticultural tribes to hunt fluctuated over time and in response to a variety of different influen-
ces. For example, while the Black Hills were clearly a primary range for the Poncas in the early
eighteenth century, warfare with Apaches and Kiowas, and later Lakotas, forced them to move
their hunting ranges farther south at some distance from the Black Hills. By the 1820s, however,
there is evidence that on some occasions they hunted alternative areas along the White River but
usually in the company of the Sicangus and Oglalas, who had become the principal inhabitants of
this waterway (Howard, J. 1965a:28-29, 130-133). The headwaters of the White River includes
areas within easy reach of the southern Black Hills where Wind Cave is located, and the Poncas
are one of the few tribes whose name for it has been recorded in the published literature (I Ibid:20,
76).

This was also the case for the Arikaras, who in time lost their primacy over the buffalo
ranges in the vicinity of the Black Hills. Before 1781, when smallpox dramatically reduced their
numbers, they were probably the primary population who used the buffalo ranges at the head-
waters of the White, Bad, and Cheyenne rivers, all of which are in striking distance of the Wind
Cave National Park area. In later decades, they appear to have continued this practice, but now
these areas were dominated by the Cheyennes and later the Lakotas. As long as the Arikaras
maintained good relationships with these tribes, they also retained some degree of access for
hunting and other procurement tasks. In later years, as hostilities escalated with their neighbors,
the Arikaras spent a greater portion of their year in the vicinity of their villages (Parks 2001a:
371). By the 1850s, the Hills region was considered enemy territory and entered only occasion-
ally and with well-armed parties (Parks 2001a:379). Like the Hidatsas and Mandans, among
whom they now lived, the Hills became the destination for specialized hunting parties in search of
elk, bighorn, and eagles. The primary bison hunting ranges for these horticultural populations
became concentrated along the Little Missouri River in areas far to the north of the Black Hills.
In contrast to the Arikaras, who probably once hunted in the vicinity of the Buffalo Gap in the
southeastern Black Hills, Mandan and Hidatsa hunting parties appear to have confined their proc-
curement activities to the Hills northern reaches. There is no evidence that they ever hunted in
the southeastern Black Hills in historic times, although there are highly speculative theories for
the prehistoric presence of populations ancestral to the historic Mandan (Schlesier 1994:342;

When the Cheyennes established their horticultural villages near the Mandans and Hidatsas in
the mid-eighteenth century, they followed the practice of taking their early summer and fall buf-
falo hunts to the Black Hills. Eventually, they carved out a place for themselves in regions
between the Little Missouri and Cheyenne rivers (Bent in Hyde 1968:16). By the end of the eigh-

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teenth century, the Cheyennes had removed most of their villages from the Missouri and established their principal settlements near the forks of the Cheyenne River where they are reported to have maintained their fields of corn until the early nineteenth century (Moore, J. 1987:68-70). When this happened, their relationship to the Black Hills shifted from a long-distance to a proximate one.

b. Proximate Connections

These connections, which are also quite old archaeologically, involved populations who attempted to practice horticulture along the high elevation waterways near the base of the Black Hills. Before the Little Ice Age, when the climate of the plains region was much warmer, horticultural settlements were established in a wide range of locations where cultivation is now difficult to sustain. There is considerable evidence that in the Late Archaic and Prehistoric periods the upper reaches of the Cheyenne, Little Missouri, Platte, White, and Niobrara rivers supported a variety of horticultural settlements possibly ancestral to peoples such as the Arikaras, Mandans, Hidatsas, and Poncas (Sundstrom, L. 1989:65; Wood 2001:192-193).

In the protohistoric era, the Poncas were known to have established satellite horticultural communities within easy reach of the Black Hills (1965a:20-21, 130-133; Jablów 1974:92-93; Brown and Irwin 2001:416). Most of the ones associated with more intensive forms of horticulture appear to have been short-lived, however. Where horticulture was practiced on a sustained and long-term basis, as among the Padouca Apaches and later, the Cheyennes, it involved a casual pattern (Grinnell 1972:1:252-254; Moore, J. 1987:68-70; 140-143; Gunnerson 2001:470-471).

The best documented and most detailed description of the casual pattern comes from ethnographic and ethnohistoric material on the Cheyennes, who planted in the vicinity of the Black Hills as late as 1865 (Grinnell 1972:1:252-254; Moore, J. 1987:68-70, 140-143). The precise locations for this cultivation are difficult to trace in the historic record, although Thomas Odell (1942:13-14), in interviews with Cheyennes living on the Pine Ridge Reservation, was told that Bear Butte Creek was one of the locations where they planted in the mid-nineteenth century. He also records Rapid Creek as a location where the Suhtaios once planted (Ibid:151). In the late eighteenth century, Cherry Creek and other higher elevation locations near the forks of the Cheyenne River were reported as Cheyenne farming sites, but some of these may have been associated with more intensive forms of horticulture (Truteau in Nasatir 1952:379; Moore, J. 1987:71). Nineteenth century sites along the Little Missouri and the Platte rivers involved casual forms of horticulture too (Grinnell 1972:1:253). These locations are still some distance from the Black Hills proper, but they were considerably closer than their horticultural settlements along the Missouri where some Cheyenne apparently farmed until 1833 (Grinnell 1972:2:33). The advantage of these higher elevation locations was their easy access to the rich buffalo hunting grounds and timber resources in the vicinity of the Black Hills (Moore, J. 1987:147-148).

At the end of the nineteenth century, many elderly Cheyenne recalled planting crops in the shadow of the Black Hills. Some even reported doing so until the mid-1860s (Grinnell 1972:1:252-254; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:5). Given the reported locations of the Cheyenne in the early nineteenth century, it is probable that much of this planting took place along the north and south branches of the Cheyenne River. It is also possible that the Cheyennes planted along streams inside the Hogback. John Moore (1987:69-72) explains in some detail why the Black Hills were able to support casual and opportunistic forms of horticulture. Not only do the Black Hills receive more rainfall than the surrounding plains, but they also have more frost-free days (Moore, J. 1987:70-71). Indeed, when European American settlers came to the area,

By the early nineteenth century, most of the Cheyennes appear to have abandoned both their intensive and casual forms of horticulture (Grinnell 1972:1:172). Many hypotheses have been advanced as to why most of the Cheyennes, and even some of the Lakotas, gave up farming as they moved away from the Missouri towards the Black Hills. One of these relates to the uncertainties of the climate in this area of the plains, and another has to do with the competing demands imposed by horticulture versus pastoralism or bison hunting as primary adaptive strategies. But Luther Standing Bear (1978:58) suggested another explanation when he wrote:

Corn had come to us in a beautiful legend, but we did not grow very much of it. On the Plains it would have been taken by the buffalo, so it was planted only in little spaces close to a stream where the ground was moist and rich. It was left uncultivated to grow by itself while the camp moved on, and when the camp came back the corn was gathered.

The incompatibility of growing corn in the same areas where the buffalo roamed is also suggested in the popular story of the struggle between the corn wife and the buffalo wife in local tribal traditions. Iron Teeth, a Cheyenne woman, offered another explanation to Thomas Marquis (and Limbaugh 1973:5):

We planted corn every year when I was a little girl in the Black Hills. With sharpened sticks we punched holes in the ground, dropped in grains of corn, then went hunting all summer. When the grass died we returned and gathered the crop. But the Pawnees and Arikaras got to stealing or destroying our growing food, so we had to quit the plantings. We got into the way then of following all the time after the buffalo and other game herds.

This is an excellent description of the casual pattern of horticulture described earlier, but it also confirms that it was predation, in this case by humans, rather than natural forces that led to the abandonment of farming. In time, the vast majority of Cheyennes and Lakotas chose hunting over horticulture except as a casual pursuit, and even those who may have continued to pursue it appear to have done so in opportunistic ways.

No matter where the Cheyennes established their settlements and gardens, they had easy access to the good bison and pronghorn hunting grounds on the grasslands surrounding the Hills and also to the elk, deer, and bighorn in their interiors. They were also within easy reach of timber resources in the region’s many sheltered valleys (Moore, J. 1987:164). As Iron Teeth (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:5) reveals, groups planted their crops in the spring near their winter villages and abandoned these sites in midsummer to search out bison on the surrounding grasslands, returning to them in the fall to cultivate their crops.

Another population, the Padouca Apaches, also practiced a casual form of horticulture. Archeologically, these Apaches are associated with the sites of the Dismal River Phase, which have been discovered at locations from southern Kansas to the Black Hills. Although their subsistence revolved primarily around buffalo hunting and the gathering of wild plant foods, they
planted corn and squash in the fertile bottomlands of small tributaries off the Cheyenne, Bad, White, and Niobrara rivers. These locations were the sites where they built their semi-permanent villages. Dismal River sites are associated with distinctive baking pits, metates, and pottery styles (Gunnerson 2001:240-241). Historic descriptions of their subsistence practices indicate that Padouca Apaches did not typically organize large-scale summer buffalo hunts as many of the other tribes in the region did. Rather, they appear to have followed a broad-spectrum subsistence pattern where a wide variety of wild plants and game were taken (Foster and McCullough 2001:928-929). The Dismal River sites, located where the Angostura Reservoir now stands, were in easy reach of the Wind Cave region, and there is no question that this area would have been used as a primary staging ground for the procurement of fauna and flora for food, medicinal, and manufacturing purposes when the Padouca Apaches occupied the area until the late eighteenth century. Indeed, Waldo Wedel and George Frison (2001:49) note the presence of lithic materials from nearby Battle Mountain at Dismal River sites now inundated by the reservoir.

3. The Bison Hunting Orientations

The most prevalent, persistent, and specialized adaptive pattern associated with the Black Hills was built around the hunting of bison (Sundstrom, L. 1989:66-69, 94-98). Even after the arrival of the horse in the early eighteenth century, bison hunting remained the defining adaptive strategy of the populations who lived and wintered near the Hills. Throughout the protohistoric and historic era, many different tribal nations followed procurement strategies where bison hunting was their primary productive pursuit. The Arapahos, Comanches, Crows, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Cheyennes, and Lakotas were the ones who occupied areas in the vicinity of the Black Hills. In historic times, these populations appear to have followed three (and possibly as many as five) different adaptive patterns in which bison hunting played a central role in their economies. In one pattern already discussed, bison hunting supplemented various levels of horticultural activity. In another pattern, bison hunting was the major focus of procurement, even though it was supplemented in varying ways and degrees with other kinds of game and wild plant foods. This pattern emphasized bison hunting for subsistence, and it appears to have persisted among some bands until the reservation era (Wedel and Frison 2001:56). In a third pattern, a highly specialized adaptive strategy was pursued that depended on the procurement of bison, not only for subsistence but also for trade. During the heyday of the commercial bison robe market in the Plains, circa 1820 to 1860, some Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho bands became major producers for this trade, concentrating their efforts on bison hunting to the exclusion of other productive pursuits (Mekeel 1943:168-173; Swagerty 1988:73; Kardullas 1990:35; Klein 1993:133-160; Pickering 1994:61; Moore, J. 1996b:122-143). Increasingly, their movements and livelihoods were synchronized to the locations of the best herds, and when the bison declined in one region, they moved onto richer ranges. In reference to the Lakotas, Francis Parkman (in Felt skog 1969:154) reported a dual pattern of adaptation:

The western Dakota have no fixed habitations. Hunting and fighting, they wander incessantly, through summer and winter. Some follow the herds of buffalo over the waste of prairie; others traverse the Black Hills, thronging on horseback and on foot, through the dark gulfs and somber gorges, and emerging at last upon the Parks, those beautiful but most perilous hunting grounds.

Again, it is difficult to know which Black Hills Parkman is naming because the ascription was used simultaneously for the Laramie Mountains and the Black Hills proper. Some historians (Wade in Parkaman 1947, Felt skog in Parkman 1969) believe, depending on the context, that some of his references to the Lakotas actually refer to the their travels in the Laramie Range. Whatever the case, it is an important statement because it suggests that the Lakotas were
differentiated not simply by the locations they traveled but also by the kinds of adaptive patterns they emphasized and pursued.

Whether bison-hunting populations followed a more variegated and subsistence-oriented adaptation or a more specialized and market-oriented one, it was common for them to situate their territorial ranges in proximity to well-watered and timbered hills and mountain ranges. It is also clear that these mountain zones were heavily utilized. As Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:271-272) also wrote:

Wild as they were, these mountains were thickly peopled. As I climbed farther, I found the broad, dusty paths made by elk, as they filed across the mountainside. The grass on all the terraces was trampled down by deer; there were numerous tracks of wolves, and in some of the rougher and more precipitous parts of the ascent I found footprints different from any that I had ever seen, and which I took to be those of the Rocky Mountain sheep.

Such are the Black Hills, as I found them in July; but they wear a different garb when winter sets in, when the broad boughs of the fir-trees are bent to the ground by the load of snow, and the dark mountains are white with it. At that season the trappers, returned from their autumn expeditions, often build their cabins in the midst of these solitudes, and live in abundance and luxury on the game that harbors there. I have heard them tell how...they had spent months in total seclusion. They would dig pitfalls, and set traps for the white wolves, sables, and martens, and through the whole night the awful chorus of the wolves would resound from the frozen mountains around them, yet within their massive walls of logs they would lie in careless ease before the blazing fire, and in the morning shoot the elk and deer from their very door.

The impression one gets from Parkman here and elsewhere in his journal (in Feltskog 1969:261-262, 270, 272-273, 277, 290-291, 297-298, 312) is the interiors of mountain areas around Fort Laramie, including the Laramie Range and the Black Hills proper, were rich with game, especially deer and elk, and were inhabited throughout much of the year, although in winter it was mostly by solitary French Indian trappers who traveled alone or with their Indian families and companions.

In 1854, the trader Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:6) described the importance of the Black Hills to the Lakotas when he wrote:

The Black Hills are the most eastern spurs of the Rocky Mountain range, several thousand feet high, well covered with timber, of which pine is the principal. The Hills or Mountains thus called commence near the head of Powder River running nearly a northeastern direction to within about 50 miles of the White River, the intermediate space to that stream being occupied by the Bad Lands. The Sioux seldom camp for any length of time in the Black Hills. But little game is found there and it consists of panthers, bears, and bighorn which are difficult to find and kill. Not much grass is found on the sides of the mountains, at least not enough to support the horses of a large camp for any length of time. They frequently visit the place, however, in search of lodgepoles which they make from the tall, straight young pines. At these times the camps are usually placed at the base of the mountains where grass is plenty, and when buffalo are not to be seen, they subsist on elk, blacktail deer and bighorn sheep.

One of the reports (Edmunds, Curtis, Guernsey, and Reed 1866:168) of the Northwestern Treaty Commission to the Sioux of the Upper Missouri gave additional details on this pattern in the mid-1860s. In reference to the Black Hills, they wrote:
Their domain is the vast rolling prairie country, where a short nutritious grass covers the surface, affording ample food, winter and summer, for the herds of buffalo, pronghorn, and other game upon which the Indians depend for their subsistence, shelter, and clothing.

Central to this domain in an isolated spur of the Rocky mountains, known as the Black Hills, well defined on the maps of General Warner, from which numerous streams flow in every direction, tributary to the Platte, Missouri, and Yellowstone.

This mountain region, and the valleys and hills adjacent to the streams, are the fastnesses to which the tribes resort in winter, or in case of danger of war parties in summer; the taller grasses of the river bottoms and the cottonwood timber that skirts these streams affording protection from storms and subsistence for their ponies. But usually, summer and winter, the Indians follow the buffalo herds, making lodges and clothing of their skins, and food of their flesh.

In his report to the Indian Claims Commission, Zachary Gussow (1974:8) describes the pattern for the Cheyennes and Arapahos in this way:

For the winter season each band or camp group retired to a traditional tract of territory in which it had one or more favored sites. Sheltered valleys and hollows at the foothills of mountains and along streams, away from the open prairies, affording if possible wood, water and game, were sought out as protection against the cold winters and severe snows and winds. Group hunting played an important part of the winter food quest, although the group formed was smaller than in summer and the buffalo were driven into pounds or enclosures large enough to hold a hundred head or more.

John Moore (1996:68-69) also represents the Cheyennes wintering patterns and annual subsistence cycle in similar terms.

More recently, Brian Reeves (1990:171-172) gave a generalized description of tribal dependence on forested mountain ranges in the adaptive strategies of Plains Indians as follows:

Life in the Northwestern Plains was tethered to the seasonal movements and behavior of the bison, on which natives relied for most of their material needs...The yearly life cycle in these northern climes can be divided into two periods: over wintering and summering. The over wintering period extended from October to May when bison ranged through their fall, winter, and spring habitats. The ranges of the herds during these seasons were principally along the western and northern edges of the Plains. Some herds also wintered in such prairie mountain ranges as the Cypress Hills in southeastern Alberta and the Black Hills in South Dakota...A critical requisite for native settlement, from fall to spring, was fuel. All else being equal, depletion of local firewood supplies was the major reason camps had to be moved...In summer, water was the limiting resource for natives, their dogs, and bison. The bison had, after calving in May, moved out into their ranges on the shortgrass Plains area. As summer wore on and waterholes and streams dried up, the movements of herds and man became increasingly circumscribed and focused on major rivers...Wild plants were collected: tubers and root crops in the late spring and early summer in the foothills and mountains, and berries in mid- to late summer in the Plains area and foothills. Another important activity during the snow-free months was the acquisition of flakable stone for small tool manufacture.

Some of the populations who followed this strategy and lived near the Black Hills spent the late summer months in the grasslands surrounding the Hills, entered their high elevation interiors in the early summer to gather lodgepoles and other plant resources, and camped in their accessible lower elevation valleys over the winter (Ludlow 1875:18; Hassrick 1964:156; Moore, J. 1987:164; Sundstrom, L. 1989:95-96, 107).
The adoption of horses, however, brought with it a limiting condition for the populations who followed a bison hunting orientation -- the necessity of finding locations with adequate winter pasturage (Moore, J. 1987:140-175). Some of the lower elevation valleys of the Black Hills in and around the Hogback certainly fit the conditions that Reeves described, and when horse herds were moderately sized, they also met the need of finding good winter grazing grounds (Moore, J. 1987:163-164). Many areas of the southern Hills, especially in the vicinity of the Hot Springs and Wind Cave, would have offered good wintering sites not only because they were several degrees warmer than the surrounding plains and often remained snow free throughout much of the winter, but also because they contained abundant supplies of fresh water and the kinds of grasses that were much desired as fodder for Native horse herds (Moore, J. 1987:70-71, 171-173). This area clearly supported large horse raising enterprises after European Americans arrived, so there is no doubt it would have done so when the area was occupied by tribal peoples (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70: 41, 45; Sundstrom, J. 1977: 161-164, 1994: 48-51).

While many bands spent a greater part of the year along the lower elevation valleys of the Black Hills, their higher elevation interiors became associated even more with specialized and temporary forms of resource procurement once horses were incorporated into local economies (Sundstrom, L. 1989:101-102). As discussed in more detail earlier, many European American settlers and military observers of the 1870s claimed that local tribes did not live in the Black Hills and used them only to gather their lodgepoles. While it is true that there is no evidence for their year-round occupancy of the interior Hills, there is a substantial body of material on their regular and extended presence in the Hill's lower elevation valleys from late fall through the early months of spring. Solid data also supports their shorter but recurring stays in the interiors during the late spring and early summer. The only time of the year many groups customarily stayed in the open prairies was from late summer to early fall when they conducted their communal bison hunts. Indeed, seasonal transhumance movements, often covering hundreds of miles of territory, were very common for the Lakotas, the Cheyennes, and the Arapahos (Elkin 1940:210-211; Hassrick 1964:154-156; Moore, J. 1987:164; Fowler 2001:847). At certain points in their histories, the Black Hills were located at the center of these movements.

The best description of the use of the Black Hills for overwintering and summering comes from Royal B. Hassrick's ethnography on the Lakotas. He argues that the Lakotas preferred to establish their camps in forest-like environments, near level-wooded and well-watered areas surrounded by ridges and high bluffs. The open high grounds were used only for some of the ceremonial camps and large-scale buffalo hunts in late summer (Hassrick 1964:65, 153). He even states that their dependence upon this modified woodland environment may have accounted for their determination to acquire and keep the Black Hills country (Hassrick 1964:65). Hassrick then goes on to describe how the use of these wooded areas was coordinated with their annual subsistence cycle.

In the late fall at the sign of the first snowfall, the Lakotas gathered at predetermined locations to select their winter campsites, which were occupied from December until March or April. For many Lakota bands, these were typically situated in valleys along local waterways or in well-timbered hollows in the Black Hills with good access to water and fuel (Hassrick 1964:156). These were also areas in easy reach of game, especially elk and deer. In fact, there were a number of well-defined Indian trails, documented by early explorers and settlers that criss-crossed the Hills. Some were apparently used in the winter months because Henry Newton and Walter Jenney (1875:302) reported: "The snow must be sometimes deep enough to hide trails and landmarks, as the main Indian trails leading through the Hills were marked by stones placed in the forks of the trees or by one or more sets of blazes, the oldest almost overgrown by the bark. At this time of the year, men made their tools and also spent time away from their winter camps
to hunt when supplies preserved from the communal fall hunts were low. This was the season of the small hunting party that the Lakota knew as the *tate*. Before the large bison herds disappeared from the Hills, the wintertime would have been the best season to hunt this animal, using various driving techniques. After the 1850s, when bison started to rapidly disappear, the bands that remained near the Black Hills turned increasingly to elk and deer as a source of meat. The hides of these two animals were especially valued in the manufacture of clothing, and winter was the time of the year that women fabricated and decorated a wide range of items made from their skins.

In early spring, the winter camps broke up with smaller groups traveling in search of deer, elk, and pronghorn, which, Hassrick (1964:154-155) notes, remained as important as bison at this time of the year. Hunting was not a primary pursuit during the spring months, however, because the meat of many ungulates, especially bison, was unpalatable, lacking in fat, proteins, and other nutrients (Binnema 2001:51), but it was a good season to capture certain animals for their hides. This was also the preferred season for trapping eagles (Grinnell 1972:1:299-302). It was the time of the year for breaking in the yearlings from the horse herds, for repairing tipis with hides procured over the winter months, and for smoking skins to use in making leggings and moccasins (Hassrick 1964:155). Finally, this was the season when women collected sap from box elder trees to make sugar (Ibid.).

By late spring, from May to June, family groups were usually moving to higher elevation locations in the Black Hills to gather vegetables, pick berries, procure medicinal plants, and cut lodgepoles for their tipis. Most groups moved away from the valleys of rivers and creeks in and around the Black Hills at this time of the year because they were prone to flash floods. This was also the season when some groups traveled long-distances to trade, and when young men ventured far afield to raid horses from enemy tribes (Hassrick 1964:155). John Moore (1996:67-68) writes that this was the time of the year when the Cheyennes entered into major battles to protect and advance their territorial ranges. Finally, the late spring corresponded with the initiation of a cycle of ceremonial observances, which were conducted in the Hills interiors (Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a: 42-43; Black Elk C. 1992a:50-52).

In midsummer, Lakotas came together in large encampments for their annual Sun Dances and multtribal political deliberations (Black Elk C. 1992a:50-52). By late August, they were moving to the open grasslands where buffalo were sighted to commence their communal hunts, using horses and surround techniques (Hassrick 1964:156). From then until November, hunting was the focus of their economic activity. Men hunted bison at this time of the year in larger communal formations, known as the *wanisapa*, while women prepared the robes and dried the meat. Women also used this time to gather nuts, plums, berries, and other food plants which matured in the late summer and early fall (Ibid:156, 166).

The use of the Black Hills low elevation valleys as a primary location for winter settlement and its higher reaches for early summer procurement activity appears to have been a very common pattern during the prehistoric era as well. In the Late Archaic period, populations associated with the Pelican Lake, Besant, and Avonlea traditions hunted buffalo on the grasslands

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2 There is some evidence that tribes hunted bison at this time of the year for specific uses. According to some Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:1:226), the early spring was the best time to take bison for dressing hides used in making covers for tipis. It would have also been the season to hunt newly born calves, whose meat was considered a delicacy.

3 Descriptions of flash floods along the Fall River as well as Beaver and French creeks are found in some of the early settler accounts, and in the case of the Fall River, some early settlers claim they learned about its flooding from the local Lakotas (Petty 1973:2-3, Williams 1973:13; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:197; Sundstrom, J. 1977:317).
surrounding the Black Hills but also spent time on the margins and in the low elevation valleys of the Hills during the winter (Sundstrom, L. 1989, 1990). There is also considerable lithic evidence of their presence in the higher elevation interiors of the Hills, but none of it suggests any year around occupancy as had been the case among the broad-spectrum foraging groups in earlier phases of the Archaic (Sundstrom, L. 1989:59-61; Hannus 1994:184, 188-190).

In the historic era, the bands of many different tribal nations used the Black Hills as a location for their winter campsites, as a place to hunt in the fall, as a site to gather plants and other resources in the early summer, and as an area to gather for trading, political meetings, and ceremonial observances. However the Black Hills were used, they became a primary feature of the territorial landscape for many different tribes. They were a prominent part of the Padouca Apaches and probably some of the Comanches territorial ranges in the early decades of the eighteenth century, followed by Kiowas, Plains (Kiowa) Apaches, Crows, and Arapahos in the middle decades of the same century, and then by the Cheyennes at its close (Tabeau in Abel 1939:132, 151-153; Truteau in Nasatir 1952:301, 379; Henry in Coues 1965:1:383-384; Grinnell 1972:1:25-33; Bent in Hyde 1968:12-14; Hurt 1974:105-106, 112, 122, 123; Mooney 1979:153-154, 164, 229). When the Lewis and Clark Expedition arrived in the area, the Arapahos and Cheyennes were the dominant populations in the Hills, but some of the Apaches and possibly Comanches still remained there as well (Tabeau in Abel 1939:71, 104; Truteau in Nasatir 1952:379; Moulton 1983-87:3:85, 133-135, 420-422, 425-426, 438-439, 487-488). Over the next forty years, the Lakotas gradually gained ascendancy in the region with small segments of Arapahos and some Cheyennes remaining in their midst (Atkinson and O’Fallon 1825:606-608; Deland and Robinson 1918:179; Denig in Ewers 1961:19-23; Maximilian in Thwaites 1966:1:305; Bradbury 1966:139-140, 176; Parkman in Feltsskog 1969:154; Hurt 1974:227; DeMallie 1975:353-356).

The adaptive patterns of the populations whose production was focused on bison were clearly related to the habits and movements of these animals, especially their tendency to congregate in the late summer on the open grasslands and to disperse in the late fall and winter in sheltered valleys and canyons (Oliver 1962:6-18; Isenberg 2000:43-44). Although bison movements between the winter and summer were predictable in a general way, their appearance at specific locations was often erratic. Drought, warm winters, and severe blizzard conditions changed their numbers, migrations, and gathering habits locally, and under these circumstances, bands sometimes faced hunger and even starvation (Bamforth 1987; Epp 1988; Clow 1995; Lott 2002:75).

When the Black Hills stood literally at the center of Cheyenne and Lakota occupation in the early half of the nineteenth century, not all of the bands that represented these two tribal nations used the Black Hills as a wintering site or as a primary staging ground for their subsistence activities. Some, however, wintered regularly in the low elevation valleys of the Black Hills and along the forks of the Cheyenne River. In the late summer and early fall, they moved out onto the surrounding grasslands to hunt bison and pronghorn. Other groups wintered in the more distant valleys of the White and Bad rivers and the main branch of the Cheyenne below its forks; these locations, however, were still within easy reach of the Hills. In one case, they maintained a localized relationship to the Hills, and in the other, a proximate one. There were other bands among the Lakotas and Cheyennes who never lived near the Black Hills for any extended period or who moved away from their reaches when bison populations began to decline after the 1850s. In this case, the bands held a long-distance relationship to the region, and the Hills were part of their secondary or even tertiary territorial ranges. What is apparent from the historic and ethnographic literature is that the tribes who depended upon bison hunting as their primary produc-
FIGURE 20. Locations for Seasonal Procurement Activity

Localized Bison Hunting Pattern
- Winter
- Spring
- Summer
- Fall

Long-Distance Bison Hunting Pattern
- Winter
- Spring
- Summer
- Fall

Proximate Bison Hunting Pattern
- Winter
- Spring
- Summer
- Fall

Semihorticultural Pattern
- Winter
- Spring
- Summer
- Fall

1. Black Hills Interiors
2. The Hogback and Race Track
3. Upper Reaches of Missouri River Tributaries
4. Missouri/Platte Rivers
tive pursuit and who followed more nomadic lifestyles had diverse patterns of relationship to the Black Hills. It is worthwhile to discuss some of these here in greater depth as they apply to the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, since these are the tribal nations whose nineteenth-century affiliations with the Black Hills are the best documented.

### a. Local Connections

The groups who wintered and remained near the Black Hills probably followed the most variegated pattern of subsistence where bison hunting was balanced with other kinds of procurement. This pattern fits most closely with the cycle described by Royal B. Hassrick, where groups wintered in the Black Hills and moved out to the grasslands beyond the two branches of the Cheyenne River in late summer. Even as late as the 1860s, after bison had largely disappeared from the Black Hills, Ferdinand Hayden (1862:373-374) reported that the Lakotas were able to make a modest living from the abundant supplies of pronghorn, deer, elk, and bighorn that still inhabited the Hills.


One description of this adaptation comes from Stephen M. Barrett's biographical story (1913) of Hoistah, a Cheyenne woman who was born in the early nineteenth century in a winter camp at the foot of the Black Hills along the north fork of the Cheyenne River. He writes about the movements of Hoistah's band as follows:

In the spring the Cheyenne moved down the river among the green meadows, seeking pasture for their ponies and following the deer, elk and buffaloes as they left the shelter of the wooded hills. Protection being no longer needed, the animals entered the open country in the river valleys where the first tender grass springs up, and the warriors sought them there...and again the winter camp was made on the bank of the Cheyenne River.

The Cheyennes as usual had come into the Black Hills before it was time for the game to be driven in to seek shelter, but no big game came, indeed it seemed that the big game, elk and buffaloes, would never come. Repeatedly hunting parties had returned to camp to report only ill luck.

One band of hunters, going far down the river, came back with the report that the Crow Indians were encroaching upon the Cheyenne hunting grounds. Whether other Indians were
driving the animals away or whether the mild winter weather induced them to remain longer in the open country was an unsettled question in the camp (Barrett 1913:11-13).

A Lakota perspective on this settlement comes from information that One Bull shared with Dick Stone (1982:23):

My grandfather used to tell me that he and his people used to camp at Bear’s Tipi, a good many years before Sitting Bull was born. My grandfather usually lived around Sylvan Lake, in the Black Hills, in the wintertime. They liked to winter there because the cold winds were kept out by the Hills.

The Sioux liked to spend the winter along the river that runs by the base of Bears Tipi. This was fine winter country. While in camp here the people rested and had a quiet time. There were all kinds of animals there, buffalo, deer, elk, bear, and mountain lions. After the hides were tanned they were made into robes and buckskins. The women would make the skins into clothes. There was beaver trapped there along the streams. This was quite a long ways from a trading post where skins could be traded for White Man’s goods. White men would come to the camps with oxen and stone boats and buy what skins were for sale.

The Pine Ridge people liked to camp at Bears Tipi, too. Every once in a while Sitting-Bull would make a visit to this place. He would live there for several days and then go back to his people...

His brother, White Bull (in Stone 1982:25), also confirmed this pattern and said:

Sometimes, years ago, we would go to Bears Tipi and stay all winter. That is how the arrows and scraping knives came to be found there. When I was two years old I spent the winter there with the Minneconjou, Itazipco, and Uncpapa Bands. These bands all speak the same language. They hunted pronghorn, buffalo and deer. There were also black bears and grey wolves around this area.

When I was fourteen years old we wintered at this place and again when I was eighteen years old. We wintered in different places around the Hill, each time.

Again, the populations who resided at these locations over the winter left them in the spring to travel to other locations in the Hills for specialized tasks like lodgepole procurement, and then in late summer, they moved to the surrounding grasslands to hunt bison beyond and between the two forks of the Cheyenne River (Standing Bear 1975:17-23; White Bull in Stone 1982:26; Moore, J. 1987:165).

b. Proximate Connections

In the same period, many of the Cheyennes, Lakotas, and some of the Arapahos also maintained winter camps outside the Black Hills and beyond the two forks of the Cheyenne River but still within a few days travel from these mountains. In the case of the pre-1840 Lakotas, the Oglalas and most of the Sicangu maintained winter campgrounds in regions south or east of the Black Hills along the Bad, White, and Niobrara rivers, while Minneconjous and Itapizcos settled in the valleys of the Cheyenne and Moreau rivers in areas north and northeast of the Hills. Most of the Sihasapas and Hunkpapas wintered along the Grand River and remained out of direct reach of the Black Hills. Although some of them joined other Lakotas to winter near the Hills, this was generally not their primary subsistence range but a secondary or tertiary one (Atkinson and O Fallon 1825:607; Deland and Robinson 1918:95n12, 112n51, 121-122, 141, 160, 179, 199, 234; Clyman 1960:16-17; Hyde 1937:20, 39-40, 46-47, 1961:17, 28; Odell 1942:21-30; Denig in
In the case of the Cheyennes, the main body stayed at the forks of the river that bears their name until the 1820s when they moved en masse to the upper reaches of the Platte River. Many of the Omisis or Ohmeseheso, Northern Cheyenne, which included the Suhtaio or Soʔtaaeoʔo, encamped during the winter along the Belle Fourche and the upper reaches of the Little Missouri, but some were known to inhabit the upper reaches of the White River until the 1870s. The Masi­kota wintered primarily within the upper reaches of the White River and also the southern Hills, the Hisiometaneo on the upper Niobrara, and the Totoimana on the north branch of the Platte, all of which are locations within easy reach of the Black Hills (Atkinson and O Fallon 1825:606; Bradbury in Thwaites 1966:5:139-140, 176; De Smet in Thwaites 1966:22:136; Grinnell 1972:1:12-15, 30; Powell 1981:2:766-929; Moore, J. 1987:229-235, 1996:146-147).


By mid-summer, much of the Hills were empty of human habitation as groups moved out onto the grasslands to follow and select the herds to be culled in their large communal bison and pronghorn hunts. In some cases, however, they did not travel very far. In 1857, Lt. G.K. Warren (1875:15-16) met Minneconjou Lakotas hunting buffalo in the Red Valley near Inyan Kara Mountain on the western side of the Hills. Large pronghorn drives were known to take place among the Lakotas just outside the Hills on the headwaters of the White River (Denig in Ewers 1961:17-18; Hyde 1961:17) and also among the Cheyennes at the headwaters of the Little Missouri River or Wokaihe yunio he [Pronghorn Pit River] in their language (Grinnell 1906:17; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:84-85; Bent in Hyde 1968:17-21, 194, 196; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:12). There are also a number of archeological sites in Fall River County along the south fork of the Cheyenne River associated with pronghorn hunting (Sundstrom, L. 2000:127-128). Thus, even though groups who wintered in proximate river valleys and hunted on nearby grasslands used the Black Hills for specialized purposes over a brief period of time from the late spring through early summer, the Hills and their immediate surroundings were still part of their primary or secondary territorial range, and a location they used on a regular and recurring basis.

The transhumance movements of tribes in and around the Black Hills closely followed those of the ruminant animal species on which they depended for much of their subsistence. The larger accessible gateways to the Hills, such as the Buffalo Gap, were well-known points of entry for
animals during the winter months, and as a result, they were popular locations to establish winter campsites (Standing Bear 1975:3, 17, 1978:43-45; Crow Dog in Kadlec and Kadlec 1981:96). Bison, elk, and pronghorn commonly moved back and forth between their winter grazing lands on the Race Track and their summer feeding grounds outside the Hogback, and this movement is not only well-recorded in historic sources but also implicated in the archeological record (Tabeau in Abel 1939:77; Turner 1974:19; Moulton 1983-87:3:179-180, 182,222, 1983:4:16, 482; 1983:6:338; Seton 1929:421; Sundstrom, L. 2000:125; White, D. 2002:23). As its name implies, the Buffalo Gap was a major entry and exit point for bison who moved between the Black Hills and the Nebraska grasslands and for pronghorns who followed long-distance migratory routes from the Hills to the grasslands along the upper reaches of the White River (Hayden 1862b:150; Seton 1929:421; Ewers 1938:12; Sundstrom, L. 1989.; Turner 1974:20, 141-142). Judging by the prehistoric and historic rock art found at Red and Craven canyons, also in the southern Hills, these appear to have been important migratory routes for local cervid populations too (Sundstrom, L. 1984, 1990). The association of the Black Hills with game animals is discussed in more detail in the next section, but it is worthwhile to note that it was not only a fundamental condition of the ways in which tribal nations adapted themselves to the area but also a defining feature of their cosmological relationship to the Hills (see Chapters Twelve through Sixteen).

Until the 1840s, when bison were still plentiful on the grasslands surrounding the Black Hills, this region became the primary territory for a succession of tribal nations who depended heavily on bison but followed other subsistence pursuits as well. After the 1850s, when bison populations began their precipitous decline, the territorial ranges of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes became more dispersed. More and more bands were wintering in areas outside the Black Hills. Yet, many of them continued to return to the Hills on a regular and recurring basis to carry on specialized procurement tasks and to attend social, political, or religious gatherings. Here they joined with the bands who, albeit in much smaller numbers, remained at the foot of the Black Hills until the reservation era.

**c. Long-Distance Connections**

The distances that tribal nations covered to reach the Black Hills and use them on a regular and recurring basis fluctuated considerably over time. In the case of the Cheyennes and the Lakotas, much of their early connection to the Hills entailed long distance movements from locations on the Missouri River that took up to a week’s time to travel with a large party. At the end of the eighteenth century, when the Lakotas started to establish themselves on the Missouri and the lower reaches of the White, Bad, and Cheyenne rivers, the Black Hills were a long-distance destination which local bands reached in search of favorable bison hunting ranges from mid-summer to late fall, but it was also a destination in the late for spring for procuring lodgepoles and medicinal plants (Clow 1995). For some divisions, most notably the Oglalas, the Hills were probably the westernmost extension of their territorial range as early as the 1780s (Hyde 1937:17, 21-23; Ewers 1938:5, Larson 1997:23). Even earlier, Lakotas may have entered the Hills for different purposes in the company of the Cheyennes and Arikaras, who had clearly followed this long distance pattern for some time. Before 1780, however, the Hills would have been a secondary or tertiary range for most of the Lakotas.

After the 1830s, many of the Lakotas abandoned their wintering grounds near the Missouri River and no longer returned to this area even to trade. The Black Hills were no longer a long-distance destination but a proximate location. The Lakotas’ primary territorial ranges now hugged the Hills and their nearby watercourses (Atkinson and O Fallen 1925:606-2608; Hyde 1937:45; Thwaites 1966:1:305; Hurt 1974:187-233; DeMallie 1975; White 1978; Bray 1994; Price, C.
This closely followed the pattern established by the Cheyennes whose territories encircled the Black Hills at the end of the eighteenth century, even as increasing numbers of Lakotas made this their home base (Truteau in Nasatir 1952:301; Bradbury 1966:139-140, 176; Moulton 1983-87-87:3:487-488; Moore, J. 1987:55-87).

In later decades, the situation became even more complex as growing numbers of Cheyennes and Lakotas moved away from the Black Hills to reach richer bison hunting grounds and/or better grazing lands for their horses. Some bands shifted their primary territorial ranges to locations well south of the Hills, and in time, the headwaters of the south fork of the Platte and even the Republican and Arkansas rivers became the locations where they overwintered (Bordeaux 1929: 45, 82-83, 191-192; Hyde 1961:35, 55-56; Bent in Hyde 1968:31-57; Berthong 1963:19-21; Fowler 2001:840-842). Other bands, however, turned their sights northwest, making the valleys of the Powder River and its tributaries their principal winter camping sites (Schoolcraft 1851-57:3:629-631; Hyde 1937:89, 93; Dodge 1959:130-131, 373; Denig in Ewers 1961:19-23; Hurt 1974:228-229; Price, C. 1996:31-37; DeMallie 2001:794-799; Fowler 2001:842; Moore, J., Liberty, and Straus 2001:864).

By the 1850s, when many Lakotas and Cheyennes had moved their primary hunting ranges away from the Black Hills, the relationships of local bands to the area became much more diversified. Some of this variation was probably a product of the predominant adaptive strategies local bands followed. As described earlier, the bands who became heavily vested in a market-oriented economy, where bison were hunted for their exchange value as much as subsistence, were probably the ones who moved the greatest distances from the Black Hills (Mekel 1943:168-173; Swagerty 1988:73; Kardulas 1990:35; Price, C. 1996:47; Klein 1993; Pickering 1994:61; Moore, J. 1996:30-33). Since bison were no longer plentiful east of the Black Hills, many of the Lakotas and Cheyennes who were actively involved in the hide market began to set their sights on the rich bison grounds along the two forks of the Platte River, the Powder River, and even as far south as the Republican and Arkansas rivers (Hyde 1961:35, 55-56; Moore, J. 1996:13-29). As already detailed in Chapter Four, prodigious amounts of robes were taken for this trade. Yet, even those who were less dependent on the hide market moved farther away from the Black Hills when bison ranges started to contract.

Many Oglalas, Minneconjous, and Itazipcos, along with Arapahos and Cheyennes, began to move towards and congregate at locations along the north branch of the Platte River, in the Powder River country, and eventually as far north as the Tongue and Yellowstone rivers. Most of these areas were outside the peripheries of the Black Hills, and in time, other wooded hills and mountainous regions, such as the Laramie and Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming, were used as wintering and summering locations. Other bands moved south of the Platte and no longer used the Hills either, except on an irregular basis. Most of the southern Arapahos, southern Cheyennes, and Lakotas (predominantly Sicangu) who hunted on the Republican and Arkansas rivers were now trading at posts near the present-day sites of Denver and Colorado Springs, and even when they came north to Fort Laramie, they had little reason to route their travels near the Black Hills. These groups were now spending time in the Sand Hills of Nebraska and/or the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and using these areas as places to gather lodgepoles and medicine in the summer months, to hunt elk and deer in the fall, and to overwinter. Some bands returned to the Black Hills periodically for political and ceremonial purposes; however, for most of them, the Hills were now a tertiary territorial range (Hyde 1937:85-86, 1961:35, 55-56, 78, 97).

Still, a number of bands traveled long distances to the Black Hills on a regular and recurring basis. Here, the Hills remained part of their primary range, a central location to camp in the late spring and/or late fall either en route to trading posts on the Platte River or as a destination to pro-
cure specialized resources. In the spring, these bands used their long-distance travels as an opportunity to enter the interiors of the Hills to secure lodgepoles, to gather berries and medicinal plants, and to conduct ceremonies. Fishing took place here at this time of the year as well. In the late fall, the hunting of elk, deer, pronghorn, and bighorn was a primary procurement activity for men, while the gathering of acorns was a focus for women. For other bands, however, the Black Hills became part of their secondary or tertiary territorial ranges. They still came here to hunt, gather, meet, and conduct their ceremonial observances, but they appear to have done so on an a more irregular basis (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931; Hyde 1937:89, 93, 106, 113, 152-153, 1961:99; Ewers 1938:88; Denig in Ewers 1961:22, 25; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:200; McLaird and Turchen 1973:375-377; Hurt 1974:242; Powell 1981:2: 923; Fowler 1982:34-44, 2001:843; Moore, J. 1987:165, 205-251; Bray 1994:179, 185-186; Price, C. 1996:26-27, 46-47, 49).

William Bordeaux (1929:191-192), a Sicangu Lakota whose family wintered along the Platte River, describes this long-distance relationship to the Black Hills in some detail, and it is worth quoting his words here. As he writes:

As a general rule, the Sioux Indians spent their winter months as far south as the Republican River, where the winter months are milder and the climate more moderate than in the northern territory.

The buffalo also concentrated in the south country to escape the severe winter months in the north. Each spring lured the Sioux on the trail of vast herds of these animals moving north. The Black Hills are right in the path of these trails.

When the foothills were reached the Sioux scattered out into the mountains to hunt the smaller game animals, such as the deer, antelope, and mountain sheep. Numberless droves roamed in the green valleys and gulches of these wonderlands.

The Indian was at a disadvantage when trying his luck on these sensitive animals out in the open. It was almost an impossibility to accomplish the feat. The dense forest with its heavy brush, gave the Indian hunter more advantage in hunting these animals in the Black Hills.

These hunting opportunities together with the abundance of wild fruit lured the Sioux into these wonderlands yearly, to hunt and gather wild fruit to sustain them through the winter months.

When all necessary nourishment and equipment was obtained the Sioux would then vacate their summer haunts for the warmer climate in the south. The approach of fall weather, with its cold north winds, would compel the vast herds of buffalo to start on the southward march and migrating with them were the harvest-laden Indians.

Completing the journey to their southern territory would require several weeks. The Platte River country with its fertile valleys and timbered banks would tempt several of the bands to remain for the winter, while the remainder continued south to the Republican River.

Some of the Cheyennes also maintained a long-distance summer relationship to the Black Hills. As one Northern Cheyenne elder told John Moore (1981:14):

It was just like a vacation—in the old days, everybody went back to the Black Hills every summer. After they used their heavy tools, like corn grinders, nut stones and things, they would hide them around some place and then come back the next summer and use them again...They used to always return to Black Hills. They never did leave it permanently. The
way my grandmother used to say, even when they traveled far, they always returned. They really thought a lot about this, Bear Butte and Black Hills. They always came back, this was their way of life.

So no matter how far away some of the Lakotas and Cheyennes traveled, the Hills continued to act like a magnet drawing them back at certain seasons to carry on any of a variety of activities.

The extent of the territory that some of these bands followed in the course of a year is revealed by Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:154-165), who described the travels of his family between 1873 and 1875. In 1873-1874, they spent the winter at White Buttes near Fort Robinson. In the spring, they headed for the Black Hills to cut lodgepoles, following Horse Creek where they briefly encamped. Moving north away from the south fork of the Cheyenne, they made camp at the foot of Buffalo Gap to hunt deer and pronghorn. From here, they traveled to Split Toe Creek, then to Spring Creek, and finally, to Rapid Creek where they moved to the Hills higher elevation locations to find lodgepoles. On their return trip to White Buttes, they followed Spring Creek down to the south fork of the Cheyenne and then took Horse Creek south to a place near Fort Robinson where a Sun Dance was held. In the fall of 1875, Black Elk's family set out to join Crazy Horse's band on the Tongue River. They camped at Horse Creek, next at Warbonnet Creek, and then moved north along the western edge of the Hills by way of Sage Creek, then Stockbridge-Beaver Creek, and onward to Driftwood Creek. During these travels, a side trip was made into the interiors of the Black Hills where Black Elk received a vision. Moving away from the Black Hills, they camped at Taking the Crow Horses Creek and then along the Powder to the Tongue River. After hunting buffalo and processing the meat over several weeks, they returned to the White Butte area of Nebraska where they wintered again. Even though long-distance excursions such as these appear to have been part of a regular and recurring annual pattern for some bands, others probably made them on a less frequent basis. In this pattern, the base and interior areas of the Black Hills were clearly important destinations or stopping points for food procural and ceremonial observance. Again, the point must be made that this kind of travel was not exceptional for the Lakotas (Walker 1982:189), the Cheyennes (Moore, J. 1987:165, 205-251), or other tribal nations in the area. It was characteristic of the aggregative patterns of adaptation that Kingsley Bray (1994) identified for the Oglalas in the nineteenth century.

There were Lakota bands, especially among the Hunkpapa and Sihasapa divisions, who traditionally wintered in areas farther north along the Grand Little Missouri, Powder, and Tongue rivers and who traded at posts on the upper reaches of the Missouri River. Most of them had little occasion to pass by or come to the Hills except for specific purposes. Although some came for specialized procurement activities, political gatherings, and ceremonial observances, the Hills had always been a long distance destination and a secondary or tertiary territorial range for most of them (Denig in Ewers 1961:15-29; Schoolcraft 1851-57:3:629-631). A few bands related to the Minneconjous, however, were reported to winter in or near the northern Hills after the 1850s (Vestal 1934:5-6; Odell 1942:27-28; One Bull in Stone 1982:23; White Bull in Stone 1982:25).

4. Pastoralist Orientations

There was yet another adaptive orientation in the region of the Black Hills, but this one appears to have been confined to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries at the height of the intertribal horse trade. During the protohistoric and early historic eras, there were populations who included the Black Hills as a secondary or tertiary procurement area and who traveled long distances to reach them every summer. Before the 1820s, and perhaps for some decades thereafter, there were specialized horse-trading bands that annually traveled from the southern plains
to the Black Hills to trade their horses for guns and other British and French trade goods. These populations spent much of their summer trading in areas in proximity to the Hills, and they no doubt entered the interiors at these times to procure specialized resources or as part of their everyday subsistence strategies while staying in the region. It seems safe to assume that, in the eighteenth century, there were a number of bands that ranged between the Black Hills in the summer and the southern plains in the winter. This is suggested by the fact that the Kiowas, Plains (Kiowa and Padouca) Apaches, Comanches, and also a group called Ietans appear simultaneously in the records of Spanish observers in areas south of the Arkansas River and by French and American reporters along the Missouri (Hyde 1959:99, 201; Mooney 1979:167; Kavanagh 1996:69, 128; Foster and McCollough 2001:927; Parks 2001b:966). In the nineteenth century, some of the Cheyennes were known to follow a transhumance pattern of movement in which they acquired horses in the Southwest, grazed them on the southern plains over the winter, and then brought them north to trade in the summer at locations on the edge of the Black Hills and also along the Missouri River (Jablow 1951; Moore, J. 1996:30-33; Isenberg 2000:46). The groups who became specialized pastoralists with horse herds numbering in the thousands ultimately remained in the south because of the milder winters and better grazing conditions for their horses. The Cheyennes, however, returned regularly to the Black Hills. John Moore (1981:14) comments on how the Cheyennes viewed these movements:

Modern elders also provide the reasons for the migratory patterns of the Cheyenne bands. While the whole tribe preferred to spend some summer time in the Black Hills, after about 1830 there weren't enough buffaloes in the area to support the whole tribe through the winter, so some bands had to make winter camps along the rivers of the southern plains. This also conserved grass, for as the horse herds of the Cheyennes began to grow, they needed more grass than the Black Hills area could provide through the winter.

The Southern Arapaho leader Left Hand gave a similar explanation to Hugh Scott (1907:558) in 1897. Most of the bands who came to specialize in horse herding and trading continued to rely on bison as an important source of food; however, many of the decisions they made about their own transhumance migrations were not determined simply by bison movements but more critically by the locations of good winter pasturage for their horses. When these herds were small, various locations in and around the Black Hills, especially along the southeastern stretches of the Race Track, would have been good spots to graze horses over the winter and at other times of the year as well. Certainly after European Americans arrived in the southern Hills, this area, including lands that are now part of Wind Cave National Park, was a popular location to raise and graze thoroughbred horses, as evidenced in the histories of local ranches, including the Valentine Ranch at Wind Cave National Park (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:41, 45; McAdam 1973:27; Sundstrom, J. 1977:161-164, 1994:48-51).

5. Early Agency Orientations

When European and then later American traders entered the country near the Black Hills, many married into local Indian families and adapted their lifestyles to the customs of the country. Over the next century, the descendants of these unions formed their own distinct communities, which were connected on one side to their father's commercial enterprises and on the other to their mother's communities of origin (Mekeel 1943:188; Parkman in Felskog 1969:312; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:34-38; Bent in Hyde 1968; Swagerty 1988:75, 82; Bray 1994:178-179; Pickering 1994:61). Some of the bands whose daughters married local traders began to winter and even establish year-round campsites near the trading posts run by their in-laws, and some of their men were hired as hunters to provision the traders' meat supplies (Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:42). One well-known band of this order was associated with
Fort Laramie and known as the *Wagluke*, Loafers or Hangers Around the Fort. In his 1856 annual report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Thomas Twiss (1856b:98) wrote:

These Indian traders have Indian families and a large circle of relatives among the Indian bands. Besides these, there is always a great number of Indian families who, from long habit and inclination, make it their home at the trading posts, and would from necessity plant and raise corn for food, when they once learned the manner of doing it from the Indian trader.

Thirteen years later, De Witt C. Poole (1869:315), the agent at Whetstone Agency, wrote:

The Indians located immediately at this agency are known as Loafer, composed of individuals who have seceded from the various bands of the Sioux and Cheyennes, and number about one thousand souls. They are mostly inclined to cultivate the soil, and adopt the habits of civilized life, instigated thereto by long association with the whites who have married into their families in many instances.

The same year John Burbank (1869:302-303), Governor and Ex Officio Superintendent of Indian Affairs, reiterated Poole’s observations and reported that one thousand Indians at the Whetstone Agency, largely representing seceders from the Cheyenne and Sioux bands, had long-term relationships with whites. Many of these Lakotas and Cheyennes married non-Indians, farmed, and adopted European American cultural practices. Indeed, as Scudder Mekeel (1943:189) wrote, the government recognized these bands as part of a permanent class that typically stayed at the agency throughout the year but left periodically to hunt and procure wild plant products elsewhere.

The bands whose daughters married European Americans often served as go-betweens, helping to negotiate exchanges between other tribal bands and the traders. In later years, many of these bands played a similar bridge role in dealings between representatives of the U.S. government and local tribes. Susan Bettelyoun and Josephine Waggoner’s book, *With My Own Eyes: A Lakota Woman Tells Her People’s History* (1988), gives considerable insight into the history and lifestyles of the bands associated with Susan’s father, James Bordeaux, a trader who operated a post along the Platte and in later years, the White River. What is clear from this book is that, like other bands, the *Wagluke*, or Loafers, made regular trips to the Black Hills to hunt deer and elk in the late fall and to procure lodgepoles in the spring (Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:21). The Black Hills was clearly a part of a long-distance, but probably a secondary or tertiary, territorial range for the *Wagluke* Lakotas who wintered at Fort Laramie.

Although many Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho bands still followed adaptive patterns independent of the agencies, more and more were using the Black Hills in the fashion of the Loafer bands after the 1860s. Fort Laramie and later other agencies, such as Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, were becoming popular locations to over winter because these were sites where treaty annuities were distributed. With the disappearance of bison east of the Black Hills and along the Platte, many bands became more dependent on the annuities they received from the government in the form of food, clothing, and tools (Olson 1965:171-198; Powell 1981:2:815-817; Price, C. 1996:102-132). In time, a greater portion of the combined Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho population remained at the agencies year-round, following the pattern established by the Loafer bands in earlier decades. By 1872, probably half of this population made the agencies their winter homes (Daniels 1872:268-269).

As the agencies started to function as wintering grounds, some local bands began to cover more than five hundred miles of territory annually to reach good bison hunting territory. As
described earlier, Black Elk's family wintered in the area of Fort Robinson in the years between 1873 and 1875, set out in the spring for the Black Hills where they gathered lodgepoles, fished, and carried out other procurement activities, and then traveled to the bison ranges on the Powder and Tongue River where they remained from midsummer to late fall, at which point some began the return trip to their winter camps in Nebraska. In this instance, even though their relationship to the Black Hills entailed a long-distance connection, they were still visited on a regular and recurring basis and remained part of the band's primary territorial range.

When Lakota agencies were located on the White River, after 1873, Red Cloud's near Crawford, Nebraska and Spotted Tail's just a few miles down river to the east, they were within easy striking distance of the southern Black Hills and the region of Wind Cave National Park. It was easy for the hunters of bands who wintered at these agencies to reach this area on specialized hunting trips in the late fall and early winter. Indeed, stories about Wind Cave from this period invariably involve hunters and hunting expeditions in wintertime (Wounded Horse in Koller 1970:1-2; Red Cloud in Matson 1972:39-42; Swift Bird in Kadlecak and Kadlecak 1981:147-148). Other bands, however, stayed in the Hills to winter at this time. This was certainly the case for Standing Bear's family, who wintered at the Buffalo Gap in 1874 (Standing Bear 1975:17-23), and it was also true for the Minneconjou followers of Makes Room, who camped over the winter near the present-day area of Sylvan Lake and Bear Lodge Butte (One Bull in Stone 1982:23; White Bull in Stone 1982:25). Even as late as the winter of 1875-1876, the bands of Spotted Tail and Swift Bear were reported to encamp at the edge of the Black Hills where they depended largely on elk and deer for food (Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:108-109). As reported earlier, Spotted Tail, with good reason, recommended the Buffalo Gap to Samuel Hinman (1874:93) as a site for his new agency. The practice of camping over the winter at the base of the Black Hills, close to water and wood, as well as good hunting grounds for deer and elk, appears to have been common during this period, and it followed an age-old pattern in which the late fall and early winter months were the times to procure elk and deer (Hassrick 1964:65, 156). After bison disappeared from the region, it is clear that local groups increasingly turned their sights to the Hills still abundant populations of elk and deer (Hayden 1862a:373-374).

There is also no question that the Hills remained a popular area for the Lakotas to procure their lodgepoles as well as food and medicinal plants in the late spring and early summer months as described by Nicolas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:173) and others (Hinman 1874:95; Jenney 1875:182; Newton and Jenney 1880:323; Bushnell 1922:70; Bordeaux 1929:191-192; Standing Bear 1975:6-17; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:72; Sundstrom, J. 1977:317, 369; Moore, J. 1981:14). It was in the summer of 1874 that the Black Hills Expedition came upon an Oglala band led by One Stab in the high interiors of the Black Hills where they were hunting and collecting plants (Ludlow 1875:16; Calhoun in Frost 1979:53-54, 59; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Curtis Krause and Olson 1974:173-174; Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:250; Forsyth in Krause and Olson 1974:255-256; McAndrews 1974:81). In the following summer of 1875, Jenney's party came across a recently abandoned campsite where the occupants had been processing lodgepoles and carrying on unidentified ceremonial observances (Dodge in Kime 1996:105). Whether or not local bands camped at their agencies year around, they were clearly using the Hills in a traditional fashion and in seasonally specific ways.

Yet, in some years, the Black Hills became a primary territory, perhaps even a year-round shelter, for local bands fleeing the threat of U.S. military troops. In the aftermath of the 1854 Ash Hollow Massacre on the Platte River, many Lakota bands retired to the Black Hills and remained there until it was safe to return to their wintering spots farther south. Similarly, in the 1860s, in the wake of the Sand Creek Massacre and the Minnesota Conflict, many Cheyennes and Lakotas moved into the Hills to elude the soldiers. Cheyenne and Arapaho bands from the south,
which typically wintered along the south fork of the Platte, returned north and took refuge in the Black Hills. There were also bands from the north and east that congregated in the Black Hills after 1862 to avoid General Sibley and his troops. As confrontations with the U.S. military escalated, there are increasing reports of the Black Hills being used by the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos as a sanctuary -- a place to hide women, children, and the elderly during periods of intense hostility (Twiss 1856:87; Warren 1875:51; Curtis 1907-30:3:178; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:68; Larson 1997:81). Yet, it is equally clear that in some periods tribes stayed away from the Hills when large military expeditions were known to be traveling there (Standing Bear, H. in DeMallie 1984:158; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:108).

Notwithstanding the movement of many bands, now known as the friendlies, to the agencies, other groups under the leadership of men like Crazy Horse, Lame Deer, and Sitting Bull of the Lakotas and Little Wolf and Box Elder of the Cheyennes continued to carry on their life independent of federal annuity distributions, and they did so largely in the region of the Powder, Tongue, and Yellowstone rivers where bison could still be found (Powell 1981:2:815-817, 921-922). In the 1870s, many of these bands also continued to hunt and winter in the neighborhood of the Black Hills but generally in their northern reaches (One Bull in Stone 1982:23; White Bull in Stone 1982:25). According to Ben Arnold (in Crawford and Waggoner 1999:287-288), a scout and mail carrier in the region during the 1870s, there were many reasons that some of the Lakotas stayed in the bison country and away from the agencies. One of these was that it was more economically profitable for them to do so. As he put it,

The annuities offered the non-treaty Indians amounted to less than the value of one robe per capita. From a business standpoint, it was to their interest to remain away from the reservation, hunt buffaloes, and sell their robes to traders and buy what they needed for subsistence, and not depend upon the agency issues, which were never sufficient to keep them from feeling the pinch of hunger. This fact alone sent many friendlies to the hostile bands where they could be better clothed and fed. The wild bands without agency assistance were in better physical condition than were the agency Indians. Barring the molestation of the military, life in the hostile camps was more desired than inactive life on an agency. The complaints against the soldiers were well founded, as at no time did they live outside their treaty rights (in Crawford and Waggoner 1999:287-288).

Although some within the ranks of the non-treaty bands came to the agencies to stay temporarily with relatives, their primary settlement and procurement areas were outside the reservation in their joint hunting territories. Many of those identified as Oglala and Sicangu traveled to the agencies at Red Cloud and Spotted Tail by way of the Black Hills, following familiar trails and camping at locations that had not been overtaken by the military and well-armed miners (Black Elk in De Mallie 1984:154-155). After 1875, under a policy of U.S. military containment, Lakota and Cheyenne bands were forced to stay near their agencies and considered hostile if they chose to remain at more removed sites in the vast area that was still considered their territory, either as part of the Great Sioux Reservation or the joint intertribal hunting ground established by the Treaty of 1868 (Howard, E. 1875:254; Mekeel 1943:190; Powell 1981:2:932-936; Price, C. 1996:153; Arnold in Crawford and Waggoner 1999:239-240).

Some aspects of the older modes of adaptation to the Black Hills had persisted even as more bands became dependent on agency food distributions, but overall, the patterns had changed, especially after 1874. Most of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were now situated in proximity to agencies where the federal government supplied them with much of their food (Price, C. 1996:102-132). Although the Black Hills were still used in traditional ways, the numbers of people using them probably declined after European Americans invaded the area. Again, the popular idea that Native people did not use the Hills needs to be interpreted in the con-
text of the time that people like Lieutenant Richard I. Dodge were writing about them. As explained earlier, the most intense use of the Hills by the Lakotas and Cheyennes took place in the winter months when European American exploratory parties did not travel in the area. Bands typically encamped at lower elevations along the Race Track or along the valleys of streams that cut through the Hogback. When European Americans happened to come upon small parties, or the remains of their recent encampments, in the high elevation interiors, it was during the early summer months, the time of the year the Lakotas and Cheyennes usually entered this part of the Hills. By the middle of the summer, the Hills were largely abandoned as groups set out for their bison hunting grounds on the high plains. Yet, it was during an era of declining use and during the off-season of their use that most of the first hand observations of the Black Hills were recorded and interpreted in such a way as to deny that the Lakotas and Cheyennes ever had any real occupancy of the area. In contradiction to the Lakota and Cheyennes own oral traditions, the European American accounts of the mid-1870s cast doubt about their permanent occupancy of the Black Hills. Unfortunately, these sources are the ones that continue to be the primary references for many later, and often misleading, interpretations of tribal use and occupancy of the Hills in pre-reservation times (Jenney 1875:182; Palais 1941:3; Parker 1966:5-6; Froiland 1978: 1).

6. Modern Reservation Orientations

After the 1877 Agreement, the Lakotas and Cheyennes relationships to the Hills became even more disrupted. In her 1997 dissertation, *The Significance of Place: The Lakota and Paha Sapa*, Alexandra Lyn New Holy (1997:155), organizes the Lakotas historical relationship to the Black Hills in terms of three broad periods: one moves from myth times to 1877, when the Lakotas still held sovereignty over the Hills and when these mountains continued to provide for the material and spiritual well-being of the people; the second covers the period until Wounded Knee II in 1973, when the Lakotas pursued a monetary settlement for the illegal seizure of the Hills; and the third includes the time since when any kind of payment for the Hills was rejected. Her timeline can be elaborated upon further by giving attention to some of the concrete ways the Lakotas and Cheyennes continued to actually use the area, even though they no longer held *de facto* control over it. Indeed, contrary to her argument (New Holy 1997:112), part of which is premised on the notion that Lakotas were physically separated from the Black Hills, we take the position that even though they were removed and their material associations with them altered, many still maintained an active onsite relationship to the Hills.

While 1877 theoretically ended Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho sovereignty over the Hills, these tribes still entered and used them for many different purposes in subsequent decades. Indeed, as described in Chapter Six, many Lakotas and Cheyennes returned to the Black Hills in the early twentieth century, following a pattern of brief and even extended residency and use during the summer and fall months. In Hot Springs, for example, some Lakotas were reported to spend their entire summer at a campground on the northern edge of the town (Bingham 1973:3; Petty 1973:23, 24). Until the early decades of the twentieth century, much of their presence in the region was associated with trade, subsistence activity, and the use of local waters for healing. From 1878 to 1918, when agencies received their food rations late or in insufficient quantities to meet local needs, government officials had little choice but to allow local tribes to find food off-reservation to stave off hunger and even starvation (Mekeel 1932:278; Stewart 1967-1970:71; Clark, B. 1983:68-69). Before 1920, it is clear that agents at Pine Ridge routinely issued passes to Lakotas to travel in the Hills for extended periods of time in the summer and fall to gather roots and herbs (Jones 1904:125-128; U.S. Senate 1904; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:262). Although hostile encounters with local settlers near the Buffalo Gap and Edgemont from 1889 to 1890 and a shoot-out with a Wyoming sheriff’s posse in 1903 must have had some
salutary effect on their off-reservation food procurement activity, there is no doubt it continued with or without government approval (Clark, B. 1983:68-69; Jones 1904).


In the summer when the teepsala or teepsins, a wild plant with a bulbous edible root, were ready for use, the Indians roamed the prairie in bands, digging and drying the teepsala for winter use. When Nat’s children saw the Indians out digging the turnips nearby they would run to their mother and beg an old hen to trade to the Indians for some of the turnips. Ralph recalls that he and Elmer Curl, whose parents lived near Bert’s place one year, dug Indian turnips by the hour.

The use of the Hills for gathering plants and minerals for practical or spiritual uses continues largely uninterrupted until the present-day. For this purpose, Lakotas came to the Hills not only from Pine Ridge but as far away as Standing Rock (LaPointe 1976:46; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:46, 98, 133-134, 141, 253, 258-259; Ingram 1989:181; Young Bear and Theisz 1994:30, 128; Forbes-Boyte 1996:104, 106). One group was even reported at Wind Cave in 1910, requesting stones for use in healing (Pilcher 1964), and many continued to come to the neighboring thermal springs to bathe (Cook 1888; Casey 1949:284; Bingham 1973:11; Petty 1973:23; Williams 1973:16; Clark, B. 1983:23; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:293-294; LaPointe 1976:46). In addition, Cheyennes were known to travel to the Hills from Montana and even Oklahoma after the 1930s to collect plants and gather clays as well as minerals for their ceremonial paints (Odell 1942; Hart 1981:33, 39; Moore, J. 1981:14; Schlesier 1987:6). Both tribes also continued to use the Hills as a place to fast, pray, and conduct other ceremonial observances (see Section Four).

Especially after 1900, Lakotas were involved in the annual summer rodeo, fair, and festival activities of local white communities. As described in greater detail in the last chapter, certain groups traveled a regular summer circuit in the Hills, staying in the region for extended stays in their tipis and wall tents (Mekeel 1932; Sundstrom, J. 1977: 124), and some of them regularly crossed over and camped on the lands of Wind Cave National Park (McAdam 1973:6). In time, permanent tourist attractions were established in the Hills that invited Lakota participation and that provided facilities for them to camp over the entire summer (DeMallie 1984:63-64; Born 1994; Larner 2002:234-272). Following trends established elsewhere in the Hills, Wind Cave National Park even supported a weeklong Indian encampment of its own in the summers of 1937 and 1938 (Freeland 1937). As reported by Martha Geores (1990:101-102), local tourist boosters made major efforts during the 1950s to capitalize on the region’s tribal connections and to involve local tribes in tourist attractions.

Whether Lakotas and Cheyennes entered the Hills for brief or extended seasonal stays, it is clear that they continued to retain a visible presence there. Badger Clark (1983:70-71) described the co-mingling of Indians, local ranchers, and wealthy Easterners as a typical sight on the streets of Hot Springs in the days when its spas were at the height of their popularity in the 1890s. Indeed, some Lakotas spent their entire summer at campsites in Hot Springs (Bingham 1973:6). Robert Casey (1949:292) described their ubiquitous presence in other Hills communities as well. Many other sources document the recurring presence of Lakotas in the Black Hills during the late

By the 1930s, it becomes clear that the Black Hills had become, once again, an important part of some Lakotas annual subsistence cycle; they remained a critical part of their de facto territorial range, even though, in the eyes of the federal government, they no longer held title to them. Unquestionably, the Lakotas were now entering the Hills on different terms and under a very different set of circumstances, but the fact remains that part of their livelihood was drawn from their summer activities in the Hills, which also included jobs in various programs of the federally-run Works Project Administration, work as waitresses at Sylvan Lodge, and employment as practical nurses in the hospitals of Hot Springs (Brown Thunder 1971; Petty 1973:25; Lewis, L. 1980:135-136; Sundstrom, J. 1994:102). They also shopped and traded in the Hills, especially at Hot Springs and Rapid City, both of which have long served as important off-reservation commercial centers for people from the Pine Ridge Reservation. The Lakotas history of employment and commerce in the Hills, coupled with their visits to the area for a wide range of traditional subsistence and religious purposes, was a significant part of their lives well into the 1960s. It is important to emphasize that even while their legal claims to the Black Hills were stalled in government offices and federal courts during these years, the Lakotas and their Cheyenne friends never completely abandoned their economic and cultural ties to the region.

Starting in the 1970s, the Lakotas attempted in varying ways and degrees to reestablish a relationship to the Black Hills on their own terms. Beginning with the takeover at Mount Rushmore in 1970 to the Yellow Thunder Camp on National Forest Service Land in 1981, some Lakotas used these occupations as a tactic for repossessing lands to which they believed they still held title under the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. Wind Cave National Park was also one of the sites of a politically motivated takeover in 1981. By the time the Supreme Court reached a decision in 1980 validating Lakota treaty rights to the Hills and offering a cash settlement for their illegal seizure, most Lakotas were no longer interested in taking monetary compensation for the Hills. Instead, as will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter, they were uniformly in favor of seeking congressional action to bring about a return of public lands in the Black Hills. Even today, the defining character of the Lakotas' political posture towards the Hills is to seek the repatriation of federal lands, and in the meantime, to protect and open access to these lands for the conduct of religious observances and other traditional activities (New Holy 1998). As Lakota political efforts to regain sovereignty over sections of the Black Hills continue to play out in Congress, the courts, and the media, the area is still used for various practical and spiritual purposes.

Less well publicized, but equally significant, are the growing numbers of Lakota people who returned to the Hills after World War II as full time residents. Again, their presence has increased substantially in towns like Hot Springs, Custer, Spearfish, and Rapid City where many of them hold jobs in the public and private sector. Census figures for 2000 show that that over six percent of the residents in Fall River and three percent of those in Custer County are American Indian, most of whom probably identify themselves as Lakota (U.S. Census 2000, Population Profiles, South Dakota: Fall River, Pennington and Custer counties). These are small numbers to be sure,
but they indicate, nevertheless, that Lakotas make up the Hills citizenry and represent the largest ethnic population in the region besides people of European American ancestry.

Today, areas of the Hills, especially around Rapid City and Hot Springs, remain important commercial centers for Lakotas from neighboring reservations. These and other regions of the Hills are locations for leisure travel among the Lakotas and for the field trips of their local school districts. Wind Cave National Park is one of the sites where school districts from the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations regularly bring their students on field trips and outings (Terry 1999, Personal Communication; Albers and Kittelson 2002). Again, even though the conditions under which and the manner in which the Lakotas and Cheyennes use the Black Hills are very different from what they were before 1877, the fact remains that the Hills are still a place they live and visit. As such, they remain a vital part of their modern adaptive strategies and survival.

II. EUROPEAN AMERICAN RELATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

During the first century of their presence in and around the Black Hills, European Americans adapted themselves to the region in much the same way as the tribal nations in whose territories they lived. As more white Americans settled in or traveled through the region, the federal government stepped in and attempted to assert its power over the land through treaty-making, military containment, and finally, the dispossession of tribal peoples from their homelands. In the process, peoples from cultures with very different understandings of land tenure came into conflict. In this battle, the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho peoples lost much of their territory, including their beloved Black Hills. The loss came about not only through their physical removal from their homelands, but also through the imposition of a very different way of relating to and thinking about these lands. When Americans first arrived in the Hills, they quickly imposed their own notions of ownership, even though they had no legal right to do so. After the Black Hills Agreement of 1877, the area was rapidly transformed through new patterns of production and property relationship. Yet, there was also a stunning, albeit unintentional continuity in land-use strategies in the Black Hills. Much of the Hills and its surrounding grasslands remained a commons with multiple users. Instead of being organized through networks of kinship, the commons was under the management of government agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, the National Forest Service, and the National Park Service (Geores 1990). Initially, laws of discovery and usufruct rights, which systematically excluded the region’s indigenous inhabitants, determined much of the access to this commons. Later, it was regulated by the federal government which determined how the land would be put to use and who would be its benefactors. At different times in the twentieth century, various American users of the Black Hills have contested federal regulations governing the commons (Geores 1990). This contestation, however, has continued against a backdrop where the ownership of the Black Hills remains a site of struggle between the newcomers and their original tribal owners.

A. Trade and Trapping Patterns

The documented presence of traders and trappers of European ancestry living in the Black Hills extends as far back as the first decade of the nineteenth century, although it is probable that some were coming here over extended periods in the eighteenth century as well. The earliest Europeans in the area were probably from Spanish settlements in the Southwest, coming to the area as itinerant traders. The traders and trappers who stayed for longer periods of time were French in ancestry, and they probably began to settle in the area at the end of the eighteenth century. Their occupation of the region was established by usufruct rights, usually gained by entering into marriages or adoptive kin relations with the tribes on whose lands these men worked.
and traveled. Over time, some of the men remained in the region and formed large families. Along the Missouri, Platte, and White rivers, the traders and their mixed-ancestry families formed permanent communities around their trading posts and places of business. Attached to these posts were employees, trappers, and hunters who also married into local tribes. These men, their families, and the tribal people who followed them led a more mobile life, temporarily traveling away from the posts to hunt and sometimes winter at far-removed locations where fur-bearing animals were abundant. Their patterns of life often mirrored those of the tribes with whom they lived. As Susan Bettelyoun and Josephine Waggoner (1988:68) described the bands of trappers:

Most of the trappers married Indian women and had large families. They went out in the wildest places where the animals were to be caught along timbered creeks. These white men lived in tents and adapted themselves to Indian ways. A winter camp was generally made in the timber some place; a few families would go in together for protection.

Over time, the independent trappers and their mixed ancestry families became more prevalent in the region, and many of them probably traveled and camped in the Black Hills on their hunting and trapping excursions. Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:312) describes one of these groups, although it is not clear whether he is describing the Black Hills proper or the Laramie Range here.

The reader may possibly recollect that when I joined the Indian village, beyond the Black Hills, I found that a few families were absent, having declined to pass the mountains along with the rest. The Indians in Bisonette's camp consisted of these very families, and many of them came to me that evening to inquire after their relatives and friends. They were not a little mortified to learn that while they, from their own timidity and indolence, were almost in a starving condition, the rest of the village had provided their lodges for the next season, laid in a great stock of provisions, and were living in abundance.

Little about the life of these family-based trappers remains, but clearly by the 1840s, they along with the traders who employed them became a growing part of the local landscape.

Many of the trappers, however, appear to have lived a more solitary existence. Traveling alone or with a companion, they spent many months of the year in the remotest recesses of local mountains, trapping beaver and other fur-bearing animals. Susan Bettelyoun (1988) gives a vivid description of her father's early years as a beaver trapper working the streams on the northern side of the Hills, and Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:258-269) offered interesting accounts of many of the lone trappers who plied their trade in the region and traded their peltries at Fort Laramie each year. Again, even though we know some of the names of these trader trappers, such as Jon Vall who traded with Cheyennes at the foot of the Black Hills (probably along the lower reaches of French Creek) in the first decade of the nineteenth century, we know very little about their life and travels in the Hills. Much more information, however, is available on the fur companies and commercial systems they worked under (Wishart 1979:41-114).

Another variety of trappers in the area was associated with the highly mobile and independent brigades known popularly as the Mountain Men. One of these was Jedediah Smith's American Fur Company party, who entered and crossed the Hills in 1823 at the Buffalo Gap and possibly over lands that now make up Wind Cave National Park (Clyman in Camp 1960). These men typically entered a region for a few weeks, trapped its supplies of beaver until they were depleted, and then moved onto another location (Wishart 1979:115-204). Farther west in the Rocky Mountains this was the dominant pattern of trapping, but it had little staying power in the region of the Black Hills. Why this is so is unknown. There certainly were streams still rich in beaver in the mid-nineteenth century, and in later years too, but it was probably too dangerous for such outfits to remain in Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho country for any extended period.
After the 1860s, military scouts, soldiers, freighters, and miners married into Indian families. Some of these men established homes with their Indian wives in the Black Hills, and in adjoining areas during the 1870s. Indeed, there was a small community of these men and their Lakota wives and families living at Hot Springs in the 1880s. Very little has been written on these families or what happened to them in later years. What available writings reveal is that some of these men adapted themselves to a way of life that remained closely tied to the tribal communities from which their wives came, while others lived apart with their descendants becoming more closely aligned with and integrated into the region’s white communities.

B. The Extractive Economies of Gold and Grass

Gold and Grass comes from the title of a book about pioneer settlement in the Black Hills, which the author, Paul Friggens (1983:59), took from a quote attributed to the scout California Joe, who traveled with Walter Jenney’s expeditionary party in 1875. First, the gold brought the prospectors and then, the grass brought the cattlemen, both of whom developed patterns of adaptation and systems of land use strikingly different from the tribal nations who had occupied the region for thousands of years. Unlike the tribal nations, and even the European American trappers and traders before them, who accessed the land in common as a function of their kinship and friendship alliances, the new settlers imposed a way of relating to the land that was based on notions of exclusive use and private property. The land and all of the resources that it contained were commodities, which could be held by individuals or groups who possessed exclusive rights to use, sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of what they owned.

1. Relations to the Land

In the early years of European American settlement, the new arrivals established their ownership of the land and its resources through extralegal means. In the eyes of the government, they were squatters until the land was surveyed and deeds conveyed through the fee patenting system. Although there was some degree of order to the allocation of lands in the eastern regions of the United States under the Land Ordinance Act of 1785, there was little the government was able to do to enforce its land policies in the west. Battles ensued in Congress between politicians from the east and those from the west over the rights of squatters. The prosquatter faction achieved victory through the passage of a preemption act in 1841, under which squatters were given prior right to purchase the lands on which they had made improvements when the government offered them for sale (White, R. 1991:137-140). The lands of the Black Hills were no different: newcomers established their access rights informally through rights of discovery or rights of possession without regard to federal laws and regulations. Edwin Curley’s early guidebook (1877:113-128) to the Black Hills provides step-by-step instructions for asserting preemption rights to mines and other kinds of land in the area.

Under the terms of the 1872 Mining Act, all lands in the public domain of the United States were open to oil drilling and mineral mining without any payment of royalties -- a law that still applies unchanged today (Geores 1990:5). Miners staked their claims and quickly formed mining associations among themselves to record and keep track of lands they prospected and mined (Parker 1966:61-62, 92-94). Much has been written about the democratic ways in which these associations operated, and how the miners governed themselves (Parker 1966:60-63, 83, 94; Schell 1961:149-150). Certainly most of the early settlements during the years of the mining boom were built on the ideals of independence and democratic cooperation, but it is clear that this
pattern was soon eroded when mining claims and interests were turned over to investment bankers and speculators (Lamar 1996:150-177).

Very quickly, much of the area in the Black Hills interiors, including portions of the land where Wind Cave National Park is now located, was staked and claimed. In a short time, after the placer deposits were exhausted, the claims were abandoned or purchased by speculators. The speculators, who operated independently or by forming stock-bearing companies, bought up investments all over the Hills. Probably less than a decade after the discovery of gold, much of the mineral-rich section of the Hills was in a small number of private hands or holding companies (Parker 1966:196-198). Although some proved to be very profitable, for example, the claims that led to the hardrock mining of gold by the Homestake Mining Company at Lead, most ended up being worthless because the areas were too remote and costly to mine (Tallent 1899:401-403). The South Dakota Mining Company owned the claims over much of the area where Wind Cave now sits, but these were taken over by the federal government in 1901 when ownership rights to the land became embroiled in controversy.

The lands settled for ranching and farming followed different systems of use and ownership. The small-scale operators took over the areas of land they lived and worked on as squatters. Until these lands were deeded as homesteads in the 1890s, their occupation and use was managed informally through the unwritten agreements and mutual respect governing first rights of occupancy. Judging by the stories of early land transactions in the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs area, local settlers casually traded their ranch holdings and sold parcels of land with an exchange of cash or goods and a handshake (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 101; Clark, B. 1983:72). Once the government took control over the Hills in 1877 and started the process of surveying the land, which began in 1892, squatters rights in the area were generally recognized and deeded under the Homestead Act of 1862. Land not proved up for a homestead remained part of the public domain or was divided into quarter sections and made available to a new generation of homesteaders, known as the honyockers, who came to the area primarily to farm from 1889 until the early decades of the twentieth century. Many of these homesteads appear to have been situated outside the Hogback, along the Cheyenne River and its tributaries, on lands better suited to farming (Stewart 1967-70:71; Friggens 1983:87-89). However, some of them were established on some of the more rugged and marginal lands that would later become part of Wind Cave National Park (Western History Research 1992:71).

Before the land was surveyed, subdivided, and homesteaded, there was also a period when there was free access to the prairies surrounding the Black Hills and the timbers, meadows, and grasslands inside the Hogback. Recognizing that profits could be made from raising cattle without any investment in the lands that fed them, local entrepreneurs quickly developed companies to acquire the capital to buy stock, attracting investors from as far away as Texas and England. In the years between 1877 and 1886, hundreds of thousands of cattle ran loose on lands in and around Hills (Lee and Williams 1964:122-124; Friggens 1983:64), including much of the area within the present-day boundaries of Wind Cave National Park. The open range was organized and governed by an ingenious system known as the roundup. According to Paul Friggens (1983:64):

Each year, the different outfits divided the vast range country into districts or zones, with reps or representatives in charge, who proceeded to work the great herds on a set schedule of about six weeks. Early each spring, the cattlemen dispatched their cowboys and reps to round up the drifting herds, assess winter losses and brand the calves. In the fall or beef roundup, the cattle were again gathered, calves weaned, steers and old cows sorted out and trailed to the closest shipping point.
In allocating their grazing rights, the ranchers of the southern Hills appear to have escaped some of the battles that embroiled the large cattle outfits and small-scale operators in the range wars of neighboring Wyoming (Lee and Williams 1964:124-126; White, R. 1991:344-346). The reason for this is unknown, but it can be hypothesized that these two groups may not have stood in competition. The small operators appear to have owned some of the less desirable ranges closer to the base of the Hills and inside the Hogback along the Fall River and Beaver, Highland and Lame Johnny creeks. While these areas were optimal for maintaining small herds because of their sheltered grazing lands and access to water, they were probably not as well-suited for the large, concentrated enterprises cattlemen were running on the open prairies that hugged the South Fork of the Cheyenne River. Interestingly, it was these very conditions that allowed some of the small-scale Black Hills ranchers to sustain much lower losses during the disastrous winter of 1886-1887 (Schell 1961:245).

Generally speaking, there appears to have been little competition and fighting among those with local range and water rights in the area of Wind Cave National Park, except, of course, for the now infamous McDonald-Stabler feud. But this was not the only squabble that led to litigious action over land and water. There were other contested claims, which, interestingly, also involved members of the Stabler family. According to Fannie McAdam (1973:29-33), Charles Valentine had a romantic interlude with Stabler's daughter, Catherine, who sued him in court for breach of promise and won his interest in the Valentine Ranch. In 1889, she went to New York and married another man, Charles F. Ottman, who returned with her to run the ranch, which she worked while still serving as a guide at Wind Cave (Bohi 1962:392n.32). The couple sold the Valentine Ranch and moved to a ranch west of the park. In later years, a fight broke out with her brother over water rights. Apparently, her mother and brother, after losing their claim to property at Wind Cave, settled on a ranch near Shirttail Canyon, where spring water was piped to Catherine's ranch. No compensation was paid for the use of this water, so her brother, Charles, took her to court and won a seven-hundred dollar settlement. After giving up her own ranch, she stayed on her mother and brother's ranch and continued to guide at Wind Cave until 1913, when she left the area permanently to resettle in New York (Bohi 1962:392; McAdam 1973:33). Kate, as Catherine was commonly called, was a colorful and independent personality, who packed side-arms and purportedly, had numerous romantic liaisons with local men. From McAdam's stories (1973:29-33) of her, she may very well have been the southern Hills version of Calamity Jane.

Land inside the Hogback in the neighborhood of Wind Cave National Park and Hot Springs, except for tracts along some of the continuously flowing streams, appears to have been used most profitably for grazing cattle, horses and farther west, sheep. In fact, most of the patent files for lands inside park boundaries indicate that much of the area was used primarily for grazing (Bohi 1962:421, 426, 428, 434, 440; McAdam 1973:8; Western History Research 1992:81, see also Abstracts of Patent Claim files contained in this report). Small parcels, averaging 18.9 acres, were cultivated for grains, root crops, kitchen gardens, and even orchards (McAdam 1973:8; Western History Research 1992:81, 88, Abstracts). This was also a location where settlers secured timber for fuel and shelter (illegally after 1903), raised kitchen stock (poultry and hogs), and engaged in a wide variety of other subsistence activities including fishing, hunting, and the collection of wild plant foods. These activities most certainly sustained them when the markets for cash crops and stock were low (Bohi 1962:366, 434, 462; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 72, 283, 419; McAdam 1973:8-9; Smith 1973:25; Williams 1973:3, 6, 20, 26; Fall River County

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4It was less desirable not because of the quality of grasses but because of the lack of available open and contiguous space.
Another industry that survived through an extralegal system of land use was the timber business. In areas north of Wind Cave in what is now Custer State Park, small operators built sawmills and took the logs freely. Like the free grasslands the cattlemen used, there was open access to the forests, and loggers simply appropriated the timber they transformed into usable lumber (Tallent 1899:411; Lindsay 1967-1970:899-900; Geores 1990:38-39). Open access, however, was curtailed after 1897 when the Black Hills Forest Reserve was established. After this date, the government began to assert its proprietary interests in the area. It did so not only by testing the legitimacy of mining and homestead claims before fee patents were transferred to the owners, but also by restricting future access to lands without homestead, mining, or township titles. In future decades, access to forest lands for mineral extraction, timber cutting, and stock grazing was regulated through leases at minimal or zero cost (Geores 1990:42-43, 46, 48).

National Park Service lands, except for properties with preexisting patents, also became restricted. The original 10, 522.17 acres set aside in 1903 were limited to specified uses. In its early years of operation, Wind Cave park lands were seamlessly connected to local homesteads; they were not cordoned off, and they continued to be used as an open range until 1909, when permits were issued for cattle grazing (Bohi 1962:421-422, 428). It was not until much later that further limits would be placed on the park’s land use, restricting activity largely to camping, hiking, and sightseeing. During the twentieth century, more acreage adjacent to the park was set aside to establish a game preserve, originally under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture, to accommodate a herd of bison. In later years, additional land in the area would come under NPS stewardship, including the game preserve and large sections of privately owned land most of which was reconveyed to the federal government in the 1930s (Western History Research 1992:47, 100, 101, 103, 105).

As the legal custodian of the largest body of land inside the Black Hills Hogback, the federal government was authorized to determine the uses to which this property would be put. In order to do so, however, it was legally obligated to recognize the preexisting rights of the squatters with homesites, mining claims, and timber or grazing interests. In the early years of its management, roughly 1877 to 1920, the government often lacked the means or the will to police much of the public property under its jurisdiction (Geores 1990:57). Many people continued to squat illegally on forest land for example, and one way the government attempted to drive them off was to forbid any fencing on public lands, a prohibition that made it impossible for these homesteaders to protect their crops and stock. In 1906, however, many of the homesteaders were able to acquire patents on their land when the Forest Homestead Act was passed (Ibid:60-61). It would take many more years for the federal government, under the auspices of the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service to fully enforce many of their regulations on the use of public lands, for recreation or privately-run grazing, mining, and logging operations (White, R. 1991:147-150). Initially, at least, the federal government’s management and regulatory role evolved with little incident (Geores 1990:29-79).

When more land was reconveyed to the federal government and greater restrictions were placed on its use, the government agencies that managed the land had to contend with unlawful forms of usage, including the unauthorized taking of timber, illegal grazing, and poaching. In the decade after Wind Cave National Park was established, park superintendents complained about the unlawful taking of timber in their annual reports (WCNP Annual Reports, December 22, 1913; February 20, 1914; Bohi 1962:434), and as late as 1953, they were still reporting problems with poachers (Bohi 1962:462). It would take some years for local residents to adjust to the shift.
from a free and open use of public lands to more restricted patterns of access. Despite widely scattered instances of unlawful takings, Martha Geores (1990:78) argues that there was a low level of conflict between different user groups as these changes were enacted. She attributes this to the fact that local communities with clearly defined rights and boundaries managed resource uses in the area. Although the Park Service had to contend with some local resistance as the status of its lands changed over time, it never had to face some of the challenges of its sister agency, the Forest Service. Over the years, this agency has had to balance the interests of multiple user groups, from the area’s original mining, logging, and ranching interests to the newer and growing ranks of recreationists and tourists.

The only major conflict that appears to have engulfed Wind Cave National Park surrounded the disposition of the Custer Recreational Development Area. While the state of South Dakota and business groups in Custer and Rapid City lobbied to have this land transferred to Custer State Park, the citizens of Hot Springs staunchly opposed this move and advocated its inclusion in the national park that served their economic interests. Once again, this dispute illustrates the park’s twofold loyalties -- one to the county it serves politically, Custer, and two to the county it supports economically, Fall River. In 1946, the matter was settled and the land of the recreational development area was divided between the two parks. The park’s properties grew from nearly twelve thousand acres to a little over twenty-eight thousand acres at this time (Long 1992:54).

Most of the land in the Black Hills interiors served as a public commons in the early years of its occupation by the United States, much as it had when tribal nations controlled the area. The major difference was that once the federal government took control of the area, it was no longer managed through productive arrangements and alliance formations organized around kinship. Instead, access was regulated through the preemptive powers of the state, in this case the United States, which conceded rights either by transferring title to individual land and claim holders in the form of private property or else by bestowing access privileges through limited leases and/or restricted forms of usage. People of many different European ethnic heritages and economic interests came to rely on the mineral, timber, water, and grass resources of the Black Hills in its early years, and while some held private title to land inside the boundaries of forest and park service lands, they gained access to much more of it from the leases the government let. Publicly owned park lands, while open to everyone, were restricted in their use from the outset and confined to limited grazing leases and recreational pursuits. Until they were reconveyed to the federal government, private lands remaining within park borders continued to be used for many of the same domestic and small-scale agricultural functions as U.S. Forest Service lands. The pattern of small tracts of private property situated amidst larger federal land reserves was a very common pattern throughout the western United States, and one that was markedly different from what prevailed in areas east of the Mississippi River.

2. Ranch Life

Inside the Hogback, including areas in and around what is now Wind Cave National Park, local ranching families followed mixed economic strategies, but their main focus was raising stock and securing the forage to feed them. Ranchers pastured their cattle and horses on their own lands, but these holdings were often small. Therefore, many needed to run their animals on the area’s open ranges, which included lands over much of the area that is now Wind Cave National Park (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 41, 57; McAdam 1973:2-3; Sundstrom, J. 1977:363, 364; Long 1992:6-8). Even after free access to public ranges was terminated, Wind Cave National Park continued to be a site where local ranchers ran their livestock, only now they had to pay a fee to do so (Bohi 1962:462). When public lands were not available
for these purposes, families appear to have devised other strategies to acquire sufficient acreage to make their agricultural enterprises profitable (Western History Research 1992:101).

For many families in the late nineteenth century, cattle and horses were the stock they raised as commodities for sale and not a main source of their own food and transportation. Not uncommonly, early ranch families hunted, fished, and trapped for their meat in order not to deplete their cash stock. When wild game was still plentiful in the late nineteenth century, it was used to supplement other sources of food. Some of the descendants of early settlers recall eating the pronghorn, deer, bighorn, and rabbits that ranged over the prairies and timber as well as the ducks and geese that inhabited local streams (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:402, 419; Fall River County Historical Society 1976: 176, 232, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:103, 261). A number of accounts tell of settlers hunting in the area near Wind Cave, and indeed, many of the stories of the cave’s discovery, presented in Chapter Six, involve ranchers and cowboys hunting in the area.

Local ranch families regularly gathered berries and other wild plant foods on the public lands adjoining their ranches, and as children, they often picked them to earn money by selling them at Buffalo Gap, Custer, or Hot Springs (Bohi 1962:369; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 402, 425, 583, 585; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:227, 365). The berries were dried and canned and made into jams and jellies too (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 402, 425, 583, 585; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:277, 365, 379). Families also used government owned and regulated lands to procure the wood they needed for shelter and fuel, and they regularly made trips into the higher elevation areas to log the timber they needed for these purposes (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:507). Some continued to do so illegally on the lands of Wind Cave National Park (Bohi 1962:434).

Inside the Hogback of the southern Hills were small valleys with fresh water, timber for fuel, and rich alluvial soils for gardening. There were also open grasslands with good forage to run cattle. In and outside park properties, along Highland Creek, Beaver Creek, and the Fall River, many pioneer families raised cattle for the market but kept kitchen stock for domestic use. Milk cows provided them with the means to make cream, butter, and cheese, chickens for eggs and meat, and pigs for bacon and lard (Bohi 1962:391; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:283; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:29, 178, 204, 232). A quick survey of the abstracts from the Patent Case Files assembled in the report of Western History Research (1992) reveals the presence of this stock, as for example, in the listing of structures for housing chickens, keeping milk, and smoking pork (Western History Research 1992: Abstracts for Patents-1433,1492, 1944, 2666, 2952, 3242, 3356, 3588, 3770, 173421, 206218, 244675, 544749, 559966, 614676, 658673, 703938, 727792, 749867, 867857, 954365).

Many of the families in the area also maintained vegetable gardens and orchards on irrigable lands near springs or continuously flowing rivers and streams, and this was true at Wind Cave National Park as well (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 72, 283; Lindsay 1967-70:899; Williams 1973:3, 6; McAdam 1973:8; Smith 1973:25, 30, 35;Fall River County Historical Society 1976:29, 36, 46, 128, 178, 204, 232; Sundstrom, J. 1977:189, 309, 364, 1994:27, 62; Western History Research 1992:88, Abstracts for Patents-1433, 1490, 1492, 1494, 2952, 85744, 244675, 614676, 703938, 749867). Some families even transplanted wild berry bushes to their own properties for easy access to the fruit and to use as windbreaks (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:283). They also grew alfalfa and other domestic grasses, and they harvested wild grasses to feed their animals over the winter months (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:et seq; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:et seq., and
Throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, ranch life was often hard and unpredictable. In some years, the members of small ranch families needed to hire themselves out as laborers. They worked on the bigger cattle operations in the area, in freighting jobs, in construction, in domestic service, and in employment at the park in order to make ends meet (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:55, et. seq). During the early years of its existence, most of the workers and officials at Wind Cave National Park were local settlers, who supplemented their income by taking jobs at the park (Bohi 1962:423, 427, 429, 430). In fact, before the 1930s, park budgets were so meager that non-local workers ended up being quartered in the house of the park’s superintendent (Bohi 1962:427). No matter how the park’s settlers carved out a living for themselves, much of it remained dependent, directly or indirectly, on their use of public lands. In certain respects, this use was not strikingly different from the ways in which native peoples lived off the land in the Black Hills, relying on them to hunt, collect berries, edible forbs, and medicinal herbs, cut timber for fuel and shelter, graze horses, and possibly even plant small gardens.

In contrast to the tribal nations of earlier times, who used the entire Hills as a public commons, European Americans settlers squatted on, homesteaded, and eventually turned significant portions of the Black Hills into a form of private property. Much of the privatization took place along the Race Track. A much smaller portion of the high elevation interiors remained under private ownership. At Wind Cave National Park, the heaviest occupation and privatization of the land took place in the well-watered valleys or at locations along the Race Track, and much of it took place later in the settlement history of the Black Hills. Most of the northeastern region of the park was not settled until after the 1890s, while the southwestern sector was occupied a decade earlier. In fact, even after the original boundaries of the park were established in 1903, lands were still being settled and patented along the Race Track (Western History Research 1992:68-71). Some of this land continued to be homesteaded until the 1930s, when it was reconveyed to the federal government to become part of the park’s northeastern extension (Western History Research 1992:105).

Over the years, the lands inside park boundaries were settled and worked by individuals and families of different backgrounds and means. According to the analysis provided by Western History Research (1992:66-67), some of the more affluent individuals who occupied the area were able to purchase their homesteads with cash. Land patents secured through cash entries were typically associated with better property, located in the flat bottomlands near springs and continuously flowing streams. These lands were also usually occupied and patented at earlier dates. Most of the more rugged and less well-watered properties were proved up later, after the land was developed through investments of labor rather than cash.

Another indication of differences in the relative wealth of settlers was the form and size of their dwellings. These included roughly hewn, one room log cabins and also frame houses with stone basements and multiple rooms; the houses ranged from less than two hundred to over one-thousand square feet. Although some of this variation reflected family size, as suggested by the author of the Western History Research report (1992:87), it is equally clear that the dwelling spaces of comparably sized families differed in fairly significant ways (Western History Research 1992: Abstracts from Patent Case Files). Additionally, the nature and complexity of the kinds of structures on patented lands and the values of the properties clearly reflected differences in wealth.
as well. Some patents were associated with an elaborate array of structures including corrals, horse barns, ice houses, root cellars, smoking houses, chicken quarters, and granaries valued at well over a thousand dollars. Others, however, contained only modest improvements, amounting to little more than a dwelling, cattle shelter, and fencing with appraisals less than four hundred dollars (Western History Research 1992: Abstracts of Patent Case Files).

Early homesteaders also differed in their family status. A good portion (42%) of the settlers were single, men as well as women, or widows and widowers when they patented their lands, and most of them were in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties when they did so (Western History Research 1992:77, 79). Many others were members of nuclear families, with an average family size of 3.38 persons (Western History Research 1992:79), but there is also evidence for the presence of extended families in which in-laws, brothers, father/sons, and other family combinations took up homesteads on contiguous or nearby properties (Western History Research 1992:73). This was certainly the case in the land-holding patterns of the Stablers and McDonalds. In fact, some of the extended families in the area appear to have been among the most successful in their agricultural endeavors (Western History Research 1992:101). This was probably due not only to the fact that they shared larger and more varied land holdings, but also that they were able to mobilize a larger labor force and thereby diversify their work efforts. Again, like the tribal nations who occupied the area before them, extended family arrangements were highly adaptive in pursuing a living through mixed economic strategies.

Besides arrangements where extended families occupied contiguous properties, there is also evidence of more dispersed living and land patterns. A quick look at the list of patentees on Wind Cave National Park lands reveals that they carry many of the same family names as people who settled outside park boundaries, closer to the towns of Buffalo Gap or Hot Springs. Ball, Streeter, Sanson, and Tanner are some of the surnames that appear on the patent lists for the park and in the family histories compiled by local historical societies (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70; Fall River County Historical Society 1976; Sundstrom, J. 1977). In some cases, as with the Sanson family, the relationships appear to have been generational ones. Thus, Adolph Sanson, who held patents on lands at Wind Cave National Park, was the son of August Sanson, who owned a large ranch on the southeastern border of the park. In this case, and probably others too, it was the children of the first generation settlers who took up homesteads on park properties. This is suggested by the ages and dates when some of them filed their patents (Western History Research 1992: Abstracts of Patent Case Files).

Whether this is the case or not, it is obvious that many of the people in the Wind Cave area were tied to the communities of Pringle, Hot Springs, and Buffalo Gap through close-knit webs of kinship and marriage. It is equally clear from the family narratives in county and town histories that local settlers frequently visited one another and joined together in supporting various kinds of recreational, educational, and religious activity. School houses, which are indicated on GLO maps, were located on park properties (Western History Research 1992). Local settlers had many sources of entertainment in the late nineteenth century: they held their own dances with fiddle and cord players and organized a variety of social clubs and church functions (Clark, B. 1983:27-32; Stewart 1967-1970:70-72; Sundstrom, J. 1977:103-104, 1994:39; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:5, 127, 232). In addition, they participated in the annual summer fairs, rodeos, or celebrations of nearby towns. Buffalo Gap had an annual fair; Custer ran its Gold Discovery Days; and Hot Springs held a water carnival and hosted a Chautauqua every year (Stewart 1967-70:2-3; McAdam 1973:25; Petty 1973:22; Sundstrom, J. 1994:124).
C. The Rise of Federal Power and Tourism

The Great Depression represented an important turning point in the history of the Black Hills and the western United States more generally. It was a time when the federal government began to play an ever-growing role in the management of its land, timber, and mineral resources and in enforcing regulations on the private use of such properties. After World War II, it is well-recognized that the federal government appropriated to itself a much greater presence and power in the West, and in the process, abrogated many of the policies which gave local users considerable access to federal lands and input on their management (Geores 1990:80-81; White, R. 1991:496-534). As the federal government assumed more power over the regulation of its traditional mining, lumbering, and grazing users, new interests were emerging from the ranks of recreationists and tourists, many of whom came from urban areas outside the Black Hills. Once seen as a resource colony of the nation's cities, the source of the extractive resources on which its industries were built, the Black Hills and the greater West more generally started to become a playground for much of the American travel and leisure business. In the last decades of the twentieth century, the old users and the new users came into increasing conflict with one another. The old users wanted to maintain their cheap and unrestricted access to public lands in the Black Hills, while the new users wanted these protected for their recreational and sightseeing pursuits. Supported by conservationists and environmentalists, the new users became highly vocal in their criticisms of the federal government for not moving far enough and fast enough to preserve the nation's public resources for spectatorship and leisure activity. They put increasing pressure on the government and its agencies to restrict users whose operations conflicted with their own interests (Geores 1990:4-5). The costs and restrictions on grazing leases were strongly felt and opposed by the old users and small operators whose ranching enterprises often functioned with only small profit margins (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:41). Today, this divide stands at the forefront of ongoing battles over America's public lands, and it will remain so as long as the economies in the American West shift away from their reliance on extractive industries towards a new dependency on the commerce of leisure, travel, and recreation (White, R. 1991:519, 530).

1. The Commons and Its Competing User Groups

The tensions created by the changing face of the groups who use public lands has been felt most strongly by land management agencies under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The National Park Service largely escaped this conflict because its properties already held a special restrictive status that prohibited most extractive uses, other than fishing, berry picking, and limited grazing. From the beginning, they were marked as sanctuaries, and as Martha Geores (1990:6) points out, they have been relatively insulated from the battles that have plagued other federal land-managing agencies. Still, they have not been untouched by the changes taking place in the economies of the New West and the new user groups coming to the nation's parks. In this changing economy, the National Park Service has played a critical role as the public owner of many of the major sites and attractions around which a large part of the modern tourist economy is being built. The Black Hills are no exception in this regard; its major attraction, Mount Rushmore, is under National Park Service management. Although Wind Cave National Park does not have the same draw and cachet as Mount Rushmore National Monument or even Devil's Tower National Monument, it still occupies a vital position in the economy of the southeastern Hills where it is located. Indeed, as argued in the last chapter, it is one of the primary reasons tourists travel south of Custer, and as a result, its existence is vital to the service-oriented businesses that support the town of Hot Springs.
Since World War II, the National Park Service has faced tensions in trying to manage its lands in accordance with its original mission while simultaneously serving the interests of its growing number of visitors. The park service has had to achieve this balance in a time when fiscal support for parks has declined and when user fees have not made up the difference. Wind Cave National Park has not had to contend with impacts that the huge numbers of tourists and recreationists bring to some of the better-known parks, such as Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, and Yosemite; it is too obscure and remote for that. But it still faces the challenges of defining its place in relation to its local neighbors. Throughout the West, communities that adjoin public lands are becoming increasingly sensitive to the impact of federal policies and actions on their economic well being. Questions about the effects of parks on the more traditional industries, their jobs and taxes, are often raised especially when these involve a change in the user status of lands or in the power base of local political structures. While it is evident that the survivability of many communities in the West is dependent on how well they can articulate with the contemporary tourist, leisure, and recreational industry, it is also clear that these articulations often bring unwanted changes to the cultural lifestyles of older communities. The tensions between the older generation of ranching/farming families who make a living from the land and the incoming populations who visit or take up extended forms of residency for leisure and recreation but make their livelihoods elsewhere are widespread in the American West. In this situation, very different ideas are emerging about the proper use of public lands, with the old timers generally favoring open access for traditional occupations and the newcomers supporting restricted access that keeps the land and its minerals, fauna, and flora, intact.

In recent years, the managers of public lands in the Black Hills have faced other kinds struggles too. Among the most significant, or at least well publicized, battles have involved contestations over tribal use of and access to public properties. Wind Cave National Park is part of what has probably been the most hotly contested body of public land in the United States. Since the late nineteenth century, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos have challenged the legitimacy of current ownership rights in the courts and in Congress, on the picket line, and in the mass media. Still, there is no resolution. Even though tribes have pressed hard to regain lands inside the Hills, none of their efforts have succeeded. The monetary settlement offered by the courts for the illegal taking of the Black Hills is still refused. So the ultimate status of the land remains in limbo. Barring the privileges that come with outright ownership, local tribes have increasingly pushed forward with whatever legal means are available to them to gain access to public land in order to protect sacred sites and to conduct the religious observances associated with them. In contrast to the past, when tribes were either excluded from public lands or their interests in these lands ignored, they have now become significant parties in the consultations and decisions reached over the public use of federally managed land-areas. Tribal interests often merge with environmentalists and conservationists interested in protecting the natural integrity of a place, but sometimes conflict with the tourists and recreationists who want uninterrupted access to sites for viewing, camping, hiking, and/or climbing. This certainly has been the case at other locations in the Black Hills, notably Devil’s Tower National Monument and Bear Butte (Forbes-Boyte 1996, 1999; Dorst 2000).

Federal lands in the West have always operated, in varying degrees and ways, in the manner of a public commons, where ethnically different groups hold similar as well as dissimilar access rights to the commons. What has changed over the past century is the profile of the interest groups who use the nation's public lands and the impact that this has had on the regions where these lands are situated. In relation to the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park, in particular, three different interest groups with distinct cultural agendas have become embroiled in controversies over how public lands ought to be used and regulated. These include the local communities of ranchers and townspeople whose lands adjoin park boundaries and whose own resources
are impacted in negative and positive ways by the presence of a park in their locale. There are also the tourists and recreationists who desire unimpeded access to park sites and the development of accommodations for their activities, including lodgings and campsites as well as improved roads and trails for hiking, bicycling, and now snowmobiling. Added to this mix, there are many different tribal peoples who desire not only access to the land to carry on some of their traditional cultural activities, including the performance of ceremonial observances and the collection of plants and minerals for religious purposes, but also protection for the sites of sacred importance to them. Protecting these sites and the ceremonies conducted there often runs afoul of the agendas of other interest groups, whose own activities must be curtailed in one way or another in order to accommodate tribal needs (Keller and Turek 1998:177-184, 233-240; Dorst 2000). Attending to the differing cultural agendas of these various interest groups raises a number of thorny policy and regulatory questions, which are covered in the last chapter of this report.

2. Tourists and Their Cultures

One of the persisting features of the Black Hills panorama of human use and occupation is its complexity. Over the past millennium, multiple user groups have accessed the Hills from near and distant locations. Like the tribal nations who dominated the area before 1877, European Americans developed varying relationships to the Hills. Besides the permanent year-round residents who made a living from ranching, logging, mining, and other local industries, there were those who came to the Hills for short stays but on a regular and recurring basis from proximate locations in South Dakota, Wyoming, and Nebraska. The Hills have always been a popular location for the residents of nearby communities to hunt in the fall and fish in the summer. Some of these people have cabins or second homes in the Hills, while others camp out in RVs during extended summer visits. Early on in the history of its non-Indian settlement, the Hills also became an attractive destination for people who traveled to the area from more distant locations (Clark, B. 1952b; Julin 1982; Lee 1987; Goeores 1990). As Montgomery’s research (1957) from the 1950s shows, most of the long-distance tourists and recreationists came from the Midwest, but visitors from other regions of the country and indeed the world have made Wind Cave National Park part of their travel itinerary in the Hills (Long 1992). As in past, the Hills have acted like a magnet, drawing people from all points of the compass.

Modern travel is built on a quest for the extraordinary and the exotic: a search for an experience that is different from the course of everyday life (MacCannell 1976). Historically, this has been accommodated in two ways. one comes about through the purposeful manufacture of an attraction, the creation of something unique that celebrates or memorializes an idea, an event, an individual, or an entire people. Mount Rushmore is the classic example of this in the Black Hills. The other stands as some pre-existing phenomenon within the natural world, whose uniqueness is purposely managed and preserved for the public. This may include an unusual landform, a scenic vista, or a rare animal, plant, or mineral. Wind Cave represents this kind of extraordinary site or sight. In the United States, federal, state, and local governments are typically responsible for stewarding the phenomena that represent the unique natural and human-made heritage of Americans. This is certainly the case in the Black Hills, where most of the noteworthy places are under the protection of federal or state agencies.

Areas where there are large concentrations of unusual sites have a kind of scenic or recreational capital that can be exploited to local economic advantage. Although the sites themselves are part of a collectively owned trust, they generate private economic opportunities for a wide variety of businesses that cater to tourists and recreationists. Communities in proximity to these locations benefit economically by providing services that support various travel and recreational cultures,
from the automobile or camper sightseeing experience to the hiking and backpacking of today’s so-called outdoor enthusiasts. At least structurally, this is not very different from how publicly held lands provided opportunities for economic development in the past. The central difference is that most travel and recreational uses do not typically require any kind of extraction that leads to the depletion of resources.

In many ways, the growth of modern travel and recreation in the Black Hills has imposed yet another kind of cultural sensibility on the area — one that is rooted in an urban experience where a people’s relationship to the land involves a kind of passive witnessing or spectatorship. In this sensibility, an area’s natural resources are not extracted and transformed as they typically are in more traditional land relations (European American and American Indian). Over the past century, National Park Service lands have been set aside and reserved to promote an attitude towards the land that has its origins in the urban experience and the urbanization of the United States. Historically, this perspective has privileged the needs and interests of outside visitors. Insofar as locals, both Indian and non-Indian, meet the terms of this urbanized relationship to the land, they are seen as the visitors to nation’s national parks. The problem, however, is that many parks, including Wind Cave National Park, are situated on lands where the locals have significant cultural attachments that do not conform to a recreational or tourist model. In the case of American Indians, there are important cultural properties -- landscapes, landforms, and natural resources -- that people need to access in traditional ways in order to conduct vital religious observances and maintain their cultural heritage. This poses a challenge to the manager’s of the Nation’s national parks because these traditional uses require the development of management policies that depart in significant ways from those established to fit the cultural models of tourists and recreationists.

III. PERSPECTIVES ON WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK

Where does Wind Cave National Park fit in the larger scheme of human occupation, land use, and economic adaptations to the Black Hills? There is no question that before 1877 the historical and ethnographic record on the occupancy and use of park lands is scanty, and as a result, much of what can be said about it is inferential and based on circumstantial evidence. Even though there are a number of archeological sites in the park, revealing the remains of hunting, quarrying, and settlement activity, most of these are prehistoric and have not been studied in any depth. Hopefully, on-going and future archeological and oral history research will enable us to have a better and more complete picture of what was happening on these lands before they were taken over by the National Park Service in 1903. In the meantime, there are a number of conclusions, albeit hypothetical, that can be advanced at this point.

First, and probably most importantly, the historical and ethnographic evidence points to this area being most intensively used by tribes during the winter months. In prehistoric as well as historic times, some of the lower elevation locations along the Race Track, Beaver Creek, and Wind Cave Canyon probably served as winter campsites. There is no question that areas near the Buffalo Gap and along the Fall River were used in this way during historic times, and there is no reason to believe that other locations inside the southern Hogback were not used in this way as well. There is also good archeological evidence for this kind of use in prehistoric times, especially during the Middle Archaic. Environmentally, this area was well suited for a winter camping location. It offered all of the necessary amenities, including access to good shelter, wood, fresh water, game, and even forage for small herds of horses. The extent to which either the Lakotas or the Cheyennes and the tribal nations who came before them wintered on park property is hard to determine, but it is clear that even if bands did not actually establish their
winter campsites inside park boundaries, their hunters came here on a regular and recurring basis from other locations. In the nineteenth century, some Lakotas and Cheyennes established their winter camps at the Buffalo Gap and along the Fall River, both of which are very close to the park. There are also reports of their bands wintering along the Race Track, although the precise locations of their camps are typically unspecified. Farther away but still within easy reach of the land at Wind Cave National Park were Lakota and Cheyenne winter camping sites along the Cheyenne and White rivers. Before the nineteenth century, other tribes, notably, the Arapahos, Kiowas, Plains Apaches (and Padoucas), and Ponca, occupied these sites, even groups who customarily wintered as far away as the Niobrara, Platte, and Missouri rivers were reported to come to the southern Hills in search of game at different seasons of the year. It is not difficult to infer from this information that the area in and around Wind Cave National Park would have been covered during some of these hunts.

There are a number of stories about the park and its environs, especially from the Lakotas but also the Cheyennes, that tell about important events taking place here in historic and myth times. The vast majority of these stories are set in the winter or fall, and they invariably involve hunters and hunting. Most of them speak of bison, but a few refer to deer or other large game (see also, sections Three and Four). After European Americans arrived in the area, the park also became known as a good place to hunt and trap. It is not coincidental that when Jesse and Tom Bingham came across Wind Cave, they were hunting deer. Earlier, the area on which Wind Cave National Park now sits may have served as a temporary winter camping area for trappers and their families. It is clear that many of the early white trader-trappers, their Indian wives, offspring, and other associated relatives wintered in the Black Hills because this was the prime season to take game valued for their peltries. Again, although we know little about their occupation, we can surmise that they were here because their presence is well documented for locations to the north along French, Grace Coolidge, Battle, and Rapid creeks. Generally speaking, in both tribal and European American traditions, the general area of Wind Cave National Park has been associated with hunting and large game animals.

Historically, the Wind Cave National Park area was probably a good place for tribes to camp, hunt, and collect plants en route to other locations in the Hills at other times of the year as well. During the 1870s, some Lakotas stopped at the Buffalo Gap to camp in their annual spring and fall travels between their agencies on the White River and their buffalo hunting grounds in the country of the Powder and Tongue rivers. In late spring and early summer, small groups were widely reported to camp in the Black Hills interiors to secure their lodgepoles, and some may well have followed Beaver Creek and/or the Race Track to reach these higher elevation locations. This route was also apparently followed by the Lakotas in their spring ceremonial cycle (Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a:42-43). They certainly did so after 1877, when they traveled and camped on park properties en route to their lodgepole processing sites or to the celebration festivities they attended in Custer and Deadwood. Indeed, the Lakotas and Cheyennes who were settled on the Pine Ridge Reservation were routinely given passes during the fall and summer months to collect food plants and medicinal herbs in the Black Hills. As revealed in Chapter Eleven, the use of the Hills for plant procurement is regularly reported in the accounts of non-Indian travelers, government agents, and local settlers, and it is also commonly mentioned in tribal oral traditions and writings.

When European Americans first came to the area, as prospectors, freighters, and merchants, they also crossed the park's lands and camped here on their way to Custer City and Deadwood. The park included two of the most highly traveled routes into the interiors for people coming overland to and from the Union Pacific Railroad stops at Sidney, Nebraska and Cheyenne, Wyoming. In later years, however, the traffic along these routes declined substantially when the
The focus of gold production shifted to the northern Hills and when alternative routes were created that skirted the Hills along the outer edge of the Hogback. Nevertheless, the park continued to serve as a route of travel between Custer and Buffalo Gap/Hot Springs for local residents, freighters hauling supplies, and loggers transporting timber. It was also a location where early settlers collected berries, gathered other flora for food and medicine, and harvested timber for domestic use. Indeed, the illegal taking of plant resources inside park boundaries by local residents was a serious problem well into the twentieth century.

The large quartzite quarry at Battle Mountain and even the outcroppings of purple chalcedony in Wind Cave National Park also attracted tribal nations to the area to acquire lithic material for making arrow points and implements. Much of the use of this region for mineral extraction by native populations took place in prehistoric times, and it clearly declined after the introduction of metal from European American traders. Some quarrying, however, still probably continued for sandstone used in the making of hammers and grinding stones, for gypsums applied in various kinds of manufacture and ceremonial contexts, and for clays mixed in paints (see Chapter Eleven for further details). In fact, there is one important twentieth-century record (Pilcher 1964) that identifies Wind Cave with the collection of stones used for medicinal purposes, and there is good circumstantial evidence for the continuing importance of local gypsum in ceremonial practice (see Chapters Eleven, Twelve, and Fifteen).

Certainly, the nearby thermal waters at Hot Springs were an important attraction for Native populations in prehistoric and historic times. The healing properties of these waters were well-known and brought people to the area for brief and extended stays (see Chapters Six, Fourteen, and Fifteen). Again, there are reports in European American and tribal sources of Lakotas and Cheyennes staying in this area not only in the winter but in other seasons as well. Aside from brief references to Lakotas and Cheyennes camping in this area, there are few specific details about the nature of their settlement. Indeed, we may never really know much about it given how the building of the city of Hot Springs and park headquarters disturbed the archaeological remains of earlier settlements (Scott 1888; Pilcher 1964). One thing is clear, however, and that is, Lakotas and Cheyennes frequently returned to Hot Springs after 1877 to bathe and camp. According to accounts from non-Indian residents in the area, it was not uncommon for some Lakota families to remain in the area over an entire summer.

The geological resources of the park and neighboring locales also drew the interest of European Americans. Although the entire area was prospected, there was never any developed mining on park lands other than a limekiln at the southwestern edge of the park. Sandstone was quarried, and gypsum was processed at nearby locations outside park boundaries. Of course, the thermal waters at Hot Springs were a major attraction for European Americans, and the foundation for the town’s development.

The mild winter climate, sheltered recesses, as well as good water, timber, and grazing areas of the park also recommended this area as a location not only for various kinds of tribal economic activity and occupation, but also for European Americans to settle. In certain respects, early European uses of and adaptations to the area of Wind Cave National Park hardly differed from the tribal nations who preceded them. Tribal populations no doubt grazed their horses on the rich grasses that covered the Race Track and the foothills of this area, something later generations of European American certainly did. In fact, several ranches inside the park and on its borders were engaged in the raising of thoroughbred horses in the late nineteenth century. The main distinction between the two populations was the species of ungulate that became the focus of their livelihoods and adaptations to the region. For tribal peoples, it was the bison until they were
extirpated from the area in the 1850s, and for European Americans, it was domesticated livestock, especially cattle introduced in the region during the 1870s.

From the 1880s until the 1930s, a small population of homesteaders established ranches on park lands, and the remains of some of these are part of the park's archaeological record. Except for a few families, such as the McAdams, McDonalds, and Stablers, little has been written about the lives of those who settled on or near park properties, although much more has appeared on some of the families who occupied areas adjacent to the park. What has been reported in historic records, oral traditions, and the writings of local historians is that much of the park area was used to graze livestock through the early decades of the twentieth century. Small sections of land especially at level, well-watered locations were also used to cultivate gardens, to raise kitchen stock, and to grow various grain crops for cash or animal feed. Most of the early ranching families were small operators who made modest livelihoods through mixed economic strategies, which included subsistence food production and various kinds of wage-work. Some local ranchers and their family members even worked on construction or served as guides, rangers, and administrators for the park after it was established in 1903. There were also larger, investor-based ranches on park lands in the 1880s, including the one run by Charles Valentine. This ranch and others established on the park's eastern boundaries ran large herds of cattle on park properties.

Much of the park's history from the 1880s to the 1930s is tied to the region's ranching tradition and its dependence on the use of public lands. Historically, access to open ranges, at little or no cost, made livestock raising an attractive and profitable endeavor for small and large operators alike, and it played a critical role in the development of the region's cattle industry. It also created a powerful political interest group with a stake in maintaining traditional European American user relationships to the Black Hills public spaces. Until the competing interests of the travel, leisure, and recreation industry entered the picture, local ranchers carried considerable influence in shaping the policy of land use on public properties, including those that came under the management of the National Park Service at Wind Cave. In some ways, Wind Cave National Park was probably unique in comparison to other national parks because of the length of time in which livestock grazing, prohibited at most parks, prevailed here. Besides the fact that the park's primary attraction was subterranean, the continuation of grazing was probably linked to two other realities. First, the park's early managers and employees had vested interests in maintaining the status quo because they were local landholders who ran their own stock on park properties. Secondly, because the park occupied an orphan-like status relative to other parks in the national park system, it received hardly any revenue in its early years of operation. Maintaining grazing permits and privileges well into the twentieth century may very well have served as an important source of revenue and also an incentive for some locals to assume caretaking responsibilities for the park.

Whatever the case, it is clear that in the 1930s park policies began to change, moving away from sustaining a local ranch-based economy towards a greater involvement in and support for the region's developing leisure, travel, and recreation industry (Long 1992). From the time Wind Cave was developed as a privately owned tourist attraction in the 1880s to 1903, when it became a publicly-owned one, much of the focus of park activity centered on the cave. Over time, and as the local ranching economy and spa industry in Hot Springs declined, the cave assumed greater importance as a critical resource in the region's tourism. Throughout much of the twentieth century, the park contributed to the local economies of Custer and Fall River counties not only by bringing tourist dollars to local businesses but also by being the employer of a large local work force. This contribution has not been inconsequential, especially as a greater portion of the region's economic wealth became dependent on this industry. By the 1930s, when the park took over management of the adjoining national game preserve, its above ground wildlife began to
equal, if not, surpass the cave as a central attraction for tourists. The health and well-being of the park's bison, elk, antelope, and prairie dogs took on increasing importance in the overall scheme of the park, and by extension, greater efforts were made to preserve and restore the land to some semblance of its original state. Increasingly, park properties became associated with more restricted, non-extractive uses. Except for fishing and berry picking, all of the activities allowed on park land including camping, sightseeing, and hiking, catered to the region's growing leisure, recreation, and tourist industry and the interest groups that supported these pastimes. As part of this process, the park's representation of itself became increasingly divorced from the history of the many different peoples who had occupied and used park lands for extractive purposes since prehistoric times. The bulk of its interpretive narratives focused on the region's natural history with hardly any attention given to its human history of occupation by tribal peoples or European Americans. Most of the people-based history concentrates on the cave, its discovery and exploration, or on park construction, especially the structures built when the CCC camps were in operation during the 1930s.

The Black Hills in general and Wind Cave National Park in particular were witness to a succession of different ethnic groups who adapted themselves to the area in a number of different and very specific ways. The history of these adaptations and some of the cultural traditions associated with them provide textually rich narratives that deserve as much attention in park interpretive programming as the stories on its natural resources. From the material covered in the next section, which focuses on the specific faunal, floral, and mineral resources of the area, we can come to certain conclusions about the ways different groups historically used park properties. However these groups adapted to the area, and whatever resources they took from it, one thing is clear, and that is, this region has always been a common ground, an area in which people of diverse backgrounds lived and traveled.
Chapter Eight

COMPETING CLAIMS, CONTESTED ACCESS

Of all the lands within the continental United States the federal government seized from their original American Indian owners, the Black Hills remain among the most contested and controversial. The lands that make up Wind Cave National Park were part of the longest running American Indian claims case in history, *Sioux vs. United States* [C-531-7], otherwise known as the Sioux Black Hills Claim. After nearly sixty years of congressional deliberation and court litigation, the Sioux’s Black Hills claim case reached a settlement in 1980 when the Supreme Court ruled that the United States had taken the Hills illegally without just compensation. The eight tribal claimants who were parties in the suit have not accepted this settlement, which amounted to 106 million dollars. Today, a sum of money, now rapidly approaching one billion dollars, sits in the U.S. treasury as settlement for the United States’ illegal taking of the Black Hills from the Sioux Nation.¹

Even before the Black Hills Claim reached the Supreme Court, the Sioux were moving forward in other ways to reclaim possession of the Black Hills. In addition to land takeovers, including one at Wind Cave National Park in 1981, there were several attempts from 1985 to 1993 to introduce legislation in Congress that would return sizable amounts of public land in the Black Hills to the Sioux, but none of these moved further than the hearing stage. In the same decade, the Sioux took other steps to assert their political and cultural interests in the region. Today, the question of the ownership of the Black Hills remains unresolved. Although the federal government takes the position that the courts have settled the question, the Sioux remain fiercely opposed to accepting the only remedy the judicial system has to offer them for the illegal taking of the Hills -- a monetary settlement. They still stand united in their determination to reacquire legal possession of land currently claimed by the federal government. The question of the Black Hills sits at an impasse not only with respect to the Sioux’s unresolved claim, but also in relation to the unlitigated claims that the Cheyennes and Arapahos hold to the Black Hills as well. Neither of these tribes pressed their Black Hills claims in court, although both were represented in the deliberations surrounding the case before the Sioux filed their claim in 1920 and both sought counsel and attempted unsuccessfully to get jurisdictional acts passed to pursue their claims.

Beyond the battles involving ownership of the land, there has been litigation over tribal religious access to the Hills stemming from the passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978. These need to be discussed here as well. In order to understand the history of the various legal struggles over the Black Hills in the twentieth century, including the lands on which Wind Cave National Park now stand, we must begin with an understanding of the nineteenth century federal treaties and agreements in which the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were the central parties.

¹ Lakota or Dakota is the preferred self-ascription of people identified historically and in legal dealings with the United States as Sioux. To avoid confusion, the term Sioux will be used in this chapter to designate the Lakotas (Teton Sioux) and the Dakotas (Mdewakanton, Wahpekute, Sisseton, Wahpeton, Yankton, and Yanktonnai Sioux) who were parties to various treaties with the United States and in later years listed as claimants in suits against the U.S. government.
I. TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS

The period when treaties were negotiated between the United States and the tribal nations who historically occupied the Black Hills covers the years between 1825 and 1871, the year Congress formally ceased the process of making treaties with tribes and began to enter into legislated agreements with them. In 1870, the House of Representatives lobbied for the abolition of the treaty system. With the support of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Ely S. Parker, a Seneca Indian from New York, the federal government unilaterally modified the manner in which it negotiated with tribes. Instead, it now acted from an attitude that tribes were ward-like entities and were thus subject to domestic legislation approved by the Senate, the House of Representatives, and the President. In 1871, legislation was passed that prohibited the United States from recognizing tribes as independent nations and from contracting with them by treaty. Henceforth, all dealings with tribes would take place in the form of agreements (Lazarus 1991:80; Wilkins 1997:229, 237-239).

A review of all treaties, agreements, and statutes between Indian tribes and the United States government, as compiled by Charles J. Kappler (1903), and a survey of all land cessions by Indian tribes in the United States, summarized and mapped by Charles C. Royce (1899), indicates that only the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahos entered into treaties and agreements involving the consideration of lands in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park. In each case, however, none of the statutes affecting lands in the Black Hills included the entirety of the populations making up these three tribal nations. In the case of the Arapahos and Cheyennes, only the northern divisions of these two tribes were represented in deliberations affecting the Black Hills. In the case of the Sioux, while most of the eastern divisions were not represented in the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty, some were parties to the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and the Black Hills Agreement of 1877, which led to the illegal taking of the Black Hills. The Santee Tribe of Nebraska and the Yanktonai of Crow Creek and Standing Rock were not parties to the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty, but they were included as signatories in the 1868 Treaty and the Black Hills Agreement of 1876, which was passed into law by Congress in 1877. The Yankton Sioux Tribe was represented in the 1851 Treaty but not the negotiations surrounding the 1868 Treaty or the 1876 Agreement. Most of the Sioux affiliated with the Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe, the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, the Flandreau Sioux Tribe, and the federally recognized Sioux communities in Minnesota were not parties to any treaties or land cessions relating to the Black Hills. The Sioux Nation claim to the Black Hills, submitted and litigated in federal courts between 1923 and 1980, included the following tribes: Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Fort Peck Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Santee Sioux Tribe, and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. Of the other tribes with known historical affiliations to the Black Hills, including the Plains Apaches, Comanches, Shoshones, Kiowas, Crows, Hidatsas, Mandans, Arikaras, Pawnees, and Poncas, none were parties to treaties or agreements governing land cessions in or near the Black Hills. Moreover, none of these tribes ever filed claims with the U.S. Court of Claims or the Indian Claims Commission that pertained to lands in the Black Hills or at Wind Cave National Park.

What follows is a list of all the federal treaties and agreements, governing land cessions to which the western Sioux, the Cheyenne, and/or the Arapaho nations were parties and which have

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2 In 1853, an amendment to the 1851 treaty was devised to include the Yanktonai in the provisions and annuity payments of this treaty (DeMallie 2001: 780).
3 Because of extensive patterns of intermarriage between modern Sioux tribes (Albers 1974), many individuals who are enrolled in these tribes are descended from Sioux who were parties to these treaties.
some bearing on the legal standing of these tribes in relation to the Black Hills. This chronological listing not only highlights the provisions of each statute, but it also discusses their consequences in regards to continuing claims on the Black Hills.

**A. Atkinson and O Fallon Treaty of 1825**

In 1825, General Henry Atkinson and Indian Agent Benjamin O Fallon traveled up the Missouri River to assess the numbers and whereabouts of tribes along the river and to enter into treaties of friendship, whereby the tribal signatories pledged their loyalty to the United States and its traders (Jensen and Hutchins 2001; see also, Chapter Four). Sioux representing the Teton, Yankton, and Yanktonnai divisions, who occupied lands from the mouth of the White River to the Cannonball, signed four treaties, as did a party of Cheyenne leaders (Kappler 1903:2:161-166). When representatives of these tribes signed the 1825 treaties, they acknowledged the right of the United States to regulate trade in the region. It is clear that the tribal parties who signed these treaties did not act on behalf of their entire nation. Nor is it likely that they fully understood the consequences of their signing, which the federal government construed as according it sovereign power to intervene in the affairs of the Cheyennes and Lakotas (Weist 1977:41-42).

**B. Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851**

The Fort Laramie Treaty of September 17, 1851 [11 Stat.749] (Kappler 1903:2:440-442) was another friendship treaty under which many tribal nations in the northern Plains pledged a lasting peace with the United States. Most divisions of the Teton Lakota (Sioux) and the Yankton Dakota (Sioux) attended the treaty deliberations, but only Sicangu, Ooehnunpa, and Yankton signed it. Some of the northern and southern divisions of the Arapaho were also party to the treaty (Fowler 1982:28-32). In the case of the Cheyenne, only the southern bands appear to have signed the treaty (Powell 1981:1:110). Even though Congress never ratified this treaty, it subsequently carried considerable weight in supporting or contesting tribal land claims in federal courts.

In the process of making peace, the tribal parties to the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty ostensibly approved boundaries to mark their respective territorial domains (Lazarus 1991:17). Technically, no tribal nation surrendered any land in this treaty, but as a number of scholars (Berthong 1963:121; Lazarus 1991:17-19; DeMallie 2001a:795) have argued, this document codified and concretized a series of territorial borders that would have a lasting impact for the tribes involved in these deliberations. It effectively restricted the territorial boundaries around which tribes negotiated land cessions in later years. Not only did it exclude the Cheyennes and Arapahos from lands that they had shared with the Sioux for over a century, including the Black Hills; it also deprived the Sioux and their Cheyenne and Arapaho allies of territories they had jointly wrestled from the Kiowas and Crows in previous decades (Lazarus 1991:18). Although Sioux rights were disadvantaged in the second instance, the interests of the Cheyennes and the Arapahos were jeopardized in both. It also seriously impaired the ability of these two tribes to make claims on lands they had continuously and jointly occupied for more than a century, and once again, some of these included the Black Hills.

The lands designated for the Sioux and the Cheyenne-Arapaho under Article 5 of the Fort Laramie Treaty were designated as follows: 1) the territory of the Sioux began at the mouth of the White River and followed a southwesterly line to the forks of the Platte, and from there, it ascended the Platte to Red Butte and then it moved north along the western side of the Black Hills to the headwaters of the Heart River, down this river to the Missouri and then back to the starting point on the mouth the White River; and 2) the land jointly assigned to the Arapahos and
Cheyennes commenced at the Red Butte and followed the North Platte River to the Rocky Mountains, from which point the boundary extended south to the headwaters of the Arkansas River and then east to the crossing of the Santa Fe Trail and from there, it returned to Red Butte by way of the forks of the Platte River (Kappler 1903:2:441, see Figure 8 in Chapter Five).

As discussed in Chapters Three to Five, the tribal nations of the plains distributed themselves across geographic space in ways that were very different from the manner in which white Americans established their relationships to the land. By projecting their own sense of landed property rights onto tribal territorial domains, the United States, as Edward Lazarus (1991:17) puts it, affirmed formally that Indians possessed personal and property rights including rights in their lands. It also established, as Chief Justice John Marshall had written in the 1832 Supreme Court case Worcester v. Georgia: Indian tribes were distinct, independent, political communities, who retained at least limited rights of self-government (in Lazarus ibid.). Even though the treaty may have created a legal benchmark for judging future federal decisions and actions, it seriously impaired the rights of the tribes to make claims based on their own standards of sovereign interest in landed property. Although government officials who were party to the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty emphatically told the tribal parties assembled at the treaty deliberations that the boundaries should not be construed as interfering in their movements, the making of these borders on paper had lasting consequences for the judgments that federal courts would later deliver with regards to whether or not tribes held aboriginal title to certain land holdings. According to the Indian Claims Commission's, Findings of Facts, dated August 27, 1965 (Horr 1974:56), Colonel Mitchell is reported to have told the tribes that in fixing a boundary to their country, he had no purpose of limiting them to that boundary in hunting, or to prohibit them from going into the territory of any other Nation, so long as they remained at peace. Yet, this is precisely what happened a century later when the Indian Claims Commission deliberated on the government's liability to tribes for lands either illegally gained or inadequately compensated (Lazarus 1991:49-69).

Another major feature of the 1851 Treaty were provisions whereby tribes gave the United States the right to construct roads and military posts in their territories. Tribes agreed to furnish restitution for crimes committed against U.S. citizens. In return, the United States committed itself to protecting tribes from the wrongdoings of its own citizens, and it promised to pay each of them fifty thousand dollars over a ten-year period for the right to construct roads and posts through their territories (Kappler 1903:2:440-442; Lazarus 1991:17-18; Price, C. 1996:31). The Senate, however, did not agree to this commitment and slashed the number of years the government was obligated to make payments without ever informing the tribes of their amendment (Lazarus 1991:19-20). In the end, the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty was a failure because, as Lazarus (Ibid:20) puts it, one party amended the terms, the other ignored them.

C. The Treaty of Fort Wise in 1861

In 1861, ten years after the conclusion of the failed Fort Laramie Peace Treaty, the United States entered into a treaty [12 Stat., 1163] (Kappler 1903:2:614-617) with representatives of the Southern Cheyenne and Southern Arapaho nations at Fort Wise in eastern Colorado. Under the provisions of this treaty, all of the Cheyenne-Arapaho territory stipulated in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851, except for a small area set aside in eastern Colorado as a reservation for their joint occupancy, was ceded in exchange for a settlement of $450,000 to be paid out over a fifteen year period (Kappler 1903:2:614-617; Berthong 1965:149-151). The problem with this treaty was that most of the Northern Cheyennes and Northern Arapahos never entered into the negotiations, even though they were included in the lands designated by the 1851 Fort Laramie
Treaty. In addition, many Southern Cheyennes, especially the followers of the Dog Soldier bands, refused to sign it (Weist 1977:48). Although this treaty paved the way for the settlement of eastern Wyoming and Colorado by American mining and agricultural interests, it did so at a terrible cost to the large numbers of Cheyenne and Arapaho who were not represented in the deliberations. One of its many consequences was that it left the Northern Cheyennes and Northern Arapahos in a legal limbo with respect to their future claims against the United States. Not represented at the cession of their 1851 Fort Laramie lands and barely acknowledged in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, they were cast adrift, situated betwixt and between treaties, to which they were linked by default rather than intent. Even to this day, some of their land claims remain unresolved as a result, including those connected to the Black Hills.

D. Indian Peace Commission Treaties

In March of 1865, Congress passed an act authorizing expenditures to make peace with all the tribes along the Missouri and Platte rivers. A peace treaty was negotiated with the Yanktonnai at Fort Sully that provided compensation in the form of annuities over a twenty-year payment period (Kappler 1903:2:690-692). Although the Yanktonnai objected to the building of overland routes through their country and increased steamboat traffic on the Missouri, they signed the treaty, which was ratified by Congress (DeMallie 2001:781).

Negotiations farther west with various divisions of the Tetons or Lakota Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were not concluded as easily. Unable to defeat these tribal nations militarily, the federal government authorized E. B. Taylor to conclude another treaty on its behalf that would bring a lasting peace to the region and permit the construction of roads and posts to accommodate overland travel (Weist 1977:58-59; Price, C. 1996:55-61; Lazarus 1991:33-37). For reasons already described in Chapter Five, the commission failed to secure the signatures of the bands whose territories would have been most affected by the building of the road, although it did manage to get the permission of leaders whose hunting grounds were far-removed from the area. While E.B. Taylor argued that the treaty negotiations had been a success, Congress disagreed and did not ratify the treaty. It can be argued that by failing to gain the full consent of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, the 1865-treaty commission paved the way for some of the liberal provisions in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 that established the Great Sioux Reservation and the large hunting commons in the Republican and Powder River countries.

1. 1867 Medicine Lodge Creek Treaties

On July 20, 1867, Congress authorized expenditures for the formation of another Indian Peace Commission to secure the interests of the United States by negotiating treaties with tribes throughout the western plains. The first treaty [15 Stat., 589] was signed on October 17, 1867 by the Comanches, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches (Kappler 1903:2:759-760), and on October 28, 1867, the Southern Cheyennes, and Southern Arapahos signed their treaty [15 Stat., 593] at Medicine Lodge Creek in Kansas (Kappler 1903:2:760-764). Under the terms of these treaties, the tribes agreed to keep the peace with the United States and its citizens, allow the construction of roads and railroads across their territories in the southern and central plains, and cede all of their lands in the present day state of Kansas. The Southern Cheyennes and Southern Arapahos settled for a reservation in what is now western Oklahoma in exchange for relinquishing rights to

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4 Yanktonnai were not represented at Fort Laramie nor were they party to the Yankton land cession even though they were later included in some of the annuity distributions (DeMallie 2001:780-781).
their reservation lands in Colorado secured under the Fort Wise Treaty of 1861. Like the other parties to the treaty, they were promised a cash payment over twenty years, and an agency with personnel to support farming and other “civilizing” programs (Berthong 1965:297-298). In addition, the Southern Cheyennes, Southern Arapahos, and the other three tribes who were parties to these treaties retained the right to continue hunting off-reservation as far north as the Arkansas River as long as the bison remained in the region and as long as the tribes did not interfere with the construction of the railroads and the passage of travelers along the overland trails (Berthong 1965:298). Some of the considerations in this treaty played a role in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty [15 Stat., 655] with the Northern Arapahos and Northern Cheyennes.

2. The Fort Laramie Treaties of 1868

Meanwhile, the commission was deliberating with various bands of Sioux, Northern Cheyennes, and Northern Arapahos at Fort Laramie and other locations along the Platte and Missouri rivers to secure similar concessions in the northern reaches of the plains. Over the next ten months, the commissioners successfully negotiated and concluded the terms of a treaty with many of the bands of the Sioux on April 29, 1868, but they failed to meet with leaders of many of the more independent northern bands (Price, C. 1996:77-79). Eventually, many of these leaders, including Man Afraid of His Horses and Red Cloud, signed the treaty in November of 1868, but some of the northern Sioux, including Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, refused to negotiate or sign it (Ibid:79-83).

In crafting the Fort Laramie Treaty [15 Stat., 635] (Kappler 1903:2:770-775), the Indian Peace Commission worded this treaty much like the other treaties it concluded in 1867 and 1868. Under Article 1, the parties agreed to abstain from war and to punish anyone on either side who engaged in aggressive acts against the other (Kappler 1903:2:770). Article 2 specified what territory would be included in a reservation set aside for the parties to the treaty. The Great Sioux Reservation, as it became popularly known, was created for the undisturbed use and occupation of the Indians herein named, and for such other friendly tribes or individual Indians as from time to time they may be willing with the consent of the United States, to admit amongst them. This encompassed all lands west of the Missouri River in present-day South Dakota (Ibid.). Articles 4 through 10 contained provisions to establish agencies and to support tribal education, health, and agricultural needs (Ibid:771-773). Article 11 conferred the right to hunt on any lands north of the North Platte River and along the Republican and Smokey Hill rivers as long as buffalo remained in sufficient numbers to justify the chase, but it also stipulated that the tribal parties would refrain from interfering with the construction of railways being built in these areas and from harassing emigrants along the overland trail. In addition, the government agreed to withdraw its posts and military from locations north of the North Platte and to retain them only at locations south of this river (Ibid:773-774). Article 12 promised that no portion of the reservation held in common by the parties to the treaty would be relinquished unless consented to and signed by three-quarters of the adult male population (Ibid:774). Articles 13 and 14 contained provisions to support the acculturation of the tribes, while 15 secured the promise that once agency buildings were constructed the tribes would make the reservation their permanent home (Ibid:774). Article 16 stipulated that all lands north of the North Platte River and east of the summit of the Big Horn Mountains would remain unceded Indian territory and that no white person or persons shall be permitted to settle upon or occupy or will be allowed to settle on the same; or without the consent of the Indians first had and obtained, to pass through the same (Ibid:774-775). It also promised that the military posts in the area would be abandoned and that the road to Montana would be closed (Ibid:775). Finally, Article 17 stated that the provisions of the 1868 treaty would abrogate all prior treaties and agreements between the two parties (Ibid:775).
Under the terms of this treaty [15 Stat. 635], which was finalized on the 29th of April in 1868, a reservation was established for the Sioux, the northern Arapaho, and other tribal parties these two tribes agreed to admit (Kappler 1903:2:770-775). Besides the various bands of Teton Lakotas, the Yanktonai Dakotas and Santee Dakotas were also included under its provisions. Under the treaty all Sioux territory east of the Missouri, except for lands on established reservations, was ceded to the United States under Yanktonai protest (DeMallie 2001:781). Although most of the upper Yanktonai eventually settled on what was then known as the Fort Totten Reservation (now Spirit Lake Reservation) after its establishment in 1867, the southern Yanktonai either remained at Crow Creek on the Missouri, where they received a reservation under an executive order in 1879, or moved to the Grand River Agency (now Standing Rock) (DeMallie 2001:782-783).

Later in the year, another treaty [15 Stat. 655] was signed with the northern bands of the Arapahos and Cheyennes giving them permission to remain on what was then called the Great Sioux Reservation or establish residence on the reservation established for their southern brethren under the terms of the Medicine Lodge Creek Treaty [15 Stat. 593] (Kappler 1903:2:778-781). The Northern Cheyennes and Arapahos interests in the Black Hills were covered in the Fort Laramie treaties in two ways. In the treaty with the Sioux [15 Stat. 635], they were included under the provisions of Article 2. In the second Fort Laramie Treaty [15 Stat. 655], they were given a choice either to make their permanent home on a portion of the lands set aside for their southern relatives in Oklahoma under the terms of the Medicine Lodge Treaty, or take up residence within the territory designated and set aside for the Sioux as negotiated on April 29, 1868 (Kappler 1903:2:778-781; Powell 1981:2:762-768). Although many Northern Cheyennes, including the followers of Little Wolf, were never parties to either of the Fort Laramie treaties, those who were believed they had legal rights to the Hills under the terms of both 1868 Fort Laramie treaties (Powell 1981:2:768-770; Dusenberry 1955:24-25; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973: 17n18).

In 1869, Congress ratified the Medicine Lodge Creek and Fort Laramie treaties but not without contentious debate (Price, C. 1996:84-85). The Fort Laramie Treaty not only secured for the Sioux much of their aboriginal domain, including the Black Hills, but it also guaranteed that these lands could not be trespassed on by outsiders without their expressed consent. Also of great significance, it mandated that no land within the boundaries of the reservation, which again included the Black Hills, would be ceded without the signed consent of three-quarters of the adult male population. But even as the treaty was being ratified, the federal government was under pressure to amend the terms of the treaty in order to make the Black Hills available for European American settlement and development (Lazarus 1991:67-70).

E. Black Hills Agreement, 1875 to 1877

Under mounting pressure from the miners, merchants, and settlers who colonized the Black Hills, and in the face of growing resentment and hostility from the tribal nations who still owned them, the government began another round of negotiations in 1875 with the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahos to relinquish the Hills. Only this time the negotiations would not be concluded in a treaty but an agreement.5 As pointed out in Chapter Five, the first round of negotiations, which

5 Unlike treaties, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives must pass agreements. Treaties only require passage by the Senate. Some scholars have argued that the move to agreements reflects a change in the political posture of the U.S. government towards tribes. This may be true, but agreements still hold the same legally binding contractual obligations as treaties.
began on September 4, 1875, failed. Even though they were reconvened a few weeks later, it was apparent that a consensus could not be reached among the adult male representatives of the tribes present at the negotiations. By October of 1875, the federal government abandoned its efforts to negotiate an agreement for the Black Hills and the commissioners returned to Washington, D.C. knowing they would be unable to secure the signed consent of three-fourths of the adult male population for any lease or sale. A few months after the Battle of Little Big Horn, the government authorized another commission to negotiate a settlement for the Black Hills. In August of 1876, George Manypenny, the chief negotiator, recommenced the deliberations (Olson 1965:224-226). Two months later on October 27th, without the required consent of three-quarters of the adult male population, the negotiations were concluded when several influential Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahos signed the agreement. Four months later, the agreement became law with the passage of a Congressional Act on February 28, 1877.

From the moment of its passage, nearly every section of the statute became a subject of controversy. The statute contains the following provisions. Under Article 1, new boundaries were created for the Sioux Reservation that did not include the Black Hills. These boundaries were described as commencing:

at the intersection of the one hundred and third meridian of longitude with the northern boundary of the State of Nebraska: thence north along said meridian to its intersection with the South Fork of the Cheyenne River; thence down said stream to its junction with the North Fork; thence up the North Fork of said Cheyenne River to the said one hundred and third meridian; thence north along said meridian to the South branch of Cannon Ball or Cedar Creek; and the northern boundary of their said reservation shall follow the Said South Branch to its intersection with the main Cannon Ball River, and thence down the said main Cannon Ball River to the Missouri River (quoted from Lazarus 1991:458).

All of the lands outside this boundary were ceded to the United States, all rights to hunt in these areas were relinquished as well, and Article 16 of the 1868 treaty, covering unceded Indian Territory, was abrogated (Lazarus 1991:457-461). Article 3 permitted the United States to build no more than 3 wagon or other roads across the new reservation. Article 4 provided that all annuities, subsistence, and supplies from this agreement, the 1868 treaty, and any future act of Congress would be distributed at points along the Missouri River (Ibid:458). Articles 3 to 11 covered the conditions of delivering annuities, resettling bands on the reservation, and making allotments for individual heads of families. These articles also stipulated the terms for providing support in agriculture, education, government and subsistence until the tribes became self-sufficient, and they set forth provisions for enforcing morality and for taking an annual census (Ibid:459-461). Some of these provisions, however, duplicated what the government had already offered to the Sioux under the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. Importantly, there was no monetary settlement for the 7.7 million acres of land ceded by the act.

Curiously, however, Article 12 of the 1868 Treaty [15 Stat., 635] was not abrogated, leaving the Sioux with a significant legal avenue to challenge the 1877 Act. Since three-quarters of the adult male population never signed the 1876 document on which congressional action was taken and the Black Hills Act of 1877 passed, Congress had illegally overridden its own duly ratified treaty law. The failure of the U.S. government to gain the required consent of the Sioux, Northern Arapahos, and Northern Cheyennes to change the terms of the 1868 Treaty, and its failure to offer adequate compensation for the illegal taking of the Black Hills, placed the Hills in an entangled and protracted history of litigation. To this day, even though the question of the legal
standing of the lands that make up the Black Hills has been settled, at least from the perspective of the U.S. judicial system, the historical and cultural claims of the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahos to these lands still remain unresolved. And there is not likely to be any closure on this issue in the near or foreseeable future.

F. The 1889 Agreement

If the 1877 Agreement had not been enough to undermine what little faith the Sioux had in the honesty and integrity of the United States government and its representatives, the proceedings surrounding the break-up of the reservation established by the 1877 Act, which began five years later in 1882, subjected them once more to the indignity of having to surrender more of their lands under further duress and deception (Lazarus 1991:107-112). Although three-quarters of the adult male Sioux population eventually and reluctantly signed an agreement in 1887 for the creation of five smaller reservations and the cession of all remaining lands, they did so with the explicit understanding that it would not abrogate any of the rights remaining to them under the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 [15 Stat., 635]. The passage of the 1889 Act, and the resulting loss of additional lands exacerbated internal divisions among the Sioux and reinforced their resolve to reclaim the Black Hills (Ibid:111-112).

II. THE SIOUX BLACK HILLS CLAIM AND ITS ADJUDICATION

Until August 15, 1946, when President Harry S. Truman signed the Indian Claims Act (60 Stat. 1049), tribes pursued their claims before the U.S. Court of Claims once they secured a special jurisdictional act from Congress. The process of getting a hearing on a case before the U.S. Court of Claims was subject to legal obstacles and delays. There was no assurance of Congressional support in getting a jurisdictional act passed, much less receiving a favorable hearing in court. Indeed, as Edward Lazarus (1991:184) argued:

The Court of Claims consistently read jurisdictional acts narrowly and almost universally refused on technical grounds to hear cases based on fraud, duress, mistake of fact, or other questions of treaty validity. The process became so cumbersome that Congress began to deliberate on other alternatives, not only because the number of tribes seeking jurisdictional acts was becoming unwieldy but also because of the process itself was unfair.

In the 1930s, Congress began to consider the formation of a special judicial body to hear Indian claims cases (Lurie 1978:97-110; Lazarus 1991:184), and fifteen years later, it passed into law the act governing the formation of the Indian Claims Commission (hereafter abbreviated as ICC). Congress granted the commission the right to hear two sorts of cases. One was based on issues of equity, wherein treaties, contracts, and agreements between the United States and tribal claimants were made under fraud, duress, unconscionable consideration, mutual or unilateral mistake, whether of law or fact, or any other ground cognizable by a court of equity (Lazarus 1991:185). The other addressed issues of fairness and covered claims based upon fair and honorable dealings that are not recognized by any rule of law or equity. (The act also included provisions for the formation of an Investigation Division that would give tribes assistance in assembling the necessary evidence to bring before the ICC (Ibid:185).

The overall history of the ICC has yet to be written, although judging by the evaluations of particular cases, including the Sioux's Black Hills claim, it would have to be argued that it
obstructed as much as it advanced the process by which tribes might received some fair measure of justice for their claims (Sutton 1985). As Edward Lazarus (1991:262-263) wrote:

Congress had created the commission precisely because the claims court, through uncharitable interpretation of special jurisdictional acts, had frustrated efforts to resolve tribal grievances on their merits. Despite this congressional intent, the commission had exacerbated the problem. The result was a tribunal even stingier in its legal rulings than the court whose conservatism it had been designed to circumvent.

Because of the ICC’s narrow interpretation of its mandate, many cases it heard ultimately ended up in the U.S. Court of Claims where the rulings were generally more favorable to tribes (Ibid: 263). One of the most important areas where there was a significant difference in rulings had to do with the recognition of aboriginal property rights. While the ICC rarely ruled in favor of aboriginal title to the land, the U.S. Court of Claims took the position that tribes held property rights in the lands under their control simply as a consequence of their prior occupancy, regardless of any government recognition (Ibid:263). By the 1960s, there was increasing dissatisfaction in Congress over the ICC’s methods and rulings, and in 1970, it was closed (Ibid:264).

The Sioux’s Black Hills claim represents a classic illustration of the problematic nature of the legal process under which tribes sought redress from the U.S. government for the illegal taking of their lands. At every step of the way in its sixty-year history, the claim was obstructed by delays, technicalities, and hairsplitting legal interpretations. Although the grounds on which the Sioux claim was pursued shifted over time, the two central questions underlying the claim were whether the Black Hills were improperly taken by the U.S. Government and whether conscionable consideration had been given for their taking (Wilkins 1997:226-227). The unwavering position of the Sioux Nation was that the Hills had been illegally seized and taken in the absence of fair compensation, while the U.S. Government’s case rested on proving that it had acted in an honorable and fair manner in terms of its own treaty law.

Because this landmark case is so important and concerns the lands on which Wind Cave National Park stands, it needs to be given some consideration here. Three different but related questions will be addressed. First, what were the major court cases and rulings that led to the final Supreme Court decision on the Sioux’s Black Hills claim? The complicated and protracted legal struggle of the Sioux and their counsel to reach a settlement on the Black Hills claim is covered in great detail by Edward Lazarus in his book Black Hills, White Justice (1998) and in a number of law review articles (Hanson, S. 1980; Shreves 1981; Pemberton 1985; Pommershein 1988), and it does not need to be reiterated here except to highlight and summarize chronologically the benchmark legal motions and rulings in what would become the longest running Indian claims case in U.S. history. Second, what was the legal theory behind the decision that led to the largest Indian land claim settlement in the history of the ICC? For some understanding on this question, reliance is placed on the work of Professor David Wilkins (1997), a political scientist, who is widely considered to be the leading expert on the history of Supreme Court decisions affecting Indian tribes. And finally, why did the Black Hills claim fail to reach a satisfactory conclusion for the two parties, namely, the Sioux and the United States government? In addition to the sources referred to above, Alexandra New Holy’s recent article, The Heart of Everything That Is: Paha Sapa, Treaties, and Lakota Identity, in the Oklahoma Law Review (1998) is especially helpful in the discussion of this question.
A. The Historical Chronology of the Case

The Sioux Nation claims case on the Black Hills took sixty years to reach a resolution, starting with the passage of a special jurisdictional act by Congress in 1920 that authorized the U.S. Court of Claims to consider a motion on the matter and ending with the final judgment of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1980 that led to a monetary settlement of more than 106 million dollars for the illegal seizure of the Black Hills. This sixty year history is divided into seven segments, which cover the events that led the Sioux to pursue a claim, trace the major court holdings in the case, and describe unsuccessful litigation pursued by the Sioux after the Supreme Court handed down its ruling.

1. The Beginnings of the Claim: 1903-1920

Hardly had the seizure of the Black Hills been ratified by Congress in 1877 when leaders from the Lakota, Arapaho, and Cheyenne nations petitioned to see the President of the United States over the irregularities that surrounded the proceedings of the Black Hills Commission in 1876 (Price, C. 1996:157-158). The date when the Sioux and their allies first attempted to organize and protest the seizure of the Black Hills is not known, although John Brennan, the agent at Pine Ridge, reported that a group of over three hundred older leaders started to meet and press their claims at the agency in 1891 (Lazarus 1991:119-120).

Little more than a decade thereafter, when many of the older leaders began to organize around the Black Hills question, a meeting was arranged in 1903 with Eben W. Martin, the Senator from South Dakota, to discuss Sioux claims regarding the Black Hills. This meeting not only included many of the younger and more educated leaders of the Sioux nation, but it also involved representatives from the Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapaho tribes. At this meeting, Red Cloud reiterated what he told the commissioners sixteen years earlier and complained that his people were not receiving what he believed had been negotiated in 1876. As Edward Lazarus (1991:121) wrote, Red Cloud understood perfectly that he had been cheated, but he still did not know just how in terms that were either accurate or that whites could comprehend. Some of the younger and boarding-school educated Lakota did have a sense of this, including Edgar Fire Thunder who was cognizant of the fact that three-quarters of the tribe had never consented to or signed the 1876 agreement (Ibid:122). Martin counter-argued, however, that this agreement was valid not only because the leaders who signed represented three-quarters of the adult male population, but also because the government had already compensated the Sioux with more than enough in food and provisions for the taking of the Black Hills and other lands under Article 19 of the 1889 Agreement. American Horse then challenged Martin by arguing that the later agreement, governing the break-up of the Sioux reservation, had nothing to do with the Black Hills or any other earlier treaty to which the Sioux were a party (Lazarus 1991:122-123).

Three years later in 1906, another boarding-school educated Sioux, Charles Turning Hawk, sought counsel from the Washington, D.C. attorney, R.V. Belt, who advised the Pine Ridge Sioux that any claim for the Black Hills had to revolve around the federal government’s failure to secure the signatures of three-fourths of the adult male population, but even then, there was no guarantee that a case would lead to a judicial ruling in their favor. Nevertheless, the Pine Ridge Sioux Tribal Council chose Belt to oversee their legal affairs on the matter. He was never retained, however. At this point in history, the Indian Bureau still reserved the prerogative to determine who would represent tribal interests, and tribes did not retain the right to sue the government independently (Lazarus 1991:123-125) As defined by congressional legislation enacted in 1873,
tribes were required to secure special jurisdictional acts from Congress in order to press their land claims in the U.S. federal court system (Lazarus 1991:124-126).

In 1911, five years after the Pine Ridge Sioux first sought legal counsel, representatives from the various Sioux, Northern Arapahos, and Northern Cheyenne tribes, who were either parties to the 1876 Black Hills Agreement, or who were present at the deliberations, met at the Cheyenne River Reservation for what had now become an annual gathering on the issue of the Black Hills treaty. At this meeting, a formal resolution was passed that claimed the treaty was executed illegally because it had not secured the required signatures of three-quarters of the adult male population. Also present at this meeting was the state of South Dakota’s highly respected historian, Doane Robinson, who became sufficiently convinced of the legitimacy of the tribes’ claims to write about them in an article that appeared in Deadwood’s Pioneer Times. Needless to say this brought about a rash of rebuttals from government officials denying the legitimacy of any such claim (Lazarus 1991:130-131).

Without the financial support of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Sioux raised their own monies to travel to Washington, D.C. and lobby Congress to get a jurisdictional act passed so they could pursue their claim in court. They also began to secure depositions from tribal elders who had been at the 1875 and 1876 proceedings. All of these elders concurred that they and others who participated in the negotiations were under the impression that they only signed a lease for the Hills not a settlement for their outright sale (Lazarus 1991:137). It would take many more years for Congress to pass the Sioux Jurisdictional Act on June 1, 1920, a statute allowing them to pursue their Black Hills case in court (Lazarus 1991:138).

In the meantime, the Northern Arapahos and Northern Cheyennes were also trying, but less successfully, to gain legal standing to pursue their case through the federal court system. In the same year that the Sioux received a jurisdictional act to pursue their claim, Northern Cheyennes and Northern Arapahos met at a joint meeting on December 15-17, 1920 to propose their own separate claim. The next year the Northern Arapahos formally withdrew themselves from any association with the Sioux claim (Fowler 1982:327n3), and the following year, 1922, the chairman of the Northern Arapaho Business Council, Henry Lee Taylor, tried to get federal support to send an Arapaho delegation to Washington, D.C. to seek some sort of redress on their Black Hills claim (Fowler 1982:134). In 1926, Congress apparently authorized the Arapahos and Cheyennes to intervene in the Sioux case before the U.S. Court of Claims, but over the next decade, they decided not to do so (U. S. House of Representatives 1939:77). Nonetheless, the Northern Arapahos were still optimistic about gaining the necessary government support to pursue their claim independently, and in 1939, they appealed to the U.S. Senate for passage of a separate jurisdictional act to get a hearing on the Black Hills before the U.S. Court of Claims, but this effort appears not to have moved beyond the hearing stage (U.S. House of Representatives 1939, 1940). By the 1940s, it was apparent that their efforts would not be rewarded (Fowler 1982:165, 173). Although the Northern Arapahos and Northern Cheyennes were parties to an ICC claim over lands inside the border of their territory as designated in the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty, there is nothing we could find to suggest that they attempted to pursue a separate ICC claim relating to their proprietary interests in the Black Hills.

2. The Case Before the U.S. Court of Claims: 1921-1949

A year after the Sioux received their jurisdictional act, the federal government retained a group of prestigious New York attorneys to review the Sioux’s case (Lazarus 1991:140). In their expert legal opinion, the jurisdictional act, which the Sioux had fought so hard to secure, was
weak because it did not empower the Court of Claims to consider the Sioux’s case on the moral grounds they wished to pursue it. Moreover, the lawyers argued that even if a decision had been favorable to the Sioux, the award would be too small to merit pushing the case any further. They also advised them against the value of their claim, asserting that an Indian tribe’s rights in the land were not those of outright ownership but rather similar to the rights of a tenant for life (Ibid:140-141). These attorneys also asserted that even though their 1868 treaty gave them an absolute and undisturbed right of occupancy to the Black Hills, it did not grant them outright ownership. Finally, even if the court accepted life tenancy as a form of ownership, they argued that any expenditure the government claimed it had spent on the Sioux would far outweigh any award the Sioux might conceivably win (Ibid:141). In their expert opinion, the Sioux needed to return to Congress to obtain a new or amended jurisdictional act, excluding government offsets and authorizing the U.S. Court of Claims to inquire into the legality of the 1876 agreement. The attorneys the government retained withdrew themselves from the case, leaving the Sioux without legal representation (Ibid:142).

In their search for new legal counsel, the Sioux found themselves embroiled in bitter disputes over what course of action they should take on their claim. No less divided in deciding how to pursue the claim were the attorneys the Sioux were attempting to retain. On December 21, 1922, the lawyers reached an agreement, but in the meantime, one of them had dropped out of the case (Lazarus 1991:132-145). The lead attorney for the Sioux, Ralph Hoyt Case, was confident that the Sioux’s original jurisdictional act was adequate enough to take their claim to court, but he was also mindful of the fact that the only redress the Sioux could hope to receive from the Court of Claims was a monetary settlement (Ibid:147). In his initial meetings with the Sioux, Case informed them that they had no hope of regaining any of their lands in the Black Hills because the Court of Claims was only empowered to make a judgment for restitution on monetary grounds. He also told them that the federal government had the constitutional right of eminent domain as long as it provided fair compensation for its takings (Lazarus Ibid: 147-148). From Case’s perspective, the key issue in the case was not that the government had taken the Hills from the Sioux, but that it had not paid them for the seizure (Ibid:147-149). Although Edward Lazarus (Ibid:150) claims the Sioux had not anticipated anything different at the outset of their long legal struggle, and merely desired to get the best price for the Hills as expeditiously as possible, it is hard to know what most of them really expected or even wanted at this point in time. 6

On May 7, 1923, Case filed the Sioux’s claim with the U.S. Court of Claims on the grounds that the United States had not given the Sioux adequate compensation for a Fifth Amendment taking of lands guaranteed to them in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty (Lazarus 1991:169). The claim was divided into three different categories of land, which included under Class A the lands of the Black Hills and their surrounding area. These lands totaled 7,345,157 acres, which Case valued at $172 million plus interest from the date of taking (Ibid:158). The claim was accompanied by a five hundred page Statement of Fact, in which Case meticulously presented the testimonies of Sioux elders who were present at the 1875 and 1876 negotiations that led to the seizure of the Black Hills. Over the years, according to Lazarus (Ibid:175, 191), this document

6 Like most other Americans in the 1920s, and even today, few Sioux had the necessary legal background and expertise to take an informed stand on their rights and options on this matter.

7 These testimonies revealed in varying, and at times inconsistent, ways the Sioux were misled and deceived by the government during the negotiations in 1875 and 1876 (Lazarus 1991:175, 191). The illegality of the so-called 1877 Agreement was raised not only by the Lakotas but also by some of the whites that attended the deliberations. Ben Arnold (in Crawford and Waggoner 1999:209-210), for one, knew the terms of the 1868 Fort Laramie treaty and what had been said in the negotiations in the 1875 and 1876 negotiations. He revealed that the original offer to the Sioux in 1875 was a land lease, not an outright sale, and that the negotiations in 1876 took place under considerable duress.
took on a sacred status among the Sioux, and while it clearly reflected the moral sentiments and views of the Sioux litigants, it did not stand up in court against government challenges that it was a record of hearsay without any objective grounding (Ibid:175).

After eighteen years of legal maneuvering, delays, and audits, the oral arguments on the Sioux case were heard before the U. S. Court of Claims in October of 1941 (Lazarus 1991:150-175). Eight months later on June 1, 1942, the court dismissed the case \(Sioux Tribe of Indians vs. The United States\) on the grounds that it did not have the jurisdiction to decide a moral claim. The court, however, held conflicting opinions that led to inconsistent readings of its ruling by later courts. In its Finding of Facts, the court rejected the central thesis of the plaintiffs that the Sioux had been coerced into signing the 1876 Black Hills Agreement. It determined that the government had conducted itself properly given the circumstances. This led a 1975 court to rule that the case had been adjudicated. Yet, in 1974 and 1979, two other courts took the position that the 1942 court holding had explicitly dismissed the case and refused to give a legal opinion on what was construed as a moral issue (Ibid:175). More specifically, the 1942 court stated that it was not given authority under the provisions of the Sioux Jurisdictional Act to rule on whether the Black Hills were seized as a Fifth Amendment taking, and therefore, it did not have jurisdiction to decide whether adequate consideration was given under the 1877 Agreement (Ibid:179-180). Seven years later, Sioux legal counsel appealed the case to the Supreme Court, but the high court declined to review it (Ibid:188).


The following year on August 15, 1950, Ralph Case, the Sioux s principal attorney, filed the Sioux claim before the Indian Claims Commission. In his thirty-five page petition to the commission, the Fifth Amendment legal theory he had originally advanced in the case before the U.S. Court of Claims was abandoned; and instead, his argument rested solely on the claim that the compensation paid to the Sioux under the 1877 Act was inadequate and unconscionable. In other words, the Sioux had not received just consideration for the taking of their lands by the government (Lazarus 1991:191). The justice department s counsel, of course, vigorously denied the allegations that the government had coerced, misled, or acted unfairly in its dealings with the Sioux on this matter (Ibid:193-195).

On April 5, 1954, the ICC in \(Sioux Tribe of Indians v. United States\) (2 Ind. Cl. Comm:646) denied the claim and sided with the government that the Sioux had not demonstrated unconscionable consideration under the 1877 Agreement. Quite the contrary, the ICC in its Findings of Fact and Opinion wrote that under the circumstances the federal government treated the Sioux fairly and provided them just compensation (2 Ind. Cl. Comm:673, 682-683). In reaching their decision, the ICC completely sidestepped Article 12 of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, requiring permission of three-quarters of the adult Sioux male population to amend any of its provisions. Since the necessary signatures were not secured in the 1876 agreement, the government taking was theoretically illegal. This important issue, however, was never ruled on because the Sioux s attorney, Ralph Case, had not pursued it in the claim before the ICC (Lazarus 1991:204-205). A year later on March 11, 1955, the ICC denied the Sioux s petition for a rehearing, and seven months later it was returned to the U.S. Court of Claims.

Once again, on November 7, 1956, the Court of Claims affirmed the dismissal of the Sioux claim in \(Sioux Tribe of Indians, et al. v. The United States\) (146 F. Supp:229). Siding with the ICC and the Department of Justice, the court ruled that the Sioux had received conscionable consideration under the terms of the 1877 Agreement. It also argued that even though the govern-
ment had breached the 1868 treaty, the Sioux had no legal standing to make a claim against the United States and no basis for recovery either (Lazarus 1991:211-212).


Realizing that their attorney, Ralph Case, had botched their case, the Oglala Sioux Tribe requested that one of their own tribal members, Helen Peterson, the Executive Director of the National Congress of American Indians, seek other legal advice. A year later she recommended the tribe seek new counsel and a reconsideration of their claim (Lazarus 1991:211-215). On October 4, 1957, the Sioux s new legal counsel, Sonosky, Schifter, and Lazarus, filed a motion before the Court of Claims to vacate its 1956 ruling on the grounds that the tribe s former attorney, Ralph Case, was incompetent (Ibid:228-229). The response of the government on the Motion to Vacate was predictable, asserting that the problem had not been the Sioux s legal representation but rather the lack of merit in their case (Ibid:233).

On November 5, 1958, the Court of Claims (182 Ct. Cl:912) granted the plaintiff s motion, returning the case to the ICC to determine whether there were sufficient grounds to reconsider it. After two weeks, the ICC (33 Ind. Cl. Comm:151, 152, 153) gave the order to have the case re-opened (Lazarus 1991:234-235). Two years later, on November 4, 1960, the Sioux filed their amended claims with the ICC. Unlike their former counsel, the new attorneys divided the case into two petitions, one dealing with the lands surrendered under the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 (Docket-74A), and a second covering lands taken in the 1877 Black Hills Agreement (Docket 74B) (Ibid:238). In relation to the second petition, the Sioux claimed that the land surrendered under the 1877 Agreement constituted a Fifth Amendment taking and that the United States had not given them adequate compensation for this seizure (Ibid:204). The government objected to the Sioux s petitions on the grounds that they represented new claims, but the ICC denied the government s objections (Ibid:242).

Following its earlier dilatory tactics, the government delayed its response to the plaintiff s petitions, raised dubious technical issues, and moved to dismiss the claim entirely. Again, the ICC denied the government s motions (Lazarus 1991:242-244). The new trial started on June 25, 1962 with the plaintiffs presenting 535 exhibits with over 10,000 pages of evidence to prove Sioux title to the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty lands (Ibid:248-249). By February 1964, all papers in the case had been filed (Ibid:260), but it was not until May of 1966 that the ICC ordered the Sioux claims be tried separately: 74A was assigned to the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty claims, and 74B was the docket for claims relating to the Black Hills. The commission also required the government to reply to the tribe s amended Black Hills petition (Ibid:264). As Lazarus (Ibid:264) wrote: The sleeping giant was about to be awakened.

After two more years had passed, the ICC set down for determination three questions:

First, what lands and rights did the United States acquire under 1877 Act? Second, was there any consideration for the acquisition by the United States of these lands and rights, and if so, what constituted that consideration? Third, if there was no consideration (an agreed-upon

8 She was one of the members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe of Cheyenne ancestry.
9 Copies of these papers are held on microfilm in the collections of the South Dakota Historical Society, and these were reviewed as part of the research underlying this report.
10 Although Lazarus use of this popular expression is no doubt coincidental, it is worth noting here that the Black Hills have long been associated with a figure of gigantic stature in Sioux traditions (see, Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen for a detailed discussion of this association).
Earlier in the same year, 1968, plaintiffs requested the commission to consider these very same questions (Ibid:267).

On March 16, 1969, Sioux counsel filed two briefs. One of these defined Sioux rights to lands that were lost under the 1877 agreement, including the Black Hills (Lazarus 1991:267). In this brief, the attorneys claimed that the United States had not provided adequate consideration for the relinquishment of Black Hills lands under the 1877 Agreement, and they further asserted that the compensation the tribe received represented a gratuity rather than a payment for the sale of the land. The defense objected to the plaintiffs’ assertions and argued that government compensation represented adequate consideration, adding that it had paid the Sioux a total of $52,139,223.93 between 1877 and June 30, 1951, and that, in addition, it had transferred 900,000 acres of land back to the Sioux. It also raised the defense of res judicata11 (Ibid:156).

On February 15, 1974, the ICC handed down its ruling in Sioux Nation of Indians v. United States (33 Ind. Cl. Comm. 1974:151). The first principal holding ruled the United States had taken the Black Hills under the 1877 Agreement in violation of the 5th Amendment, and the second held the land appropriated under this act was worth 17.1 million dollars (33 Ind. Cl. Comm. 1974:217, 357; Lazarus 1991:317). The ICC justices further argued that the Sioux claim rested on moral rather than legal grounds; and therefore, it stood outside the scope of the 1920 Sioux Jurisdictional Act and had not been adjudicated as the government claimed in the 1942 court (Lazarus 1991:319). Thus, the ICC rejected the government’s res judicata claim (33 Ind. Cl. Comm. 1974:209; Lazarus 1991:319). The ICC also found that the government had made no effort to give the Sioux the full value of their land and were required to offer fair compensation for the taking (33 Ind. Cl. Comm. 1974:216-220; Lazarus 1991:323). In other words, the 1877 Black Hills Agreement had constituted an illegal taking as defined by the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The ICC also held that the time of taking was November 17, 1875, the date President Ulysses S. Grant secretly ordered the Army to stop upholding Sioux rights as set forth in Article 2 of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, not the later date of 1877 when the act relinquishing Sioux title to the lands was passed by Congress (33 Ind. Cl. Comm. 1974:227). The commission awarded the Sioux $17.1 million for a Fifth Amendment taking of the Black Hills and $450,000 for the gold seized by the settlers. It also held the government liable for paying interest on the entire 17.5 million in the amount of 5% per year from the 1875 date of taking (Lazarus 1991:359). The downside of the ICC ruling, according to Lazarus (Ibid:324), was the government was allowed to collect its offsets from the award; it was able to claim reimbursement for the expenditures it had made on behalf of the Sioux in fulfilling any obligations it incurred under the 1877 Act.

Since the government’s credit would substantially reduce the monetary settlement the Sioux would actually receive, the attorneys turned to Congress to seek an amendment to the ICC Act which would bar offsetting, that is, exclude food, rations, and provisions from the category of allowable offsets the government was able to deduct from a claims settlement (Lazarus 1991:330-332). The amendment was brought before the Senate by James Abourezk, the Senator from South Dakota. On May 28, 1974, it was passed by the Senate (S.3007) and approved by the

11 Res judicata bars a rehearing on an issue previously adjudicated in a civil court. It was the government’s position that the Fifth Amendment taking had been decided by the 1942 Court of Claims, and therefore, the issue could not be retried.
House (H.R. 16170) on October 15, 1974. President Gerald Ford signed the amendment into law on October 27 (Ibid:332-336).

5. Back to the U.S. Court of Claims: 1975-1977

Meanwhile, the United States appealed the ICC’s 1974 rulings, and once again, it was referred to the Court of Claims on the grounds of *res judicata* and *collateral estoppel*. On June 25, 1975, in *United States v. Sioux Nation* (207 Ct. Cl. 1975:234), the government asked the court to consider whether the Black Hills were relinquished by the power of eminent domain or by the course of unfair and dishonorable dealings not amounting to a constitutional taking. In this case, the Court of Claims affirmed the ICC award for 17.5, but denied any government liability for interest on that amount, stating that the Sioux’s Fifth Amendment Claim was barred by *res judicata* (207 Ct. Cl. 1975:234). In reaching this decision, the court argued that while it did not agree with the 1942 decision, it was compelled by the technical requirements of the law to rule that the 1942 court had decided the Fifth Amendment question (Lazarus 1991:344). In its evaluation of the historical record, the court found the government’s dealings with the Sioux reprehensible, but ruled that the Sioux could only seek compensation on the ground of dishonorable dealings. This meant an award for 17.5 million, not an added 85 million in interest. On December 4, 1975, the Supreme Court denied a petition from Sioux counsel for a *certiorari*, so the maximum allowable recovery on the claim remained at 17.5 million (Lazarus 1991:344-345).


Meanwhile, Sioux counsel tried to get Senator Abourezk to introduce another amendment to the original 1946 ICC Act, whereby Congress would instruct the ICC to consider the Black Hills claim solely on its merits without regard to the defense of *res judicata* and *collateral estoppel* (Lazarus 1991:347). The statute (92 Stat. 153) was signed into law by President Jimmy Carter on March 13, 1978 (Ibid:365), and it gave the Sioux another legal reprieve -- the chance to finally prove their claim of a Fifth Amendment taking. The Black Hills claim was argued before the U.S. Court of Claims for the fourth time on November 28, 1978. On June 13, 1979, the court handed down its final ruling in *United States v. Sioux Nation*, in which it affirmed the 1974 ICC ruling that the Sioux were entitled to $17.1 million plus interest at 5% from the date of taking, determined by this court to be February 1877 (the date the Black Hills Act was passed into law) and to $450,000 for the gold stolen from the Hills but without interest on this amount for a grand total of 106 million dollars (220 Ct.Cl. 1979:442; Lazarus 1991:373-375).

On October 17, 1979, the Solicitor General filed a petition for a writ of *certiorari*, asking the Supreme Court to overturn the 1979 Court of Claims decision, and a month later on November 21, 1979, the high court considered the petition for a *certiorari* in the Black Hills Claim as United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians, No. 79-639 (Lazarus 1991:378-379). Oral argument for case began on March 24, 1980 (Ibid:386), and on June 30, 1980, in *United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians* (448 U.S. 371, 100 S.Ct. 1980), the Supreme Court affirmed the 1979 Court of Claims ruling, voting 8 to 1 in favor of the decision. Justice Blackmun wrote on behalf of the majority in the case, while Justice Rehnquist presented the dissenting opinion.

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12 *Collateral estoppel* refers to a situation where an issue of fact cannot be relitigated between two parties once it has been decided upon in a valid legal judgment.
7. The Legal Aftermath of the Supreme Court Decision

After sixty years, the long legal battle was seemingly over. The victory was bittersweet, however. Even though the Sioux s attorneys had won the largest Indian claims award for their clients, the political grounds on which the claim was being staked had shifted. The Sioux were no longer interested in a monetary settlement for the Black Hills; they wanted their illegally confiscated land returned.

One day after the Supreme Court decision, Mario Gonzalez, a Sioux attorney from Pine Ridge, sought an injunction against Sioux counsel to prevent them from pursuing a monetary claim. The complaint asserted that the lawyers in the Sioux Nation case did not represent the Oglala Sioux Tribe (Lazarus 1991:403, 408). Two weeks later, on July 18, Gonzalez filed a case with the Federal District Court in South Dakota, requesting, among other things, the return of the Black Hills to the Sioux. He argued that the 1877 Black Hills Agreement was null and void on the grounds that the U.S. had seized the Black Hills for private rather than public purposes, thereby violating the Fifth Amendment. The tribe sought the return of their proprietary rights to the Hills and monetary damages for the extraction of minerals. He moved to stop any payment on the Sioux Nation settlement to the plaintiffs and their attorneys (Ibid:408-409; Pemberton 1985:310). A year later, the court dismissed the case and ruled in Oglala Sioux Tribe v. United States [650 F.2d] that it lacked jurisdiction over such matters. It also declined Gonzalez s move to appeal the case (Pemberton 1985:310). Subsequently, the Oglala Sioux Tribe sued the Homestake Mining Company to revoke their title to five acres of property in the Hills, to secure damages from the company s trespass on Oglala land, and to prevent the company from furthering its operations (Pemberton 1985:311, Lazarus 1991:412). In 1983, the court dismissed the case of Oglala Sioux Tribe v. Homestake Mining Co. [722 F.2d] on the grounds that it had disposed of the issues raised in a previous ruling on the Oglala Sioux Tribe v. United States. While Edward Lazarus (Ibid:412-413) dismissed Gonzalez s legal efforts as frivolous, Richard Pemberton Jr. (1985:312) took a more measured view of the situation and argued that the United States was not legally equipped to address the issues of real importance to the Oglalas and other Sioux people. As a result, and in the end, the court system served as no remedy at all for the Sioux in their quest for justice on the matter of the Black Hills.

B. The Legal Interpretation of the Case

Throughout its long history, the Sioux Nation s Black Hills claim never really pivoted, as some other Indian claims cases have, on the issue of whether or not the Sioux had property rights and interests in the Black Hills. These had been acknowledged in two treaties with the United States. First, the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 clearly established that the Black Hills were located within the territorial boundaries of the Sioux Nation, and second, under the terms of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, the Black Hills were included within the lands set aside for the exclusive and undisturbed use and occupancy of the Sioux and any other tribes who they permitted to reside there. Sioux rights and interests in the Black Hills prior to 1851 were carefully documented by ethnohistorical evidence assembled for the Justice Department by Wesley Hurt (1974) in 1953, and they were also evident in the prodigious body of material Sioux counsel assembled for its litigation after 1957. Aboriginal entitlement was never really at issue in the Sioux Black Hills claim. What was open to question was whether the court would recognize this form of entitlement. It was never seriously addressed, however, because the United States had effectively acknowledged Sioux ownership in the 1851 and 1868 Fort Laramie treaties.
According to Professor David Wilkins (1997:226-227), the Black Hills case hinged throughout its long history on the question of the government’s right of eminent domain and its authority to exercise its claimed plenary power. More specifically, it hinged on the reading of these rights as they applied to earlier Supreme Court rulings over Fifth Amendment takings of Indian lands. Several cases served as precedents in the Supreme Court decision, but the two most important ones were: *Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock* [187 U.S. 23 S. Ct.] and *Shoshone v. United States* [299 U.S. 57 S. Ct.]. In addition, the high court considered certain lower court decisions, including *Three Tribes of the Fort Berthold Tribe v. United States* [182 Ct. Cl. 543].

Ever since Supreme Court Justice John Marshall’s famous 1830s rulings in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* and in *Worcester v. Georgia*, tribes have been viewed as distinct, independent political communities and as domestic dependent nations with certain sovereign rights in their lands. Under American law, however, the United States retains dominion over and claims title to all lands within its borders as the ultimate sovereign body (Lazarus 1991:169-170). Notwithstanding the acknowledgment of the nation’s highest court that tribes have rights in their lands, especially when these are protected by treaty, U.S. courts have read these rights differently and ruled inconsistently on the extent to which and the conditions under which this property can be seized by the United States through its right of eminent domain and its authority to exercise plenary power.

In the *Lone Wolf* Case, the Kiowa, Kiowa Apache, and Comanche tribes of Oklahoma brought suit against the U.S. government on the grounds that it had illegally disposed of their lands by selling them without their consent. The high court ruled that Congress had plenary power over Indian land, and that it had the power and authority to abrogate treaties and alter their provisions. It further held that the government, as the guardian of Indian affairs, maintained paramount power over Indian proprietary interests. In its role as trustee, the government had the right to exercise its plenary power in making good faith decisions on behalf of tribal interests. The court construed this power as political and not under the jurisdiction of the judicial arm of the government (Wilkins 1997:105-117; Lazarus 1991:169-170).

In the *Shoshone* Case, the Wind River Shoshone Tribe of Wyoming sued the government on the grounds that they had not received any compensation when another tribe, the Northern Arapahos, was admitted to and settled on their reservation. In this case, the Supreme Court reaffirmed congressional power over Indian property, but it also held that such power does not extend beyond its obligation to provide a fair return for its takings. The court ruled that the government had the right to seize tribal property under its power of eminent domain, but that it could not appropriate tribal lands for its own purposes or transfer them to others without giving tribes just compensation. The *Shoshone* Case was construed by the court as a Fifth Amendment taking because the tribal parties had not been offered any fair or just return (Wilkins 1997:91-104; Lazarus 1991:172-173).

Until the 1970s, decisions in the Sioux Nation case were cast, often in contradictory ways, in relation to these two precedent cases. From the very beginning, Sioux counsel believed that the proper precedent case was *Shoshone*, and that the 1877 Black Hills Agreement constituted a classic Fifth Amendment taking. The 1942 court, which presumably did not adjudicate the case, nonetheless, read the plaintiffs’ claim as lacking merit because the *Shoshone* Case did not apply. Instead, they argued that in passing the 1877 Act, Congress was exercising its plenary power to make decisions on behalf of its guardians, and so *Lone Wolf* was the proper case. The 1974 court, 13 At all levels, the courts have not always seen fit to protect Indian property rights in situations where their aboriginal title was never recognized in a treaty, agreement, or other statutory contract with the U.S. government.
by contrast, took a different position and argued that *Lone Wolf* did not apply. Instead, the precedent case was *Shoshone* (Wilkins 1997:266-227; Lazarus 1991:211, 322).

Conflicting opinions on the applicability of these two cases had dogged other tribal claims as well. So in 1974, the U.S. Court of Claims created what it identified as a good faith test in *Three Tribes of the Fort Berthold Tribe v. United States* to determine which of the previous precedents, *Lone Wolf* or *Shoshone*, properly applied to claims involving federal takings of tribal lands. It set forth guidelines to determine whether Congress was acting in its plenary capacity as trustee over tribal property or in a sovereign role with powers of eminent domain. It argued that Congress could not invoke both at the same time but must chose which of its hats it intends to wear in carrying out particular actions (Lazarus 1991:319-321). In its 1974 decision on the Sioux Black Hills claims, the Indian Claims Commission held that Congress had not functioned in its capacity as a trustee because it had not simply substituted tribal lands for money, but instead, it acted as a sovereign and seized tribal assets without making a good faith effort to fairly compensate the tribe for its taking (Ibid:321-323). On appeal, higher courts confirmed the application of the Fort Berthold guidelines in the Sioux Black Hills claim (Wilkins 1997:227; Lazarus 1991:367-369, 379-382). The Fort Berthold standard has its own problems, however, not the least of which is that a trustee/beneficiary relationship does not apply to a case unless Congress assumed such an obligation under a treaty or other statute (Wilkins 1997:227; Lazarus 1991:321-323). Congress assumed no such obligation in the 1877 statute that authorized the seizure of the Black Hills from its tribal owners.

In its final ruling on the matter in 1980, the Supreme Court in *United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians* (448 U.S. 371, 100 S. Ct:409-410, 412-413) took the position that *Lone Wolf* did not apply because the government had never attempted to give the Sioux adequate compensation for their lands. The court’s majority also discredited the applicability of *Lone Wolf* on the grounds that the circumstances under which the Black Hills were seized did not lead to the conclusion that the taking was a change in its form of investment in tribal property (Ibid:413). It also struck down the government’s claim that the case was political and, therefore, not subject to judicial review. The court dismissed this argument and asserted that when Congress passed the 1920 jurisdictional act allowing the Sioux to pursue their claim in court, it had sanctioned a judicial review (Ibid:414). It also held that Congress had not acted in good faith because it had not applied appropriate measures for protecting and advancing tribal interests when it appropriated the Black Hills (Ibid:415). Finally, it determined that there had been a taking under the Fifth Amendment, and that even though the government had provided the Sioux with rations, this was not a consideration but rather a form of coercion to pressure the Sioux into signing the 1876 Agreement upon which the 1877 Act of Congress was based. Therefore, the court ruled that the United States was obligated to pay the Sioux an award with interest for the illegal taking of the Black Hills (Ibid:419-424; see also Wilkins 1997:225-233; Lazarus 1991:389-401).

While the court’s holding may have led to some measure of success in gaining for the Sioux a larger settlement (5% interest on the 17.5 million or 106 million) for the government’s Fifth Amendment taking of the Black Hills, it did little to resolve the ambiguous nature of the relationship between tribal nations and the federal government. David Wilkins (1997:229-234) has argued that the possibility of tribes receiving full redress for illegal takings is precluded because they do not stand on equal grounds as sovereign powers before the U.S. judiciary. Their sovereignty is stripped, *ipso facto*, once they enter the legal system; here, they must assert their rights under conditions defined and restricted by the exercise of U.S. sovereignty, not on their own terms. Edward Lazarus (1991:401) also concluded that the resolution of the Supreme Court and earlier ruling bodies was flawed because it did not take into consideration tribal forms of jurisprudence and because the judges were ill-equipped to examine the history of the case in a fair
and impartial way. In his dissenting opinion, Justice Rehnquist asserted that Justice Blackmun had taken a revisionist position in representing the history of the case. Rehnquist's reading, however, was no less subjective and politically motivated. The masking of justice, as Wilkins (1997) puts it, has been inevitable in U.S. Supreme Court rulings on tribal sovereignty because the U.S. Constitution is generally interpreted on grounds that are legally and politically biased in ways that favor the laws and interests of the United States over those of the tribal nations with whom it has historically litigated cases over land and religion.

D. Why the Supreme Court Decision is No Settlement At All

To the present day, the Sioux remain adamant in their refusal to accept any monetary compensation for the Black Hills. There is no end to the explanations of why the Sioux continue to refuse the settlement awarded them by the Supreme Court in 1980 for the illegal seizure of the Black Hills. Historical, economic, political, and cultural reasons have been advanced for the refusal of the Sioux to accept a monetary award, and some of these are described here, albeit in an abridged fashion.

1. Historical Perspectives

Many of the attempts to explain the Sioux's refusal to accept a monetary settlement for the Black Hills pivot in one way or another on historical events and circumstances. A subtext of Edward Lazarus (1991) treatise on the Sioux's Black Hills claim is that by prolonging the case and failing to reach a positive outcome for the Sioux prior to 1960, the U.S. government missed the propitious historical moment when a monetary settlement would have been acceptable to the Sioux for the taking of the Hills. He also blamed the ineptness of Sioux counsel, Ralph Hoyt Case, and his mishandling of the case for the failure of the tribe to reach a favorable legal resolution and settlement at an opportune historical moment. Notwithstanding internal political differences among the Sioux during the history of the case, there was a time, before 1970, when it would have been conceivable for Sioux leaders, inside and outside of tribal government, to accept a monetary settlement without political risk. After the Sioux treaty-rights movement gained momentum in the 1970s, advocating the return of the Black Hills, it was no longer politically practical or possible for Sioux leadership to even argue the merits of a monetary settlement (Lazarus 1991:349-357; New Holy 1998). By 1974, the political winds had changed direction, and the only resolution the Sioux would accept for their claim was the recovery of the Black Hills, themselves. Vine Deloria, Jr. (in Lazarus 1991:404) asserted that so many Sioux had now taken a hard-line view on the matter that it would be political suicide for any tribal leader to push for anything but a land return.

There is no question that the legal conclusion of the Sioux Black Hills claim could not have come at a more inopportune moment in history, at least from the standpoint of those who wanted the Sioux to accept a monetary settlement. A strictly historicist account, however, is not sufficient to answer the question of why this settlement was no longer acceptable to the Sioux in 1980. This question needs to be answered in other ways. On the one hand, attention must be given to the reasons why the monetary compensation was rejected. And on the other hand, the conditions under which an acceptance of the settlement was foreclosed require consideration as well. Both of these are well beyond the scope of this report, and, therefore, they can only be addressed very briefly here.
2. Economic Reasons

By the early 1980s, the power of Sioux tribal governments was considerably weakened by the treaty rights movement and the politicization of the Sioux people. None of their leaders was in a strong position to advocate on behalf of a monetary settlement, but more than that, most of them probably did not wish to be identified with a decision that directly challenged the rising tide of Sioux nationalism and its emphasis on traditionalism and sovereignty (Lazarus 1991:403-405). As Vine Deloria (in Lazarus 1991:406) argued, if the settlement money had been accepted, it would have been rapidly dissipated in communities that faced some of the highest levels of poverty in the United States. Pressures to make per capita payments and/or to support programs that attended to the tribes’ ongoing needs would have siphoned off the funds. The compensation would have quickly evaporated, leaving only ephemeral effects. It could not have contributed to any lasting solution to the Sioux’s vast economic needs. In the end it was not worth it for the Sioux or their leaders, to sacrifice their continuing sense of entitlement to the Black Hills in exchange for a fleeting sum of money. As Sioux leaders had recognized a century earlier, the Hills held a lasting and irreplaceable storehouse of resources that could provision their people for seven generations to come. Even though much of the Hills resource value had already been extracted since 1874, contemporary Sioux still saw them as capable of providing some measure of economic independence as evidenced in the plans they put forth in their 1985 land recovery bills (see below).

3. Cultural Rationale

Many Sioux believe that the Black Hills are beyond any price because they are sacred, standing at the very heart of their culture and traditions. They proclaim that the Black Hills can never be sold, and that the only acceptable settlement for their theft by the United States is the return of the land (U.S. Senate 1985; Black Elk, C. in Doll and Deloria 1994:29; Clifford in Doll 1994:60; Gonzalez in Doll and Deloria 1994:92; Gonzalez 1996; Lazarus 1991:351-353). In the face of such beliefs, the elected leaders of the various Sioux tribes who were parties to the Black Hills litigation and potential beneficiaries of the settlement were placed in a quandary, which Edward Lazarus (1991:405) describes as follows:

Sioux leaders faced a choice that was really no choice at all. On the one hand, if they voted to use the Black Hills money, they faced certain accusation of having repudiated their heritage and having accepted as justly resolved the tribe’s grievances against the United States that for a century had served to explain and excuse four generations of shattered lives. On the other hand, if they voted to reject the Black Hills money, they could don the mantle of traditionalism while in fact sacrificing nothing.

Befuddled by why, after all these years, the Sioux were apparently no longer willing to accept a cash payment for the Hills, some writers began to explore the origins of the cultural rationale behind the change. Richmond Clow (1983) offered one of the first attempts to account for the cultural grounds on which the settlement was being rejected. He argued that the Black Hills claim had become a tribal symbol, which united the Sioux people and provided them a common purpose after they were dispossessed of their lands and moved onto reservations. He maintained that the Sioux rejected the monetary compensation for the Black Hills because to admit that their struggle over the Hills had ended would have been to lose the symbol that unified them and given them a cultural identity as Sioux people (Clow 1983:315-316). As discussed in more detail in Chapter Thirteen, Clow, among other writers (Parker, W. 1985; Feraca 1990; Chirinos 1991; Worster 1992; Bordewich 1996), also took the position that the symbolic and sacred significance of the Black Hills had been invented by modern Sioux to maintain their sense of identity and to
justify their present political aspirations, which included, most predominately, the recovery of the Hills themselves.

Alexandra New Holy (1997, 1998) offers a more complex and compelling interpretation of the connection of the Black Hills to a modern Sioux identity and culture. In contrast to many other non-Indian writers, New Holy asserts that the Sioux have long held the Black Hills as sacred. She argues that for the Sioux the Black Hills, as Nicholas Black Elk once put it, are the heart of everything that is. They have remained one of the most significant and concrete manifestations of Sioux (more specifically, Lakota) culture and identity from pre-reservation times to the present (New Holy 1998:317-321). Before 1877, New Holy (1998:322-323) argues the Black Hills were a place of shelter, a source of sustenance, a site of trade and political negotiation, and, above all, a religious sanctuary. They were a place, as she puts it, to which the Sioux maintained a lived relationship (Ibid:322). This was an area they entered freely for their own material, social, and spiritual purposes. The importance of this relationship, she contends, was well recognized by Sioux leaders in speeches they gave during the 1875 and 1876 deliberations over the sale of the Hills (New Holy 1998:325-330). After their seizure by the U.S. government in 1877 and until 1970, the Sioux reasserted their claim to the Hills through the only remedy they saw available to them, the federal court system. They pinned their hopes on a lucrative cash settlement that would end their poverty and promise them a better life (Ibid:331-334). New Holy (Ibid:334-335) points out that as early as 1964, some of the Sioux, who had moved to the cities of California, began to study the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and used the terms of Article 6 as grounds for the occupation of Alcatraz. A decade later, other Sioux activists would rely on this treaty to mobilize their movements including the protest at Mount Rushmore in 1970, the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973, and the takeover of lands in the Black Hills in 1981 (see also, Chapter Six). In alliance with traditional elders from the Pine Ridge Reservation, including Frank Fools Crow and Pete Catches, the activists rekindled their commitment to Lakota culture, language, and traditions. They began to learn about and participate in the Lakotas long-standing spiritual relationship to the Hills and to use this connection to shift the grounds on which they were staking their claims to the Hills (Ibid:336-339). By the time of the Supreme Court ruling in 1980, the old grounds were no longer a culturally viable place to stand in relationship to the Hills, and the only acceptable course was to reclaim ownership of the area, or at the very least, unfettered access to the places of sacred importance (Ibid:339-352).

Elsewhere, New Holy (1997) offers an in-depth analysis of how the spirituality and politics surrounding the Black Hills evolved over time into a much more encompassing and holistic sense of Lakota identity, nationhood, and cosmology (see Chapter Thirteen for further details). At the crux of New Holy s interpretation is the position that the Lakota s relationship to the Hills is multistranded, woven from many complex and intersecting threads. In their attachment to the Black Hills, religious ties cannot be separated from social, political, and economic ones because they are all joined together as one. The Black Hills, as the quintessential center of all that is, represents the Lakotas idea of cosmic singularity, which stands at the foundation of their traditional religious precepts. The Hills are the people, the land, the resources, and the sacred universe wrapped into a single space. Because so much is embedded in their presence, the Sioux s claim to them cannot be settled in any singular or unilateral way. While a monetary settlement might address at least one of the threads that tie the Sioux to the Black Hills, it will never be sufficient to compensate for all the threads that make up the complex cultural tapestry that is the Black Hills.
4. Political Terms

The Sioux’s religious connection to the Hills cannot be dismissed, reduced, or explained away simply by politics, as some non-Indian writers have tried to do (Clow 1983; Parker, W. 1985; Feraca 1990; Chirinos 1991; Worster 1992; Bordewich 1996). Whatever concurrent religious motivations lie behind the Sioux’s modern quest to reclaim the Black Hills, they are closely linked to their understanding of sovereignty. As defined in its broadest sense, sovereignty represents a nation’s right to control and determine the destiny of its people on political, economic, social, cultural, and religious grounds. Since the 1850s, the struggle between the United States and the Sioux has boiled down, in one-way or another, to questions of sovereignty. The Black Hills has stood at the center of this struggle because they have been a supreme symbol of Sioux sovereignty in its broadest sense. The Sioux never relinquished the Black Hills by their own volition; these lands were appropriated from them through congressional action. The Sioux knew the 1877 Act was illegal from the beginning, and they started organizing in the 1880s to challenge its terms. With the hope that the U.S. court system would give them some measure of justice, they became increasingly embittered when ruling after ruling did not end in their favor. Over time, many were beginning to believe that legal avenues were futile because they were forced to play by rules to which they had never been a party and to which they never consented. Although their first attorney Ralph Case may have bungled their claim on legal grounds, he at least had the moral side of their story correct. Even though the Sioux lost their legal battles under his counsel, they continued to support him not because they were naive, as Edward Lazarus (1991: 180-181, 187, 206) implies, but precisely because he understood the grounds on which their case rested. That these grounds had little standing in U.S. courts only confirmed Sioux suspicions that the American justice system would never give them a fair hearing on their case. Their growing lack of faith in the American legal system helped to nurture the growth of a movement that would ultimately refuse settlement on any terms that did not include land recovery.

Today, there is a fundamental difference between how the federal government interprets its sovereign relationship to the tribal nations of this country, and the way these nations understand their sovereignty vis-à-vis the United States. The Sioux see themselves as members of a sovereign nation, possessed with its own plenary powers and rights of eminent domain. When they negotiated treaties with the federal government, they were doing so, not as the subjects or wards of the United States, but as one sovereign to another. Some might argue that when the Sioux signed the 1825 peace treaty with Atkinson and O Fallon, they effectively surrendered their sovereignty to the United States. By the terms of this treaty, however, they merely pledged their loyalty to the United States and its trade interests, something they normally did with one another without acceding any sovereignty. What the Sioux continue to assert is that they were recognized by the United States as a sovereign nation under the terms of the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. From their viewpoint, this is the only legally binding treaty they entered into with the government, and as a result, they have never deferred their sovereignty to the United States. To reject the Supreme Court settlement of 1980 is more than a matter of money, it is a question of sovereignty. By accepting the terms on which the court ruled in their case, the Sioux would be granting the United States the right to exercise its plenary power and eminent domain over them. In effect, what many Sioux are saying is that they are not willing to relinquish their de jure sovereign powers to the United States, even though these have been severely compromised since 1877 on de facto grounds. The Black Hills are not for sale because the Sioux as a sovereign people have never given the government their consent to purchase them. In the end, there remains the understandable fear that in selling out the Black Hills, the Sioux would not only be sacrificing the very soul of their nation but also its promise of sovereignty.
It can be easily argued that such claims are idealistic and lack any grounding in political or legal reality, but however they are perceived, the fact of the matter is that the status of the Black Hills will stay in political limbo for some time to come. It will remain the grounds on which the Sioux continue to stage their sovereign struggles, and it will remain a flash point for contestation and confrontation between the Sioux peoples and the federal government.

III. CONGRESSIONAL LAND RECOVERY ACTS

Although the Supreme Court’s 1980 decision vindicated the Sioux position that the taking of the Hills constituted an illegal Fifth Amendment taking, the political ground on which the Sioux staked their struggle over the Black Hills had shifted. By the time of the settlement, many Sioux began to recognize that their attempts to acquire compensation for the Black Hills stood in conflict with a strict adherence to the terms of the 1868 treaty and their ideas about sovereignty (Lazarus 1991:325). On the 18th of March in 1974, the Black Hills Sioux Nation Council (hereafter referred to as the BHSNC) rejected any sort of monetary settlement and proclaimed that the Black Hills were not for sale (Lazarus 1991:326-327). By the time the Supreme Court reached its decision, many Sioux held the position that taking settlement money was, as Lazarus (1991:325) put it, not only logically absurd, it represented a capitulation to U.S. treaty breaking, a sellout to white and capitalist notions that land and money were interchangeable or more crassly, that Sioux lands could be bought.

Two years after the Supreme Court ruled on the Sioux claims, and one year after the failed occupation at Wind Cave National Park, some Sioux started to mobilize support for the passage of a land recovery bill in Congress. Pursuant to this effort, Sioux leaders agreed to establish a committee to draft legislation for the recovery of lands in the Black Hills and to organize a campaign to lobby on its behalf (Lazarus 1991:414). A year later in January of 1983, the Black Hills Steering Committee chose Gerald Clifford to head this legislative effort, and they voted unanimously to secure the return of all their Black Hills land (Ibid:415). Working with Mario Gonzalez, counsel for the Oglala Sioux Tribe, Charlotte Black Elk, an educator; and other tribal members, Clifford began the daunting task of drafting legislation that would simultaneously achieve widespread approval from the various and often divided constituencies within the Sioux Nation, and at the same time, gain support from politicians in Washington, D.C. (New Holy 1998:342-343).

From the beginning, the land recovery efforts were disrupted by personal and political conflicts within the Sioux’s own ranks, most notably the split between Gerald Clifford and Oliver Red Cloud of the BHSNC (Lazarus 1991:415). As Alexandra New Holy (1998:343) observed, the conflict between these two men had roots in a long-standing division within the Oglala tribe that reached back to the generation of Oliver Red Cloud’s famous great-grandfather and the non-treaty leaders, Little Big Man and Crazy Horse, who were the direct ancestors of Gerald Clifford and Charlotte Black Elk. In the midst of this internal conflict, several years passed before a compromise was reached among contending Sioux political groups and before eight tribal governments passed resolutions in support of a land recovery bill. In the meantime, efforts were taken to secure congressional sponsorship for the bill. Bill Bradley, a Senator from New Jersey,

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14 Black Hills Sioux National Council (BHSNC) was organized in the 1920s to pursue the Sioux’s Black Hills claim in court. Throughout its long history, there has always been a measure of tension between its interests and those of the IRA (Indian Reorganization Act) tribal governments. In the 1970s, the BHSNC was one of the first Sioux political bodies to oppose a legal remedy for the taking of the Black Hills and to consider new strategies for seeking redress.
agreed to bring the bill before Congress, and on July 17, 1985, he introduced the Sioux Nation Black Hills Act in the Senate. Lacking support of the South Dakota delegation, the bill died quickly without even a subcommittee vote (Lazarus 1991:418-419).

The Sioux Nation Black Hills Act (U.S. Senate S. 1453, 1986:2-28) proposed the creation of a new Sioux reservation, in which the Sioux would gain title to all federal lands in the Black Hills, except for Mount Rushmore (U.S. Senate S. 1453, 1986:11). Wind Cave National Park, for example, would have become part of a newly formed Sioux Park, which would be open to everyone, Indians and non-Indians. Certain sacred locations in the newly created park would have been kept off limits to outsiders, however (U. S. Senate S. 1453, 1986:16-19). The bill allowed private citizens and the state of South Dakota to keep their properties with the proviso that the Sioux tribe would retain a first right of refusal to purchase these lands (U. S. Senate S. 1453 1986:13). It also included monetary compensation for lost use of the land rather than just compensation for expropriation, and it proposed measures for the tribe to receive revenue from the administration of grazing and timber leases, but it prohibited all forms of commercial mineral extraction (U. S. Senate S. 1453 1986:19-22). It also included provisions for the management of the area through the Black Hills Sioux National Council (U. S. Senate S. 1453, 22-28; Lazarus 1991:418; New Holy 1998:342).

While the Sioux Nation Black Hills Act may have been the most politically realistic compromise in the face of tribal politics, it had little chance of success on practical grounds (Lazarus 1991:420). Years earlier, Richard West, now director of the Museum of the American Indian and formerly a partner in the law firm that represented the Sioux in their Black Hills claim, met with Robert Fast Horse, one of the leaders of the occupation at Wind Cave National Park, and suggested, according to Lazarus (1991:414), that the Sioux would have to identify provable sites of religious significance, mount a national and international public relations campaign, and secure the support of the South Dakota congressional delegation. He also went on to write: West believed that with good strategy and a little luck, the Sioux might be able to recover all federal lands except for those existing inside national parks (Lazarus 1991:414). While the Black Hills Steering Committee compiled and presented an impressive, although controversial, body of evidence to Congress on the sacred significance of the Hills and its various sites, and while they were able to generate some degree of support in the national media, they had little success in securing any support from South Dakota’s congressional delegation.

After hearings before the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs in 1986 (U.S. Senate:29-86), where the Sioux presented their religious case on the sacred significance of the Black Hills, Senator Bill Bradley reintroduced his bill, the Sioux Nation Black Hills Act [S. 1453], in the Senate on March 10, 1987 with the support of Daniel Inouye of Hawaii and Stewart Udall of Arizona (Lazarus 1991:422-423). Whatever progress the Black Hills Steering Committee had made in getting their bill before Congress, however, was soon undermined by the Sioux’s own internal politics. With the support of an association of the elderly, known as the Grey Eagle Society, the BHSNC headed by Oliver Red Cloud opposed the Bradley Bill and publicly voiced its opposition within a week of the bill’s reintroduction in Congress (Lazarus 1991:423).

Oliver Red Cloud and his supporters stood behind a successful Sioux businessman from California, Phil Stevens, who argued that the Bradley bill offered insufficient compensation to the Sioux (Lazarus 1991:423). After convincing many Sioux that they could realistically gain a 3.1 billion compensation package over the 106 million provided in the Bradley Bill, Stevens shifted the tone of Sioux land recovery efforts from their religious foundation to more pecuniary grounds (Lazarus 1991:424; New Holy 1998:343-345). In the face of strong political disagreements
among the Sioux, Clifford reluctantly asked Bradley to hold his bill until the Sioux ironed out their differences (Lazarus 1991:424).

Meanwhile, stringent opposition to the Bradley Bill from the South Dakota Congressional Delegation was mounting. The lead Senator from South Dakota, Tom Daschle, extracted a promise from Daniel Inouye that no further hearings or other actions would take place on the bill unless Daschle supported them. The other senator from South Dakota, Larry Pressler, successfully lobbied to block any land return bill. Daschle also supported the formation of a citizens committee in South Dakota under the leadership of David Miller, a historian from Black Hills State College, called the Open Hills Committee, which rapidly gained the support of the most conservative South Dakotans (Lazarus 1991:425).

After wrecking any chance the Sioux might have had in getting the Bradley Bill on the floor of the Senate, Stevens funded the drafting of another bill with the assistance of Mario Gonzalez and used his influence with Matthew Martinez, a Representative from California, to introduce it in the House of Representatives on September 19, 1990 (Lazarus 1991:427). It failed to achieve any action in Congress, and Martinez refused to reintroduce it because of strong opposition within Sioux ranks (New Holy 1998:345). In 1992, several Sioux tribes rescinded their endorsement of Phil Stevens (Lazarus 1991:426; New Holy 1998:346-347). A year later, another effort was made to get support for a third bill, the Sioux Nation Black Hills Restoration Act of 1993, but it never received formal approval from any of the Sioux tribes. In the face of the continuing and bitter polarizations between the Clifford-Bradley and the Stevens-Martinez camps, any further action to get congressional support for the return of the Black Hills became futile (New Holy 1998:347; Hill 2000). No further attempts have been made to approach Congress for the return of Black Hills lands to tribal ownership, although some Lakotas were still working on these efforts through 1995 (Melmer 1995).

Over the past century and a half, the political, economic, and cultural tides have waxed and waned on both the Sioux side of the ledger and on the side that represents the interests and sentiments of the U.S. government and the American public at large. Only rarely has the pendulum of history swung in tandem with the interests of both parties. The 1980s was a period when the two sides might have been able to reach a just and fair solution to the impasse over the Black Hills through some form of congressional legislation, but this did not happen. Presently, we are at a juncture in time when the two sides are standing farther apart than they did even a decade ago. This is not the moment for the Sioux to push a bill in Congress for some form of land reclamation. Nor is it a propitious time for them to consider how they might accept a monetary settlement to achieve the return of some of their Black Hills lands, as judged by the anger generated when the Santee Sioux tribe considered seeking their portion of the award money from the 74A claims docket, which included lands the Sioux lost in 1877 but outside the Black Hills (Little Eagle 1996: A1, A2; Melmer 1996c: A1, A6). Even if the Sioux decided to use their settlement monies to purchase land inside the Hills, they would only be able to procure private holdings, not some of the public lands that are the most important to them. Only through congressional action would they be able to secure title to and sovereignty over lands of sacred and cultural significance, including Bear Butte Lodge, Craven Canyon, Bear Butte, Reynolds, Slate and Gillette prairies, Harney Peak, Wind Cave, and the Race Track, and such action is not likely in the near or foreseeable future. Meanwhile, the Sioux and other tribes are pursuing other avenues to gain access to and protection for sites on public lands that are culturally and spiritually significant to them.
IV. LEGAL STATUS OF TRIBAL ACCESS TO FEDERAL LANDS

While the Sioux were not successful in having their specific interests in the Black Hills addressed by Congress, tribal concerns of nationwide importance were receiving widespread congressional support. In the 1970s and 1980s, important pieces of legislation were passed that acknowledged tribal sovereignty in diverse areas from taxation and economic development to child welfare and health-care delivery. In addition, Congress passed laws that recognized tribal religious freedoms, their interests in certain forms of cultural properties, their rights to access public lands for traditional cultural purposes, and their concerns over the handling of funerary remains.

A. Congressional Statutes and Executive Orders

Four congressional statues and two executive orders have specific relevance to national park lands, and these need to be briefly described here. The first four became law through congressional action, while the last two were enacted in the Office of the President as Executive Orders.

1. National Historic Preservation Act

In 1966, Congress passed legislation known as the National Historic Preservation Act (hereafter, NHPA) that protects sites of historic interest. Subsequently and through 2000, this act has been amended on numerous occasions. Today, NHPA protects any of a variety of historic and prehistoric sites of local, regional, and national importance. The cultural properties of American Indians come under the provisions of this law in several ways. The law provides protection for places associated with important individuals, natural landforms with religious significance, and locations associated with traditional cultural practices. It requires federal agencies to inventory and evaluate cultural properties on the lands they administer. Under Section 106 of the Act, the agencies must notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation of any actions that might impact eligible properties, and they must carefully evaluate the consequences of issuing licenses to users that may affect properties already listed on the National Register (Parker and King 1990).

2. The American Indian Religious Freedom Act

This act, Public Law 95-341 [92 Stat. 469] (hereafter, AIRFA) of 1978 establishes the rights of American Indian people to access public sites for the practice of their religious observances, to use and possess sacred objects necessary to the conduct of their religion, and to freely worship according to the dictates of their religious beliefs. Under the provisions of this legislation, federal agencies are required to consult with tribes whenever their management practices might endanger sacred sites, burials, and other ethnographic resources or restrict access to such sites.

3. Archaeological Resources Protection Act

A year later, Congress enacted another piece of legislation Public Law 96-95 [16 Stat. 470] (hereafter, ARPA), which governs all cultural and spiritual sites over fifty years of age. It restricts the issuance of permits by federal agencies that might endanger a site, and it requires consultation with tribes who consider it significant on religious or cultural grounds. Additional amendments to this statute were enacted in 2000 to strengthen its enforcement.
4. Native American Graves and Repatriation Act

This statute [Public Law 101-601] (hereafter, NAGPRA) which was passed by Congress in 1990, governs the proper protocol for handling skeletal and funerary remains from unmarked graves, and it covers the return of objects of cultural patrimony, sacred or otherwise. It also requires consultation with tribes with whom a cultural affiliation can be established for funerary remains.

5. Indian Sacred Sites Executive Order 13007

This directive passed on May 24, 1996 directs all agencies responsible for federal lands to provide accommodations to protect sites of sacred significance to American Indians and to permit access to and use of these sites by the religious practitioners of federally recognized tribes.

6. Consultation with Tribal Governments Executive Order 13084

Passed in May of 1998, this is the most recent of a string of executive orders that affirms the special sovereign status of federally recognized tribes. It directs all federal agencies to work with tribes on a government-to-government basis and to institute measures whereby tribes may collaborate in consultation processes surrounding the formulation of regulatory policies and practices affecting the interests of their communities.

B. The Court Litigation

Since the creation of these statues and directives, federal agencies and local administrators of public lands and properties have taken very different steps in implementing them in relation to their own management policies. They have also responded in very different ways to the attempts of tribal peoples to assert their various rights under these laws, and in some cases, their management policies have collided with tribal interests, leading to litigation in the courts. In the case of the Black Hills, several cases have gone to court that revolve around the rights of tribal people to access and use public lands for religious purposes.

Most of these cases have been tried under the provisions of AIRFA, which in Section 2 of the statute, directs federal agencies to evaluate their policies and procedures in consultation with native traditional religious leaders in order to determine appropriate changes necessary to protect and preserve Native American religious cultural rights and practices. In recent years, a number of scholars have written about the impact this law has had on the use of public lands for the practice of tribal religious observances, and they have analyzed various cases where the courts have not ruled in favor of tribal interests. The rulings indicate a number of things, and paramount among these is a basic conflict between congressional intent and the legal interpretation of the meaning of a statute. While Congress desired protection for Indian religious beliefs and practices, and even required federal agencies to make accommodations for them, the courts have trampled on the spirit of the law by empowering federal agencies with the authority to determine how much freedom, in fact, can be exercised (Ensworth 1983:172-175; Pemberton 1985:328; Wilkins 1997:274). In this regard, it is worth quoting Richard Pemberton (1985:322-323) at some length:

The court has said agencies may not deprive persons of constitutional protected rights or liberties without giving them a substantive evidentiary hearing. Assuming federal agencies have the authority to decide whether Indians’ first amendment rights are violated, courts must subject
agency legal conclusion to the appropriate standard of review. Under that standard, the reviewing
court must independently determine whether the agency s proposed action conflicts with Indian
people constitutionally protected religious freedom. By empowering executive agencies to decide
with finality the legitimacy of a tribe s religious claims to public land, our courts offend the
constitutional rights of tribal members. As presently interpreted, the Act restricts the court s
inquiry into first amendment issues once an executive agency has ruled that its decision conforms
to the Act. The agency is, of course, inclined to so rule since it has itself initiated the action of
which the Indians complain. Thus though Indian litigants may still bring actions under the free
exercise clause against executive agencies and private developers in federal court, the agency s
self-determined compliance with the AIRFA will serve as prima facie evidence that it has not
violated the Indians constitutional rights. This interpretation of AIRFA restricts rather than
enhances the religious freedom of American Indians. Though the courts insist that the Act has no
teeth, they interpret it in such a way that it gnaws at the liberty of those whom it is designed to
protect.

One of the earliest and most famous cases testing the strength of AIRFA (Pemberton
1985:329-330) is United States Marshals Service v. Means, 724 F.2d 642 [11th Cir. 1983], in
which the U.S. Forest Service denied a group of Lakotas an extended permit for the establishment
of the Yellow Thunder Camp at Victoria Creek in the Black Hills, ordering them to vacate the site
they occupied on September 8, 1981. Camp members filed an administrative appeal to the forest
service s eviction notice, but on September 9, 1981, the United States filed a suit against the
principals of the camp on the grounds that they were occupying the land illegally. Six days later,
the camp principals filed a countersuit, in which they alleged that the Forest Service s decision to
deny them a special use permit was arbitrary, racially motivated, and violated their rights under
AIRFA and the Constitution. The actions were consolidated into a single case, which ended up in
the 11th Circuit Court, where the presiding District Judge, Donald O'Brien, ruled in favor of the
Lakotas, ordering the forest service to grant the campers a permit on the grounds that its decision
was indeed arbitrary and that it violated that the campers rights under the First Amendment of
the U.S. Constitution. O'Brien also held that access to the Black Hills was fundamental to the
practice of the Lakota religion. In 1988, the Eighth Circuit Court, in The United States vs. Means,
858 F.2d 404, overturned the ruling of the district judge in Sioux City, reasserting the right of the
Forest Service to evict the campers and upholding what had become a long line of precedent
cases privileging the policies of public agencies and even private developers over tribal religious

Another famous case testing the strength of AIRFA is Crow v. Gullet, 541 F. Supp. 785, in
which Frank Fools Crow, Pete Catches, and other spiritual leaders from the Lakota, Cheyenne,
and Arapaho tribes sued the state of South Dakota on the grounds that the state s actions had
desecrated Bear Butte, a site vital to tribal religious observances, by allowing tourists to defile the
site and disrupt ceremonies conducted there (Pemberton 1985:325-326). The court ruled that
because the Lakota, Cheyenne, and other tribal religionists have no property interest in a state
park, as sanctioned in federal or state law, they have no grounds on which to restrict how it is
managed by the state. The court further held that the actions of the state did not infringe on their
beliefs and practices, and that the state was not required to accommodate its management policies
to tribal religious interests. It also held that the integrity of the butte and its landscape had no
relation to tribal religious practice. Indeed, the court concluded that the state held the right to
restrict tribal religious practice in the interest of keeping the park open to tourists (Pemberton

In the same year, the state of South Dakota sued a Lakota religionist, Dewey Brave Heart, in
South Dakota v. Brave Heart 326 N.W. 2D 220, for burning a ceremonial fire in the Black Hills
without a permit. Although Brave Heart and other plaintiffs had applied for a permit to build a

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ceremonial fire for their Sun Dance, their application was denied by the forest service (Pemberton 1985:328). A South Dakota law enforcement officer arrested Brave Heart and the other worshippers, who were subsequently convicted. On appeal, South Dakota's Supreme Court ruled that the Forest Service was justified in denying a permit to the Lakotas given the dry weather conditions in the area (Pemberton 1985:329). The court denied the Lakota's First Amendment right to practice their religion on the grounds that they had failed to prove that an open fire, rather than a stove or other fire-making enclosure, was necessary and central to the practice of their religious observances (Pemberton 1985:330).

The most recent case addressing AIRFA issues in the Black Hills is *Bear Lodge Multiple Use Association v. Babbitt*, 2 F. Supp. 2d 1448, where the 10th District Court ruled in 1998 against a mandatory ban on commercial climbing at Devil's Tower National Monument during the month of June in order to permit tribal religionists to practice their ceremonial observances. It allowed, however, a voluntary ban on the climbing. Although National Park Service staff, climbing organizations, environmental groups, and tribal representatives had worked together to achieve some compromise in formulating a workable management plan, which was finalized in 1995, the proposed restrictions on climbing brought the plan to court (Melmer 1996: A1, A3; 1996b: A1, A2). The 10th District Court's ruling only confirmed other court decisions that have denied tribes any kind of exclusive protections and rights of access to their sacred sites. Indeed, most of the final court decisions on AIRFA, including those that have reached the Supreme Court, have not ruled favorably on behalf of tribal interests. Many have argued that these rulings have denied tribes the free exercise of their religious rights because AIRFA fails to detail the conditions under which tribal religious sites require access and protection. One of the frequent criticisms of current judicial rulings on AIRFA cases is that they apply Judeo-Christian standards of religious observance to tribal beliefs and practices. But even if the law had greater specificity, it still would not address the issue of who determines compliance to the law and on what grounds the compliance rests. As David Wilkins (1997:255-261) argues in his analysis of a Northern California case, the Supreme Court's ruling privileges federal administrators in making decisions about public land use and the rights of tribes to access them for religious purposes. What this ruling and others clearly imply is that, while tribes have a legitimate interest in protecting religious sites and have a right to access these places, they can only do so as long as their concerns and practices do not infringe on other user groups and/or federal management policies. Even in the face of the First Amendment and AIRFA, a tribe's religious sovereignty is ultimately constrained by the people who hold title to the land whether they are private developers or federal agencies. So far, court rulings, including those of the highest judicial body in the land, have favored the protection of property over religious freedom. In response to a spate of unfavorable rulings, tribes are now actively lobbying Congress to amend AIRFA or pass new bills that will afford their religious sites and practices greater protection under the law.

**V. THE STATUS OF WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK LANDS**

Although many different tribal nations historically occupied lands in the southeastern Black Hills, including the lands that make up Wind Cave National Park, only three tribes, the Sioux, Arapahos, and Cheyennes, ever entered into treaties with the United States government that covered these lands. All of the treaties concerning the Black Hills were concluded at Fort Laramie in Wyoming Territory; one was negotiated in 1851 but never ratified by Congress, and the other two [15 Stat., 635 and 15 Stat., 655] were enacted in 1868. One of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaties [15 Stat., 635] included the Black Hills in a reservation for the undisturbed use of the Sioux, but it contained language that permitted some of the Arapahos and Cheyennes to occupy the area as well. This arrangement was confirmed in another 1868 treaty [15 Stat., 655]
with the northern divisions of the Arapaho and Cheyenne nations. The reservation established by the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty [15 Stat., 635] includes lands that now make up Wind Cave National Park.

Northern Cheyennes and Northern Arapahos were also present at the deliberations in 1875 and 1876 that led to the 1877 Agreement and the relinquishment of tribal title to the Black Hills and the lands of Wind Cave National Park. The Arapahos were specifically named in this agreement, but the Cheyennes were not. Parties from both tribes, however, were signatories to

TABLE 1. FEDERAL TREATIES AND ACTIONS WITH TRIBAL NATIONS THAT COVER THE BLACK HILLS AND WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Legal Document</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Atkinson and O Fallon Treaty</td>
<td>Trade, peace, and friendship with United States and its traders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>1868 Fort Laramie Treaty [15 Stat. 655]</td>
<td>Northern Arapaho and Northern Cheyenne accorded the right to settle on Great Sioux Reservation, which includes lands in the Black Hills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Sioux Black Hills Claim</td>
<td>Supreme Court rules that the 1877 federal seizure of the Black Hills was illegal. The Sioux Nation awarded a monetary settlement, still unclaimed, for the taking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Sioux Land Recovery Act (Bradley Bill)</td>
<td>Testimony heard before the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs regarding a proposed bill to return Wind Cave National Park and other federal lands in Black Hills to the Sioux. No further action taken on this bill.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the negotiations in 1876. This agreement, however, did not secure signatures from three-quarters of the Sioux's adult male population as stipulated in the provisions under Article 12 of the 1868 treaty with the Sioux [15 Stat., 635]. Nonetheless, Congress passed the statute in which the Black Hills and adjoining lands were taken from the Sioux without their full consent. Less than a decade after its enactment, all three tribes believed they had been robbed of their lands in the Black Hills and challenged the legality of the agreement and the deceptive and confusing manner in which it was presented. In the early decades of the twentieth century, all three tribes attempted to get Congress to pass jurisdictional acts on their behalf so they could take their cases to the U.S. Court of Claims. Only the Sioux, however, succeeded in this effort.
From 1920 to 1980, the Sioux's Black Hills case was heard several times before the U.S. Court of Claims and the Indian Claims Commission. Finally, it went before the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of the Sioux's claim that the Black Hills had been seized from them as a Fifth Amendment taking and awarded them $17.5 million as settlement for the value of the Hills and its gold at the time of the taking plus interest for a total of 106 million dollars. The Sioux have never accepted the settlement, and it remains in the U.S. Treasury accruing interest.

From the perspective of United States legal system and many of its citizens, the highest court in the land, the Supreme Court, has settled the Sioux's Black Hills claim. However immoral or unfair the government's taking of the Black Hills may have been from a Sioux (and their Arapaho and Cheyenne allies) standpoint, the U.S. Constitution grants the nation the right of eminent domain over the lands within its territorial boundaries. Federal courts have also determined that Congress has plenary power to execute land-takings but only if their owners are given fair and just consideration for the taking. The Supreme Court's decision acknowledged this and ruled that Sioux lands had been taken without adequate consideration. It offered its only available remedy for the federal government's illegal seizure, a cash settlement for the value of the lands plus interest from the date of their taking.

The lands of Wind Cave National Park, although certainly not acquired fairly from the Sioux, have been given consideration in terms of U.S. law through the settlement awarded by the U.S. Court of Claims and affirmed through a writ of certiorari by the Supreme Court. Whether or not one believes that this settlement ultimately represents a morally sound and fair solution, it is the only one available under U.S. law. No final legal determination or settlement, however, has ever been made on behalf of Northern Cheyennes and Northern Arapahos treaty interests in the Black Hills. Both tribes also have historic treaty rights and claims to park properties, but neither tribe was ever able to get their Black Hills claims heard before the U.S. Court of Claims or the Indian Claims Commission.

Although the Sioux ultimately received a favorable ruling and settlement on their behalf, they have refused any compensation for the Black Hills on a number of different grounds. The most significant of these revolves around their sense of sovereignty as a nation. This sovereignty finds expression not only in politics but also in religion, and even more specifically, it is enacted and symbolized in their struggles over the Black Hills. Sacred areas in the Black Hills, including Wind Cave National Park, became a site of this struggle in the 1980s. The Sioux pushed to reclaim park lands and other federal properties in the Black Hills, and to this end, they tried to get land recovery legislation passed in Congress from 1985 to 1993. Their efforts did not succeed.

The conflict over the Black Hills is more than just a fight over real estate. It is a struggle over who ultimately defines a human relationship to the land. In the absence of title to the Black Hills, the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahos have fought to gain protection for and access to areas they hold sacred. Some of their efforts have been accommodated, at least in part, on lands under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Interior and the National Park Service at Devil's Tower National Monument and at Wind Cave National Park. Tribes have been less successful, however, in securing protections and accommodations necessary to the practice of their religion on state lands in South Dakota, notably at Bear Butte, and on federal lands in the Black Hills supervised by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service. In both instances, litigation took place that favored state and federal managerial policy over tribal religious interests.

So far, Wind Cave National Park has escaped litigious encounters over federal laws that now give tribes certain protections for their sacred sites and rights to access them in ways consistent with traditional religious practice. Whether due to flexible policy or thoughtful administration,
the U.S. Park Service appears to have had a more open-minded attitude towards accommodating tribal religious interests on the lands they manage in the Black Hills than the U.S. Forest Service. Few of the traditional access issues that the Park Service has faced over the past twenty years have required court intervention. In the one that did at Devil’s Tower National Monument, National Park Service management took a position that was respectful of tribal religious concerns. Park managers, however, still face the prospect of having to develop policies and make managerial decisions that are responsive to the congressional intent of new federal laws, and doing so in ways that accommodate tribal interests, minimize potential conflicts with other user groups, and avoid legal adjudication. Since the passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, court rulings have not been very helpful in this regard. Indeed, as Richard Pemberton (1985:322-323) has rightly argued, the courts have put public administrators in difficult and often untenable positions, which require them to make final determinations on religious matters they are ill-equipped or ill-prepared to take on. On the one hand, the courts have given public administrators the right to make decisions on religious matters pursuant to their land management policies, but on the other hand, they have denied them the jurisdictional authority to decide issues of constitutional rights under the free exercise clause of the First Amendment. As Pemberton (1983: 321) aptly puts it, the courts “place bureaucrats in the classic position of standing between a rock and a hard place”.

Once again, sacred land issues have come to the forefront in tribal politics. These are now a primary topic of concern before the National Congress of American Indians, and it is the focus of a major lobbying effort to get Congress to enact stiffer laws to protect sacred sites and accommodate tribal religious practices. Mount Graham in Arizona has drawn considerable media attention over the past year in relation to tribal efforts to stop the building of astronomical observatories. Closer to the Black Hills, the Lakotas are becoming more involved in the deliberations over management of public properties, where the landscapes hold cultural and religious significance. Recently, a group of Lakotas staged demonstrations at Badlands National Park, protesting the removal of fossil remains on park properties in which they have joint management responsibilities.

Presently, it is safe to say that Wind Cave National Park and all other public lands in the Black Hills still remain in a state of moral, if not legal, limbo because no final and acceptable resolution has been reached on their status vis a vis tribal claims of ownership. Whether one supports these rights or not is irrelevant to the fact that they are contested, and will remain so as long as the claims are not settled to the satisfaction of the parties involved in the dispute, which includes the federal government, state agencies, and private land holders on one side and the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahos on the other. In the meantime, the administrators of public lands in the Black Hills will need to develop management policies in ways that consider tribal rights and interests pursuant to the free exercise of their religion, to their rights to access sites and properties of cultural, historical, and religious significance, and to the protection of these sites and the cultural properties affiliated with them. The need for park officials at Wind Cave National Park to involve Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos in policy-making pertaining to cultural properties over which they have significant interests is no longer a matter of choice: it is the law.
Part 3
Part Three

THE BLACK HILLS AS
A FOOD PACK AND A SAFE

... I heard Sitting Bull say the Black Hills was just like a food pack and therefore the
Indians should stick to it. At that time I just wondered about what he had said and I
knew what he meant after thinking it over because I knew that the Black Hills were
full of fish, animals, and lots of water, and I just felt that we Indians should stick to it.
Indians would rove all around, but when they were in need of something, they could
just go in there and get it (Henry Standing Bear in DeMallie 1984:163-164).

Our Great Father has a big safe, and so have we. This hill is our safe. That is why
we can t come to a conclusion very quick...(Spotted Bear in Allison 1875:188).

Before the Lakotas and Cheyennes were removed from the Black Hills, these mountains were
considered to be their food reserve. The Lakotas euphemistically called them their meat pack,
oiyhpeye talo (Hassrick 1964:75,165; Utley 1993:115). In 1875, during deliberations with
members of the Allison Commission over the sale of the Black Hills, Lakota, Cheyenne, and
Arapaho leaders would echo Spotted Bear s words that the Hills played a central role in the
provisioning of their peoples. As Dead Eyes (in Allison 1875:189) put it, it is not a very small
thing to take the whole of our safe. In later years, Henry Standing Bear, quoted above, and other
Lakotas as well as Cheyennes would recall the importance of the Hills to their former livelihoods
In conversations with John G. Neihardt in the 1930s, Iron Hawk (in DeMallie 1984:171-172)
reiterated the same sentiment, when he said:

Sitting Bull said: How! Brother, it is well that you have said that; these hills are a treasure to
us Indians. That is the food pack of the people and when the poor having nothing to eat we
can all go there and have something to eat, and it is well that you have said this.

Many years later on March 6, 1966 Joseph Black Elk (in Edward and Mabel Kadleeck 1981:81)
had this to say:

In the center of this vast country the mystic Black Hills were the thriving hunting grounds of
the Sioux, where the deer, elk, antelope, and buffalo nibbled the sweet mountain grass,
watering on the streams of water that ran noisily down through the high walled canyons, with
colored cliffs sheltering the valleys. They said animals were the Sioux supermarket, on the
hoof, furnishing them with food, clothing, shelter, and even medicine.
When oral histories were collected by the American Indian Oral History Project at the University of South Dakota, Moses Circle Bear (1971:14) remembered how the elders spoke about the Hills as a place they could always find food because it never failed the people.

Many of the region's early traders and explorers also recognized the Hills as a primary location for the Lakotas and the Cheyennes to procure their livelihood. Antoine Tabteau (in Abel 1939), Meriwether Lewis and William Clark (in Moulton 1983:3:482), Maximilian, Prince of Wied (in Thwaites 1966:2:246, 346-347), and Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:16), among others, recognized their importance to the subsistence of the tribal nations in the region. Later, U.S. government officials, military personnel, and journalists would also remark on their value to local tribes (Twiss 1856b:95; Hayden 1862a, 1862b; Edmonds, Guerney, and Reed 1866:168; Knappen in Krause and Olson 1974:28; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:69). From his experience on the Black Hills Expedition, newspaper correspondent, William Curtis (in Krause and Olson 1974:149) wrote on July 13, 1874 in the New York World:

The Black Hills enclose what may be called the earthly paradise of the Sioux, and from the mingled influences of superstition and selfishness they have guarded it with the utmost jealousy. The abundance of game is insisted upon by all competent witnesses. Bears, panthers, antelope, elk, deer, and of fish there are many. It is this quantity of game which I think, after due examination of all the facts of the case, induces the Sioux so highly to prize and jealously guard the Black Hills. They sacredly preserve the game found within their boundaries so making of the country a combined deer park and Mecca.

Even observers, like Lt. Richard Dodge, who otherwise denied the Lakota's use of the area, described the Hills as the Lakotas' nursery for game & a fine one it is. Two early settlers, Jeese Brown and A.M. Willards (1924:16), wrote: This region has long been the favorite hunting ground of the Indians where they always find plenty of game, and Annie Tallent (1899), the indefatigable pioneer of white settlement in the Hills, entitled her famous book, The Black Hills and The Last Hunting Ground of the Dacotahs.

In historic times, the Black Hills represented a veritable storehouse of animals, plants, and minerals. Local tribes drew on these resources in different ways and degrees, but one thing is clear: the Black Hills were well known as an important and highly valued location for various kinds of resource procurement. Although one important species, the bison, abandoned the Hills after the 1860s, others remained abundant enough to provision local tribes. Even after tribal title to the Hills was extinguished in 1877, Native people continued to return to the area to hunt and find plants, stones, and other resources important to their daily needs and spiritual well-being, and they continue to do so to the present day.

After European American explorers and settlers arrived in the area, they discovered the abundance of the Hills various natural resources, and they quickly grasped the economic opportunities offered by their vast mineral, grass, and timber reserves. By imposing new forms of relationship to the land, European Americans dramatically altered the region's fauna and flora. By the early decades of the twentieth century, some species were extirpated from the area and others were substantially reduced, but many remained relatively untouched in the face of new patterns of extraction and use.

Today, the Hills remain the location of more than one-thousand different plants, over three hundred species of animals, and countless rocks and minerals. It is a unique region not only because of the varieties of its life forms, but also because it is a location where various eastern and western species meet and reach their farthest geographic reach. It is also a place where
species typically associated with northern boreal environments occur as isolates and where species commonly found in more southerly locales reach their northern limits. As Sven Froiland (1978:78) writes:

Here several biomes meet and overlap...a Cordilleran element, the Great Plains element, the Northern Coniferous element, and the eastern Deciduous Forest element. This overlapping of ranges of organisms belonging to several different geographic elements has resulted in the creation of a whirlpool effect of distributions involving many taxonomic groups, both plant and animal.

The Black Hills’ unique and diverse biological features did not go unnoticed by the tribal nations who lived and traveled in their midst. In most tribal perspectives, the abundance, uniqueness, and diversity of the Hills’ life forms were a telling testimony of their importance and sacredness. Indeed, the two went together in the sense that the region’s geological/biological complexity was embedded in, constituted by, created for, and a sign of their spiritual power.

While the Hills as a whole have long been acknowledged as a primary area for various kinds of tribal procurement activity, the region where Wind Cave National Park now stands occupied a very special place in the relationship of local tribal nations to the Black Hills. The area of Wind Cave National Park has long held sacred significance to the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and probably the Arapahoes too. In Lakota beliefs, the area inside the Buffalo Gap is the winter home of the buffalo and other game animals, and Wind Cave the birthplace and origin site of humans and the Pte Oyate [Buffalo Nation]. Wind Cave is also associated with Tate, the Wind, and his five sons, the Four Winds and the Whirlwind, and as such, it has a special bearing on the origins of movement, hunting, and also plants used in herbal medicine. For both tribal nations, this area is the location where a great race took place in cosmic time that determined the nature of human-animal relationships and where the buffalo first performed the Sun Dance. The importance of this area as a sacred landscape is discussed in greater detail in Section Four. In order to understand the sacredness of the area, it is necessary to give some attention to the practical and spiritual aspects of the life forms located in the area of Wind Cave National Park that were and have remained so pivotal to the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos’ sense of this place in their universe, and more specifically, in defining their own relationship to the Black Hills. The discussions that follow focus largely on the traditional cultural contexts, uses, and meanings of faunal, floral, and mineral resources located in this area. They give attention primarily to the tribal nations known to have lived here in the nineteenth century, but some consideration is also paid to the cultural interests of the European American peoples who lived in the area in later times.

1 Again, little about this region’s cultural significance to the Arapaho peoples has been recorded in published accounts of their oral/written traditions.
Chapter Nine

NATURE AND THE COSMOS

Besides its famous subterranean landform, Wind Cave National Park is well known for its wildlife, native flora, and distinctive mineral formations above ground. As a protected enclave, a central function of the park is to preserve and steward its unique geological and biological resources for the viewing and appreciation of its visiting public. Many different groups come to this park each year, and they carry with them diverse sets of understandings about the park's landscape that are influenced by their respective cultural origins. Two of today's largest user groups are European Americans and American Indians, each of whom approaches the park and its natural world from very different philosophical perspectives.

One perspective is based on a philosophy steeped in a tradition of empiricism that grew out of the European Enlightenment. It is situated in a physical world where nature represents the sum total of its observable material properties, processes, and conditions. It has no existence beyond what is given in its corporeal appearances as these are observed through rigorous scientific observation. It is the tradition within which the natural history of the Black Hills, their fauna, flora, and mineral formations, are typically described and analyzed in natural history studies and popular guidebooks (Pettigrill and Whitney 1965; Turner 1974; Larson & Johnson 1999). It certainly stands at the foundation of the way in which the area of Wind Cave National Park is represented to the public (see, for example, WICA websites).

This perspective stands in marked contrast to the philosophical traditions of the tribal nations who historically occupied the area. While tribal approaches to the park's landforms, animals, plants, and other natural resources involve empirical observation as well, they are nested in an ontological framework with very different premises about the relationship between nature and the human world. This framework is connected to a material universe of practical observation, but it does not end here. In Lakota and Cheyenne schemes, for example, the material world is ultimately rooted in a metaphysical universe where the concrete appearances of things are manifestations of a spiritualized cosmos. As William Powers (1986:153) describes the difference:

The Lakota see a continuous relationship between nature and culture, and as Indians they do not seem themselves as having the same privileged position as the white man affords Homo sapiens. If there is any difference, humans are the last arrivals of the created world, and they must do whatever they can to learn as much as other life forms that preceded them. And here one of the great differences between Indians and non-Indians is underscored. Whereas Euro-Americans science and theology understand humans to be the sine qua non of all living things, the Lakota see humans as the most humble. For whites, the humans were the last to inhabit the earth, and are therefore the crowning glory of all that preceded them. For the Lakota, humans were the last, and that makes them the newest, youngest, and most ignorant. When Lakota seek knowledge about their present state of affairs, they seek it through instructions imparted to the medicine men from animals, birds, and other animate and inanimate forms that serve as his helper.

These two very different ways of seeing the natural world have contributed historically to distinctive approaches to nature. One emphasizes the separation of humans from nature, indeed, the
domination of the human species over other life forms, animate as well as inanimate, whereas the other gives priority to the connections and indivisibility of all life forms (Brown 1989a:181-182). In this perspective, humans stand on equal grounds in a natural world, on whose beneficence they depend for their lives and well being.

How European American and American Indian philosophies have articulated and competed in our understanding of Wind Cave National Park and the multitude of natural resources that reside there is an important subject but one beyond the scope of this work. A more pressing objective of this and subsequent chapters is to give some understanding of how the tribal nations who once lived in and around the Black Hills, especially the Lakotas and Cheyennes, understood the life forms that make up this world. It is an understanding that must be approached through all of its nuances and complexities if we are to understand why Wind Cave National Park and the region that surrounds it continue to occupy such an important place in the cultural traditions and practices of today's Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribal peoples too.

I. INDIVISIBILITY OF THE COSMOS

Although the Lakotas and Cheyennes share much in common regarding their understandings of the cosmos and its workings, there are both obvious and subtle differences in their philosophical perspectives. In the cultural traditions of both tribes, there is a basic belief in the existence of a unifying cosmic force or principal. The workings of this force are largely influenced by spiritual figures that represent and embody basic elemental properties in nature, including the Sky, the Sun, the Earth, the Winds, and the Thunders. These forms impart life, both in a material and immaterial sense, to all humans, plants, animals, and other living forms, including waters and mountains, and they exert their influences in manifold ways. All of the resources which make up the geophysical world, from rocks and minerals to soils and clay, exist as living entities in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, and they are believed to possess a form of agency in the same way that plants, animals, and humans do.

A. Cheyenne Concepts of Oneness

In Cheyenne philosophy, according to Karl Schlesier (1987:7), cosmic power, exhaustoz, permeates and maintains the universe. It is a life force or energy that is invisible except by its quantum-like effects; it both resides within and is generated by Ma heo, the Blue Sky, and the various spiritual figures or potentialities, the Maiyun and hematasoomao, who have free access to it (Schlesier 1987:190). It is the Maiyun spirits whose actions restore and concentrate this energy for the purpose of regenerating all life forms (Moore, J. 1996:212). Schlesier (1987:190) describes these spiritual potentialities and the workings of exhaustoz as follows:

In Tsistsistas understanding, they are causal (they can be brought about by specific Tsistsistas behavior) and noncausal (they may manipulate themselves without a trigger. They are nonlocal (i.e., they are everywhere) and local (i.e., they may appear in a specific locality or in a specific physical form). They are fissionable. They may be local at a number of places at the same time. They are outside, or, outside and within the construct of time and therefore represent universal information.

1 The discussions about Cheyenne and Lakota cosmologies in this and the following chapters are abridged and very elementary. The nuances and rich complexity of these two tribal cosmological systems can only be alluded to here. What is presented is only a very partial picture of a much larger body of knowledge carried by many respected Lakota and Cheyenne intellectuals and religious leaders today.
Humans may partake of this power by establishing partnerships with spiritual figures and through the observance of sacred ceremonies (Moore, Liberty, and Straus 2001:873; Moore, J. 1996:212-213). Indeed, ceremonial observance is necessary to renew this power because, according to John Moore (1996:213), it is exhausted by the end of winter and needs to be regenerated in the spring.

Ultimately, everything in the Cheyenne universe comes from and returns to its source in Ma heo, which is the cosmic singularity. When Cheyennes refer to that which is sacred, they describe it in reference to Ma heo. Thus, the word for sacred power is ma heno. Ma heonetano means to think in a spiritual or sacred way, while ma heoneve refers to a state of being sacred and ma heono eetahe expresses the action of doing sacred things (Leman 1987:415).

B. Lakota Views on Cosmic Singularity

Lakota philosophy is also permeated by the idea that the universe embodies a oneness, a unifying principle or singularity, in which everything is interconnected (DeMallie 1987:27-28). Wakan Tanka embodies this notion of oneness. It is the universe or cosmos in its totality. It is the creator of all things that have been and will always be: it is both everything and one at the same time. Wakan Tanka embraces all life: it is omnipresent and omnipotent (Powers 1986:118-126; DeMallie 1987:28-29).

Within this universe, the Lakotas distinguish between what is common and uncommon, ordinary and extraordinary, self-evident and incomprehensible, profane and sacred (DeMallie 1987:27-28; Fools Crow in Mails 1991:46-57). In the Lakota language, wakan is the word used to describe that which is sacred. Anything, including animals, plants, places, people, objects, and actions, is wakan when it expresses and exhibits extraordinary or incomprehensible qualities. The word wakan, according to George Sword (in Walker 1980:96-97), is derived from the word kan, which means ancient or a strange and wonderful thing or that which cannot be comprehended. Kan with a gutteralized k can also mean nerves or arteries, implying metaphorically an old, incomprehensible interconnectedness and unity (Buechel 1970:282). Father Eugene Buechel (1970:525) in his Lakota-English Dictionary defined wakan as sacred, consecrated; special; incomprehensible, possessing or capable of giving ton, i.e., an endowed spiritual quality which is received or transmittable to beings making for what is especially good or bad. Wakan is also sometimes glossed as a state of power, a vitalistic energy or presence in the early English sense of this word, not in its modern meaning as a force opposing, manipulating, acting upon, and controlling its surroundings (DeMallie and Lavenda 1977:154-166). William Powers (1986:120), however, questions the use of wakan to mean a form of power. From his perspective, the best translation and gloss of wakan is incomprehensible, mysterious, or simply sacred (Powers 1986:109-114, 126).

As I interpret various texts on Lakota spirituality and cosmology, ton (tun, or tunwan) appears to be the Lakota word that most closely approximates the idea of a numinous cosmic energy or vitalizing power, while wakan describes the manifestation of its presence. Wakan is an incomprehensible or mysterious state made so by the presence of a numinous essence called ton, although the distinction between the two is often conflated in the literature (Buechel 1970:499; Powers 1977:52; DeMallie 1987:30). Ton is related to the Lakota word for creation or birth

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2 In the representations of some Lakota religionists or wakan wicasa [holy men] (Black Elk in Brown 1971; Fools Crow in Mails 1972, 1991; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984), Wakan Tanka is sometimes personified and represented as a masculine, godlike figure. But in other instances and in other depictions (Walker 1980, Wakan Tanka is represented in a more gender neutral manner as a cosmic singularity.

3 See also, Stephen Riggs definition in his Dakota-English Dictionary (1968:507-508).
tonpi (Powers 1977:52), and therefore, it might be likened to a quantum-like, animating presence behind existence that pervades the universe and that makes certain things and events exceptional or wakan (Walker 1917:153). Everything is believed to have this spiritual essence or force, which ultimately resides with Wakan Tanka and the sacred figures who represent aspects of this cosmic unity (Black Elk in Brown 1971: xx). According to Frank Fools Crow (in Mails 1991:48-49):

Power is not everywhere present, but it is where they are and so it surrounds us. It is above, below, and on all four sides. Also some power was given to each thing in the universe when it was created—Sun, Moon, stars, rocks, animals, birds, fish, plants, people.

In the Lakota scheme of things, there are many different spiritual figures of varying importance, the wakanpi, whose ton influences the appearance and workings of supernatural things (Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh, and Tyon in Walker 1980:95). Ton is not singular but differentiated qualitatively and quantitatively according to the spiritual figures that impart it. Thus, the spiritualized essence or ton of Wi, the Sun, appears in fire (Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh, and Tyon in Walker 1980:95). By imparting their ton, certain spiritual figures create a state of wakan in other phenomena (Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh, and Tyon in Walker 1980:95; Walker 1980:220-221, 225, 230). This power or energy is contained in the wakanpi who comprise different kinds of spirit potentialities that exert their influence on the workings of the universe and the course of human destiny.

II. THE ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE

Many tribes in the northern Plains, including the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas, order their worlds in terms of two interconnected elliptical spheres, one crossed by a vertical axis with a zenith and nadir and the other by a horizontal axis with two intersecting lines. In these spheres, time and space are not separate categories but indivisible aspects of each other (Powers, W. 1977:4, 169, 175; Moore, J. 1996:203-206; New Holy 1997:30-31; Anderson, J. 2000:91-118). The seasons and the directions, for example, are organized by the same system of classification represented by the four winds, which also symbolize stages in the life cycle and points on the landscape. Notwithstanding some fundamental similarities among these three tribes in their basic model of the world, they differ in how they prioritize particular universal coordinates for purposes of understanding and organizing the many phenomena that make up their worlds.

A. The Cheyenne’s View of Cosmic Order

In Cheyenne traditions, the universe is divided into a spiritualized feminine principle, Esceheman, The Earth or Our Mother, and a masculine one, Heammawihio or Ma’heo, The Sky or Our Father. According to George Bird Grinnell (1972:2:88-91), the Sky was the Supreme Being and creator of all other spiritual and material forms including the Earth. As Karl Schlesier

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4 One of the Lakotas that Bucko (1998:201) interviewed, however, used the Lakota word, w okiye, to express the idea of a life force or energy. This is derived from the word okiye, which means, to help (Buechel 1970:606).

5 This refers to major spiritual figures in the Lakota pantheon.

6 There is an important body of published work on Arapaho cosmology and Arapaho relations to the worlds of animals (Kroeber 1900, 1902; Dorsey and Kroeber 1903; Anderson, J. 2000, 2001). While we make note of some of this here and in the following chapters, the material is not as systematically developed as that on the Lakotas and Cheyennes simply because there is not much about their historic or modern cultural affiliations to the area of Wind Cave National Park that we could develop in a way comparable to the Lakotas and Cheyennes.
(1987:7) explains, *Ma’heo* created the universe, *Emamanstoon*, by opening the ground at the location of his fingerprint with the use of a digging stick. In the Cheyenne Sun Dance or New Life Lodge [*Oxheheom*] and Animal Dance [*Maussam*], an earth painting is made that mimics the creation of the universe from its cosmic center and creator, *Ma’heo*, to its four directions, which are represented by four colored mounds that signify four sacred mountains, the pillars of the universe, at the corners of the world. The Four Winds are known as the *Ma heyuno* (Powell 1969:2:434; Schlesier 1987:93, 120). After this, the *Maiyun*, who work in the seven planes of the universe were formed, including *Eseheeman*, the Earth, *Atovsz*, the Sun, *Nonoma*, the Thunder, *Nemevota*, the Rain, and all the *hematasoomao*, the immortal spiritual essences of all life forms (Schlesier 1987:8).

On the horizon, where the sky and earth meet, the universe takes its directional form. The *Ma heyuno*, the four sacred persons who guard the four directions, only have personal spirit names because of their sacredness (Schlesier 1987:8), and they often appear either as men on horseback or as men with horns (Powell 1969:2:435). Rudolph Petter (1913-15:422-423) related what Lefthand Bull told him as follows:

> There was a time when there was no earth, only the Great-Mysterious ruled in the wide space. It was all like fog in a dreary evening when one cannot distinguish objects. The Great-Mysterious one had four great servants, the ones whom he has set to watch the four quarters. He told these beings that he would make the earth and also human beings. Go about and you will soon find that earth, said he to his servants. They went about for quite a time but came back and reported that they could not find anything. Go again and look carefully, he told them. But in spite of their efforts they found nothing. Four times they were sent and came back without having seen or found anything. The fifth time the Great-Mysterious told them now you will see something. And it happened, as they were floating about, they noticed a shapeless and dark mass looking like one about to give birth to a child. They returned and reported what they had seen. Go again and see what I have created, you will find a new being there, bring it to me. the Great-Mysterious told them. They went and found the earth shaped and on it a new being they had never seen before. They brot (sic) this being to the Great-Mysterious who took it in his arms and said: This being is a man whom I have made to inhabit the earth, it is my child and I shall love him. After that the man was brot (sic) back to the earth to inhabit it and live on it.

When the four winds came upon the earth and stayed, their homes or pillars were situated at sacred mountains. *Hesenota* (or *Esseneta he*), whose color is white, symbolizes morning and spring (Petter 1913-15:424; Powell 1969:2:436; Moore, J. 1974a:150, 1996a:206). This is the direction from which the light and life originate. He is the one who lives in the southeast where the sun rises. In other accounts, however, his color is red or yellow, and the animals and plants with which he is associated include redheaded woodpeckers, yellow-shafted flickers, and red willows. *Onoxsovota* (or *Onoxsovon*), whose color is yellow (Powell 1969:2:436) or black.
FIGURE 21. The Cosmic Tiers in the Cheyenne's Universe

**Adapted from Moore 1986:182, 183, 1996:205; Schlesier 1987:5**
(Moore, J. 1974a:151-152; 1996:207), stands at the northwest where the sun sets. He is associated with death and darkness, with the moon, with the deep waters where water monsters live, and with predatory birds with crescent shaped claws. Sovota (or Sovon), whose color is red (Powell 1969: 2:436) or green (Moore, J. 1974a:154-155, 1996a:206) brings thunderstorms, rain, and the grass of summer, and he resides at the southwest corner of the world, while Notomota, whose color is black (Petter 1913-15:745; Powell 1969:2:436) or white (Moore, J. 1974a:154, 199a6:206) represents cold, snow, inertia, and disease and dwells in the northeast. The Ma heyuno help humans: they appear in visions and give knowledge of the workings of the universe in many sacred contexts (Powell 1969:2:435). The hematasoomao, the spirits of animals, are believed to have their abode at the homes of the four directions (Petter 1913-15:211).

The Sacred Persons, Ma heyuno, exercise influence over the Sacred Powers, the Maiyun, who reside above and below the earth in the form of natural forces (Powell 1969:2:435, 437). The most important Above Person is the Sun, Niesehaman, a messenger of the Southeast, and he is closely followed by the Thunder, Nemevonam, an associate of the Northwest (Powell 1969:2:436). Other Above Persons include the Moon, the Stars, and the Rain. The most significant Listener Under the Ground is Grandmother Earth, Esceheman. These Maiyun may appear and reveal themselves to humans in other forms, including as wolves, bison, bear, elk, and swifthawks (Powell 1969:2:439). Along with the Ma heyuno, they exercise control over the hematasoomao of lesser life forms among animals, plants, and minerals (Powell 1969:2:435).

Besides its horizontal divisions, the universe was divided along a vertical axis. The zenith of the world above was the place of the creator, Ma heo, and the spiritual universe, while the nadir of the world below was the home of the female generative principle, He?estostse, and the material world (Moore, J. 1996:208-211). The Maiyun, as the messengers of the Sacred Persons, have spiritual and material forms (Schlesier 1987:8). They hold positions in the sky, but they also occupy sacred caves, Ma’heonoxsz, on earth where they once imparted sacred knowledge to the Cheyenne’s two prophets, Motsiuiv [Sweet Medicine] and Tomsi vsi [Stands on the Ground or Erect Horn]. From caves and other locations they frequent, the Maiyun guard and take care of the homes of the animals whose spirits, hematasoomao, reside in other cavern formations under the earth (Schlesier 1987:4-7).

The Maiyun are able to access exhastoz, the cosmic energy and the source of breath, omotome, which gives material form its life energy. The hematasoomao are the immortal spirits, souls, or shadows of all living forms (Grinnell 1972:2:93; Schlesier 1987:4-13; Moore, J. 1996:209), and they are released in their mortal or physical forms at the behest of the Maiyun who fulfill the cosmic plan of Ma ‘heo (Schlesier 1987:4, 8). Each species or distinct life form has a limited number of hematasoomao, which according to Cheyenne belief are disappearing because of the ways humans are domesticating and exploiting the world (Schlesier 1987:4-5, 10-11). Thus, when the bison nearly became extinct at the end of the nineteenth century, the Cheyenne believed that the Maiyun were keeping the hematasoomao or spirits of the bison in their subterranean homes, awaiting a propitious time to release them again in their physical form (Schlesier 1987:4-5; Moore, J. 1974a:163, 1996:211).

B. The Lakota’s View of the Cosmic Order

Lakota religionists differ in how they conceptualize the spiritual figures or potentialities that constitute or make up the cosmic singularity that is Wakan Tanka. Some of the knowledgeable men who consulted with James Walker in the late nineteenth century (Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh, and Tyon in Walker 1980:94-95; Lone Bear in Walker 1980:127-128) thought of Wakan
Tanka, the divine oneness, as embodying the Tobtob, the 4 x 4, or sixteen discrete yet integrally related spiritual presences or potentialities. Ten of these spiritual presences constitute natural forces or elements whose relationships with one another can be understood, in part, through Lakota stories of creation as rendered and interpreted by James Walker (1983). Creation began when Inyan, the oldest spiritual presence, made through its own motion, first Maka [Earth], her land and water (the blue blood of Inyan’s veins). Part of the water was then transformed into a blue dome that covered the earth and became the Sky or Skan [Taku Skanskan] (Melody 1977; Walker 1983:194-195). Through this division, the tanton or material and the tanton sni, the immaterial essences of the universe, were created (Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh and Tyon in Walker 1980:95). Aspects of these three spiritual figures, in turn, went into the creation of the Sun, Wi (Walker 1983:195). In Walker’s interpretation, Stone, Earth, Sky, and Sun constitute the superior spiritual presences in the universe, each of which has an associate. The Sun’s partner is the Moon, Hanwi, the Sky’s helper is the Wind, Tate, the Stone’s associate is the Thunder, Wakinyan, and the Earth’s helper is the Meteor, Wohpe, who also appears as the White Buffalo Calf Woman, Pte San Winyan and gifts the Lakota with their sacred Buffalo Calf Pipe (Densmore 1918:63-66; Hassrick 1964:217-219; Finger in Walker 1980:109; Powers, W. 1977: 54; Powers, M. 1986:43-49; Looking Horse 1987:68-69; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:38-41).

There are four additional sacred presences, who appear later in cosmological time: the Four Winds [Tob Kin] and the Whirlwind [Yamni], the sons of the Wind [Tate], and the Face [Ite], who is the daughter of the first Buffalo People [Pte Oyate], the Old Man [Waziya] and the Old Woman Wakanka]; the last three are not part of the Tobtob, however. The other two lesser sacred figures are the Bison Bull [Tatanka] and the Bear [Humunpa] (Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh and Tyon in Walker 1980:94; Powers 1977:54). Although James Walker (1917:79-81) personified and ranked these figures hierarchically as superior, associate, and inferior deities, the Dakota ethnographer and linguist Ella Deloria concluded in her correspondence with Franz Boas that these figures were not grouped in a hierarchy. Generally, they were not envisioned in anthropomorphized terms. Nor were they represented, according to Deloria, in the kind of Greek-like dramas in which Walker often cast them (Jahner in Walker 1983:17-27).

In some of the narratives of more recent Lakota religionists, the divisibility of the cosmic singularity -- that is, Wakan Tanka -- is depicted in other ways. Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:312), as one example, represented it in his version of the story of the Great Race. After the people were dispersed over the earth from its center in the Black Hills, he tells how Slow Buffalo said:

Up in the heavens, the Mysterious One, that is your grandfather. In between the earth and the heavens, that is your father. The earth is your grandmother. The dirt is your grandmother. Whatever grows on the earth is your mother. It is just like a sucking baby on a mother (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:312).

In another context, Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:238-239, 392-393) described it on a four directional plane composed of the spirits representing the North, South, East and West that bisected a vertical axis at its center where all of the divisions come together as one. In a parallel fashion, Fools Crow (in Mails 1991:49-59) envisions the cosmos as forming a plane or disc with four quarters, the sacred persons of the Four Directions, who come together in a center that is linked to a circular dome above, the domain of Tunka sila [Grandfather], whose ceremonial color is blue, and another dome below, the realm of Maka Uni [Grandmother Earth], whose color is green. The vertical aspects of this ordering are also manifested in the representation of the ceremonial articles used in the Yuwipi, which according to Louis Kemnitzer (1970:41-43), must represent the Wakinyan [Flying Ones] in bird feathers, skins, plumes, and bones; the
Wamakaskan [Those Who Move about on the Earth] in skins, tails, claws, and quills; the Wahutkan [Those who have Roots] in wood, tobacco, and other plants; and Makah sitomni [All the Earth] in stone and soil.

Generally speaking, the differentiation of the universe along its vertical axis is not as well articulated in the published literature on the Lakotas as it is on the Cheyennes. It is clearly implicit in Lakota texts but not explicitly elaborated upon. Whether the differences in Cheyenne and Lakota orderings represent significant cultural distinctions between the two tribal nations or whether they are a function of how tribal narratives were interpreted by outsiders is difficult to know. Drawing on William Powers, Joseph Eppes Brown, and Arthur Amiotte’s interpretations, Alexandra New Holy (1997:138-139) suggests that a hierarchical ordering of the universe is largely ephemeral and undifferentiated in the Lakota scheme of things. It appears to be inseparable from and collapsed into their ideas of directionality, which are organized within a circle where time and space are united. The axis mundi of their universe is simultaneously conceptualized as a line on a horizontal plane linking north and south, or east and west, and as a line on a vertical plane connecting the nadir and zenith. This is why the direction north and the nadir (or underworld) are often seen to occupy the same space in Lakota cosmology.

In liturgical texts and in the interpretations of Lakota spiritual leaders, as these appear in many different published sources, the meaning of the horizontal disc represented by the Four Directions or Four Winds is described in great detail. The Four Winds are considered highly wakan among the pantheon of the Lakota’s most influential spiritual beings, and as such, they are appealed to in most every major ceremonial observance, including Hanbleciya [fasting or vision seeking] (Densmore 1918: Black Elk in Brown 1971:49-50; Walker 1980:131, 133; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:122-135), Hunkapi [making relatives] (Walker 1980:124, 210, 221; Black Elk in Brown 1971:103-104) and Yuwipi (Kemnitzer 1970:71; Powers 1982:54; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163; Bucko 1998:184, 196, 200, 208). The stories about them tell how they brought order, direction, and movement to the world. Through their actions, the world is renewed, plants are created, the birds and animals are assigned their places in the universe, and humans given their basic orientations too. Indeed, a great deal about Lakota cosmology is revealed in their sense of Tate, the Wind, and his sons, the Four Winds, Tob Kin, and the fifth, the Whirlwind, Yamni (Jahner in Walker 1983:200-203).

Each of the Winds is represented by a particular color, is the source of specific life functions and behaviors, and is associated with certain animals, birds, and plants. There are differences among Lakota people, however, in which of the birds, mammals, and plants they may associate with a particular direction. There are also significant differences in how the basic colors are matched with these figures. Some of this variability is probably a result of the inversion of symbols in the ritual thinking of Heyoka [Contraries], but in other instances, it is a function of local cultural differences or even individual interpretation. Very briefly, the North Wind, Waziyata or Yata, is most commonly associated with the color red, the buffalo, the wolf, the magpie, pine, and kinnikinick; he is described as stingy and morose but is also seen as a source of procreation and health. Sometimes his color is white and inverted with his brother s, the South Wind, Itokagata or Okaga. The South Wind is typically represented by the colors white or red, linked to the elk, the meadowlark, the crane, waterfowl, and sage. He plays the flute and wins the heart of Wohpe. He is a symbol of bravery, kindness, generosity, creativity, industry, romance, and renewal. The West Wind, Wiyohpeyata or Eya, generally has black for his color. The blacktail deer, swallows, lizards, hawks, flickers, bats, and butterflies are his messengers, and

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8 Lee Irwin (1994:30) observes this difference too and suggests that the elaborate vertical distinctions the Cheyenne make may be related to their Algonkian cultural heritage.
cedar is his favorite plant. He is responsible for purifying the world through rain and thunder. Finally, the East, *Wihiyanpa* or *Yanpa* is most often linked to the color yellow, associated with the whitetail deer, the nighthawk, the owl, the redheaded woodpecker, and sweet grass. He is characterized as discontented, foolish, lazy, and noisy but also stands for wisdom and understanding. He sleeps by day and travels at night (Dorsey, J. 1894:442; Curtis 1907-30:68, 71-73, 77; Densmore 1918:196-197; Wissler 1912:6, 19-20; Beckwith 1930:407-408; Kemnitzer 1970:71; Black Elk in Brown 1971:19-20, 103-104, 119-120, 133-136; Walker 1917:172-173, 1980:84, 125, 126, 127, 173, 197, 232, 1983:61, 71, 72, 81-82, 84, 159, 161, 162, 183, 184, 300, 301, 309, 313, 321-322, 340; Powers, W. 1977:75-77, 191-193, 198-199, 1982:54, 1986:81-82, 138-140; Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990:39; Fools Crow in Mails 1991:59; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163).

The remaining four *Tobtob* represent sacred presences which make-up the domain of spirituality that is necessary for sustaining life in each and every living thing (Amiotte 1989c:164). These are *Niya*, the breath of life; *Nagi*, the spirit; *Nagila*, the spirit-like; and *sicun*, a spiritual potency (Powers 1977, W:52-53). There has been considerable discussion in the literature regarding their meanings and precise applications in Lakota thought and practice, and some of it is confusing because each of these concepts gets conflated. Arthur Amiotte (1987:86-88, 1989c:164-172), a Lakota scholar and artist, provides the best and most straightforward explanation.

One soul is the *niya* or *ni*, which is the breath that gives rise to *woniya*, life (Amiotte 1987:86, 1989c:164-165). It is the soul or spirit that imparts substance to a living form and contributes to its materialization. It is closely associated with the Earth, the Wind, and the bison (Densmore 1918:67-68). It is also linked to the stars, which are sometimes understood as the *woniya* of *Wakan Tanka* (Goodman 1992). When *ni* ceases to exist at death, the physical remains of a person deteriorate into nothingness (Good Seat in Walker 1980:70-71, 72; Sword in Walker 1980 83; Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh, and Tyon in Walker 1980:95).

Another soul, the *nagi*, is the immortal shadow or ghost spirit, a spiritual template that mirrors the physical form of being (Buechel 1970:342, 771; Powers, W. 1977:53; Amiotte 1987:87, 1989c:165-166; Goodman 1992:40-41). The *nagi* remains with the body, but it can also travel, encounter, and communicate with the *nagi* of other life forms (Good Seat in Walker 1980:70-71,72; Amiotte 1989c:87-88). It can warn a person of impending danger, but it can also abandon an individual, leaving him/her vulnerable and requiring ritual intervention to call the soul back. After death, when the breath ceases to flow, the *woniya* or life of a person is gone and the only soul that remains is the *wanagi*. After death, when the *wanagi* is released and travels to the spirit world, the body becomes nothing (Good Seat in Walker 1980:70-71; Sword in Walker 1980:85).

The *nagila*, the little ghost or shadow, according to Amiotte (1987:87, 1989c:171-171), is the soul that from the time of conception brings motion to the formation of life and its growth. It is an aspect of the life force that originates with *Taku Skanskan*, the spiritual presence that ignites all forms of movement. The *nagilapi* of humans and all other life forms have a *ton*, force, potency, or energy that is necessary to life, but different from the *ton* of the *Taku Wakan* or the

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9 This expression is used to identify the soul after the death of its living, materialized form.
**FIGURE 22. Cosmic Coordinates in Lakota Universe**

**NOTE:** The association of animals, plants, and colors with specific winds varies, and so do the connections with the figures on the edge of the circle, some of which make up the Tȟóttȟá. 

The final soul, or sicun, is an aspect or clone of another and often greater spiritual presence, the Taku Wakan, whose potency, or ton, can be embodied in a stone, a song, a prayer, or an animal part and activated or called into service when it is needed. The sicun is the essence of a spirit who has appeared to a person in a dream or who has been invoked by a holy person and then transferred to other people for their use and protection. The Sun's ton, for example, can be imparted to a stone and made into a sicun (Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh, and Tyon in Walker 1980:95-96). All the major spiritual figures have a ton that can influence the workings of humans, animals, plants, and other living forms (Good Seat in Walker 1980:72-73). When something is invested or reinvested with the spiritual force, ton, of the sacred, it becomes a sicun (Powers, W. 1982:11). The sicun gives its holder the potencies and abilities of the spiritual helper or partner it embodies (Powers 1977:52-53; Amiotte 1987:87-88, 1989c:170-171; DeMallie 1987:30; Goodman 1992:40-41). The sicunpi, according to Frank Fools Crow (in Mails 1972:49-52, 93-94, 186), constitute 405 qualitatively distinct spiritual potencies, all of which represent different aspects of Wakan Tanka. Everything that exists in the universe has a sicun, which William Powers (1982:14) describes as forming the immortal spirit species of the universe. The sicun are somewhat like the hematasoomao of the Cheyenne, insofar as they are shared across different living forms and reincarnated from one generation to another. Over their lifetime, spiritually gifted people may accumulate many different sicunpi who not only assist them in their own life endeavors but can also be called upon to help others. Sicunpi protect those who hold them from discord, danger, and ill-health, and when one person shares or gives away their sicun to another, their own protections and potencies are depleted (Powers, W. 1982:11-14; DeMallie 1987:30).

III. THE ELEMENTS

In the Cheyenne and Lakota scheme of things, the sun, moon, thunders, and stars that make up the sky, and the stones, soils, and waters that make up the land are living beings. Like humans, animals and plants, they possess physical and spiritual properties (Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh and Tyon in Walker 1980:95; Schlesier 1987:6, 11). The elemental spiritual figures in tribal cosmologies impart life, both in a material and immaterial sense, to all humans, plants, animals, and other living forms, including caves and mountains, and they exert their influences in many different ways.

All of the resources that make up the geophysical world from rocks and soils to water and wind are believed to possess a form of agency. This world is especially important in understanding tribal ideas about the Black Hills and the area of Wind Cave in particular. In many Lakota understandings of the Black Hills, for example, they are known to be highly sacred because they contain all the elemental aspects of the cosmos. As the highly revered spiritual leader, Pete Catches (in Parlow 1983a:2) once said: All of the Black Hills is sacred. It unifies the whole thing. Its force, its cliffs, its rock formations, its streams and lakes, rivers and what vegetation, fruit and everything that exists and grows in the Black Hills are sacred to the Lakota people. In at least two publications (in Parlow 1983a:2-3; in Gonzalez 1996: 67), Catches elaborates on this unity by describing how the Black Hills are ruled by seven spirits who govern everything that makes the world as we know it. He stated:

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10 The Cheyenne also believe in the existence of four souls, whose spiritual forces are attributed to each of the four Ma heyuno or Four Directions (Moore 1974a:166).
To the Indian spiritual way of life, the Black Hills is the center of the Lakota people. There ages ago, before Columbus came over the sea, seven spirits came to the Black Hills. They selected that area, the beginning of sacredness to the Lakota people. Each spirit brought a gift to the Lakota people.

The first spirit gave the whole of the Black Hills to the Lakota people forever and ever, from this life until the great hereafter life.

The next spirit that came told the Lakota people there is an external fire deep in the bowels of the earth, which we know as volcanoes, the fire, the everlasting fire-so the Black Hills belong to the Lakota people, and from it, that eternal fire in the bowels of the Black Hills is the life-giving heat.

The next spirit brought water, commonly known to us now as Hot Springs. We went there ages ago, together healing -- which became Evans Plunge, commercialized-where we, Indians, go for our healing in the healing waters of life.

The third spirit brought the air that we breathe. You’ll see that -- you go to Wind Cave and the Earth breathes in and out. That’s very sacred. It’s needed for life. Without it, we cannot live, nothing can live. The plants need air, all creation needs air.

The fourth spirit brought the rock people, which includes the gold, as mentioned here a while ago, and the minerals. That is why the Black Hills [are] sacred to the Oval Office.

The fifth spirit brought medicine. In the area of the Black Hills -- that today’s pain and disease has to do with AIDS -- if we were left alone and if we can go there, we can develop our way of healing -- even to the end of time, which is AIDS now, today, We can do that because the Black Hills [are] sacred, because that is life itself.

The next spirit brought animals, the buffalo, the deer, all the small animals from which we get body parts. From the eagle, we get eagle feathers, from many of the smaller animals, we get parts of their body, transform it into our way of life -- because all of creation is one unit, one life. We are them and they are us. This is his creation.

The seventh spirit brought the Black Hills, as a whole -- brought it to the Lakota, forever, for all eternity, not only in this life, but in the life hereafter. The two are tied together. Our people that have passed on, their spirits are contained in the Black Hills. That is why it is the center of the universe, and this is why it is sacred to the Oglala Sioux. In this life and the life hereafter, the two are together.

Why should we part with the Black Hills? Land is not for sale.

I’d like a life to look forward to after this life. Generations and generations ago, our people have looked upon the Black Hills as the center of the world, and it’s a circle. We began from there and we make a complete circle of life, and we go there after our demise from this world. That is why it is sacred to us (in Gonzalez 1996:67, italics ours).

Wind, water, fire, and stone are four elemental properties that Catches associates with the Black Hills, with two linked to very specific landscapes -- the thermal waters of Hot Springs and the air movements of Wind Cave. Bear Butte, an outlier of the Black Hills, is also identified as sacred because it contains all levels and/or basic elements of the universe (Schlesier 1987:5; Forbes-Boyte 1996:104, 1999:28).
A. Stone

In Lakota perspectives, as already described, Inyan is the first presence in the universe, out of whose initial motion the sky and the earth were created.11 Inktomi, the Spider, and the Wakinyan, the Thunders, are also his offspring, and he is directly implicated in the origin of the Pte Oyate, Bison People, who come from underground caves in the realm of Inyan, the mountains (Walker 1917:82, Little Wound in Walker 1980:124). According to James Walker (1917:82), Inyan is the patron of authority and vengeance, of construction and destruction, and of implements and utensils. His potency can be imparted to anything that is hard as stone; his symbolic color is yellow (Walker 1980:186). Inyan, who exists in a materialized form (George Sword in Walker 1980:99), is invoked more than any other spiritual figure in the Lakota pantheon.

Offerings and sacrifices, which may include pieces of skin, are made to Inyan on things that most closely resemble him, usually stones (Blunt Horn, Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:102-103). The stones used in invoking Inyan are not ordinary but special in their shape and composition. Unlike common rock, which is called imniza (Buechel 1970:183), these are known as tunkan, an abbreviated and respectful address for tunka sila [grandfather] (Densmore 1918:205; Powers, W. 1982:13). Ella Deloria (1944:52) suggests that the term tunkan refers to eternity or an endless chain of ancestral relationship going back in time. As Lone Man told Francis Densmore (Densmore 1918:214):

The earth is large and on it live many animals. This earth is under the protection of something that at times becomes visible to the eye. One would think this would be at the center of the earth, but its representations appear everywhere, in large and small forms—they are the sacred stones. The presence of a sacred stone will protect you from misfortune.

And as Chased-By-Bears told her:

The outline of the stone is round, having no end and no beginning; like the power of the stone, it is endless. The stone is perfect of its kind and is the work of nature, no artificial means being used in shaping it. Outwardly it is not beautiful, but its structure is solid, like a solid house in which one may safely dwell. It is not composed of many substances, but is of one substance, which is genuine and not an imitation of anything. (Densmore 1918:205).

The round stones that met these specifications are formed from the brown colored sandstone typically located in the area (Densmore 1918:205). They are often found in the bed of a lake, stream, or river (Powers, W. 1982:13), although Brave Buffalo (in Densmore 1918:208) explains that the most suitable spherical stones are found atop buttes in the direct light of the sun. Another kind is made from the crystallized sand that ants push up from their mounds (Powers, W. 1982:13).

Today, according to William Powers (1982:11), Lakotas who have faith in Wakan Tanka and traditional religious precepts wear a tiny round stone in a small bag made of buckskin on their person. Besides the stones that people carried on their person, large stones and boulders could

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11 Although inyan is identified as masculine in Walker’s works, this spiritual figure appears to be gender neutral or bisexual (Powers, M. 1986:36-38). In some contexts, Inyan may be considered feminine as one of the two progenitors of Inktomi, the other being Wakinyan, who is almost always seen in masculine terms. Yet, in relation to Inktomi’s half brother, Iyo, whose other parent is Unk or Unktehi, a masculine ascription may be appropriate since these water deities are often described in feminine terms.
also be a subject of veneration. These were sites where offerings and sacrifices were made. Historically, the stones were typically decorated with stripes painted red, **Inyan s** favorite color (Densmore 1918:208; Little Wound in Walker 1980:197; Walker 1980:118, 231, 232, 233; Catches and Catches, Sr. 1990:81). Such acts were believed to bestow endurance and perseverance on those who venerated and showed respect to **Inyan** (Walker 1980:235).

Stone also possesses an immaterial and immortal essence that is capable of renewing life. In the sweat lodge, hot stones are connected to the creation of **ni** [breath] when water is applied to them, and as a result, they are directly implicated in restoring a person’s health (Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990:67-86; Catches and Catches, Sr. 1990:81-84; Bucko 1999:82). More specifically, stones on which lichens grow are considered ideal for use in a sweat lodge because they don’t crack (Fire and Erdoes 1972:177). These are sometimes called **inyan waksupi** [stone beadwork] (see Appendix B under lichens for other names).

In James Walker’s rendition of the Lakota creation cycle (1983:220-221, 222-223, 227-228), the spirits were invited to feast on the **icage**, white fruits, that grew under the earth, suggesting the crystalline formations in caves. **Taku Skanskan** made entrails from these fruits and molded a masculine father and feminine mother figure from them, the first **Pte Oyate**, and gave them the fruits as their source of eternal nourishment (Walker 1983:225-226, 249). At the end of the nineteenth century, the Lakota scholar, George Bushotter (in Dorsey 1889:153-154) wrote about mysterious stones, including one that was white and looked like ice or glass. Three decades later, Rufus Pilcher (1964) recalled that a group of Lakotas requested crystalline stones from Wind Cave to use in healing. In this regard, it should also be noted that quartzite stones from the Black Hills are kept in the Plains Apaches most sacred religious bundles (McAllister 1965).

According to Francis Densmore (1918:205), the Lakotas believed it was highly significant when people dreamed of stones, and in her text on Lakota music, she recorded numerous accounts of stone dreamers and the songs they had learned in their dreams (Densmore 1918:204-244). Luther Standing Bear (1978:215-216) wrote about these dreamers as follows:

> The stone dreamer sang a song about the night sun or moon, and also one about the day sun, which was taught to him by stones. The stones were possessed of extraordinary knowledge, for they were on the earth, in the earth, and in the sky visiting the sun and moon, so they taught the following song to the dreamer, that he might derive power from these heavenly bodies...Whenever horses or articles were lost, the Stone medicine-man was called, for he could send out his flying stones and they would locate the missing things. The medicine-man was always called with the pipe for the best results.

The power of the stone to move and locate things, however, was the work of **Taku Skanskan** [That which creates movement] (Dorsey, J. 1894:445), a figure often equated with **Skan** [Sky]. As Francis Densmore (1918:205-206) describes this:

> It is said that a medicine man in demonstrating his power to acquire information by means of the sacred stones sends them long distances. After a time the stones return and give him the desired information. He is the only one who understands what they say. It is said that stones sometimes fly through the air in a darkened healing tent and strike those who have refused to believe in them. The power of stones to move through the air comes from Takuskanskan. His symbol is the boulder. He also lives in the four winds.

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Louis Kemnitzer (1970:63) states that stones refer to the earth, to permanence, to lightning, to genuineness, and to the power transmitted to living things on earth. They have power to move by themselves, and they may serve as messengers for spirits as well as exerting their own power.

Stone dreamers are called Yuwipi (Tyon in Walker 1980:153), and even though they were prohibited from practicing by the federal government in the early reservation era (Densmore 1918:245), they represent the most prevalent class of religious practitioners among the Lakota today. There is a rich published literature on Yuwipi and the ceremonies they perform that does not need to be elaborated upon here (Densmore 1918:204-244; Feraca 1961; Kemnitzer 1970, 1976; Powers W. 1982; Lewis 1990:90-93). What needs to be said, however, is that stones received in dreams could be used for many different purposes. Besides being called upon to assist in locating lost objects (Densmore 1918:205), they also helped to predict the outcome of a raid or battle (Densmore 1918:231-236). They were used in hunting and considered especially effective in summoning bison (Densmore 1918:210; Walker 1980:118, 232). But their most prevalent application was in treating the sick and in making medicines to protect people from harm and injury (Densmore 1918:246-250; Tyon in Walker 1980:153-155; Walker 1980:232).

Among the Lakotas, communicating with stones was considered sacred talk, demanding the same reverence and gravity required when enlisting the aid of other major spiritual figures, such as the Thunders or the Bear (Densmore 1918:206). Their use also required truthful speech (Walker 1980:197), as in the practice of swearing on the knife. Stones were present at major ceremonies, along with other significant objects of reverence such as bison skulls and eagle feathers (Walker 1980:224, 262, 269-270).

The Cheyenne’s understanding of stone, which is called hohona (Petter 1913-15:1015), has not been elaborated upon in the same way as it has been for the Lakota. Although stone was not among their principal spiritual figures, the Cheyennes believed that stones held inherent life powers: they had animism and were capable of movement (Petter 1913-15:1015; Moore, J. 1974a:175; Whitman in Schwartz 1988:54). Stone is strongly identified with eternity and immortality (Powell 1969:1:27). As John Moore, (1974a:175) points out, a common liturgical phrase in Cheyenne songs and ceremonies is only stones live forever.

The Cheyennes organized stones and soils primarily in terms of their colors and shapes. Red colored rock and earth was associated, for example, with the sunrise or the blood of slain beings (Moore, J. 1974a:174), as in the red earth of the Race Track in the Black Hills. Stones covered with green lichen, as another example, were linked to green hailstones and the power of the thunders to renew the earth (Ibid:171). White stones, such as gypsum or selenite, were tied to white hailstones and the powers of winter (Ibid:174). The Cheyennes also employed stones in healing, but there is very little detail about their specific uses (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:54). Beyond this, we were unable to uncover any other information about Cheyenne beliefs regarding stone in a more abstract and spiritual sense, even though there is a good deal of material on its utilitarian functions.

Inyan Kara Mountain on the western side of the Hills is closely associated in Lakota thought with the creative potentialities of Inyan (Black Elk, C. in Goodman 1992:51). However, the entire Black Hills are evocative of stone and the formative role it plays in all creative processes, and this may be why so many Lakota and Cheyenne origin stories are located in this region.

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12 The variable amount of information about stone appears to mark a significant difference between these two tribes that is not a function of the focus of ethnographic studies on their cultures.
B. Earth

Whereas stone is typically identified with a masculine generative principle, the earth is feminized and understood as generating a materialized form of sustenance. The earth is called maka (Buechel 1970:328) in the Lakota language, and she is addressed respectfully, either as mother, Maka Ina (Walker 1980:234), or grandmother, Maka Ui (Sword in Walker 1980:102; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:74, 97, 110; Bucko 1999:208). According to Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:312), the Earth itself was the Grandmother, while the things that grew on her surface were the Mother. No matter what particular kinship term was used to address her, she was one of the superior spiritual presences in the Lakota pantheon, the Tobtob, and considered highly wakan (Little Wound in Walker 1980:70; Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh, and Tyon in Walker 1980:94; Sword in Walker 1980:99). As James Walker (1917:82) described her:

The earth is a material God, whose substance is always visible. She ranks third of the superior gods, though she existed next after the first in existence. She is most often addressed as the All-mother, for she is an ancestor of all material things, except the rock. Her domain is the world and she is the patron of all things that grow from the ground, of drink, of food, and the tipi. Her potency may be imparted to anything that has grown from the ground. Her color is green.

The belief that Maka is the source of the animals and plants on which people depend for their livelihood is a persisting and vital tradition in Lakota worldviews. As Luther Standing Bear (1988:194) wrote in the 1930s:

In talking to children, the old Lakota would place a hand on the ground and explain: We sit in the lap of our Mother. From her we, and all other living things, come. We shall soon pass, but the place where we now rest will last forever. So we too learned to sit or lie on the ground and become conscious of life about us in its multitude of forms...

More recently, another Lakota, Joseph Rockyboy (in St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:74) put it this way:

Some people focus on the Sun Dance and the male power of the sky, but it is to bless Mother Earth with new life that the dance is held. When we pray in the sweat lodge or in our ceremonies, we always remember Maka Ina [Mother Earth]. We get our health from Mother Earth and the herbs that grow from her. We use some for food and others for doctoring.

The Earth is often imagined in the figure of a bison, since she is the chief patroness of the animals as Tatanka, the bison bull, is the chief of the animals (Short Bull in Walker 1980:144; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:110). She is also seen in the image of the turtle (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:112). Finally, she is closely linked with plants, as both food and medicine, and according to Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:120), she governs their productivity and gives them their potency. In various Lakota stories and liturgical texts, she is sometimes envisioned as an old woman (wakanka) who manifests herself near caves and springs, but she may also be represented interchangeably with her associate Wohpe [Meteor] as the young bison woman who also appears near cave openings (Left Heron in Walker 1917:183-190; Black Elk, H. in Thiesz 1973:16-18; LaPointe 1976:80-84; Melody 1977:152-164). Or she reveals herself in the guise of Pte San Winyan, the White Buffalo Calf Woman (Powers, W. 1977:169).
Pulverized earth is present in all major Lakota and Cheyenne ceremonies. When the Lakota make a ceremonial altar or **hocoka**, a process called **makagapi** [making the earth], special soil is used. According to William Powers (1982:42) in reference to **Yuwipi**:

Vole dirt is used because voles are members of a sacred, omniscient community of creatures endowed with knowledge of both the surface of the earth and its subterranean parts. Like ants, which push earth and stones to the surface, moles, prairie dogs, wolves, coyotes, and other burrowing animals bring clean earth from the underground. This subterranean earth has not been contaminated by humans and is thus preferred for sacred rituals.

Louis Kemnitzer (1970:54) adds that every **Yuwipi** man has his own supplies of earth that are kept in special containers for the purpose of building an altar’s sacred space. Indeed, in most major ceremonies, including the **Sun Dance** and vision quests, the location where the altar is built is cleared and specially pulverized earth is applied to the spot (Densmore 1918:218, 222; Kemnitzer 1970:70). The same also applies to the Cheyennes who excavate the sod and apply pulverized soil in building a new ground for their ceremonial altars, a process that Schlesier (1987:6) likens to the reenactment of creation.

The Cheyennes have several different names for the earth. One name, **nathoe**, refers to the land or country where people live, and another, **hestec**, is used for soil or ground (Petter 1913-15:422). **Notostovoom** refers to the surface of the earth, and it is closely related to **votostoom**, which means a habitable area (Petter 1913-15:422). The Cheyennes respectfully called the earth, **Esceheman** [The Earth or Our Mother] (Powell 1969:2:437; Schlesier 1987:5, 8, 82; Moore, J. 1996:208-211). She is associated with **He?estostse**, the deep center of the earth, the nadir of the world below. She is linked with land animals, especially bison. From her earthly home, she protects the spirits of the animals and oversees their emergence from a spiritualized essence to a material form, a process that takes place in their underground cavern homes, which Cheyennes believe are located in the Black Hills and at Bear Butte (Moore, J. 1974a:163, 1996a:208-211; Schlesier 1987:4-7). **Esceheman** and the buffalo, as Father Peter Powell (1969:2:443) puts it, are the living symbol and source of female power. Her goodwill insures the abundance of food and game for the Cheyennes, and her essence takes expression in materialized forms (Powell 1969:2:444; Moore, J. 1996a:208-211). John Moore (1974a:162) argues that the deep earth represents stability; it is the substance out of which all living things are created but it does not create life itself without the intervention of the sun and rain. The substance of the earth is found in caves, but it also appears above ground on rocky surfaces without vegetation. The earth where plants grow represents the interactions between the sun, rain, and the earth (Moore, J. 1974a:161, 164).

Various manifestations of the earth mother figure in Cheyenne and Lakota traditions are associated with many stories connected to several important places in the Black Hills, including Bear Butte and Wind Cave.

**C. Sun/Fire**

In both Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, the Sun, **Wi** in Lakota and **Eehe** or **Atsosva** (its sacred name) in Cheyenne, is typically associated with the winds and cardinal directions of the East and/or South (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:105; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:126; Moore, J. 1996:206). Its appearance in the spring sparks the renewal of life and the greening of the earth (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:287-288). The Sun is addressed as father or grandfather, and Red Cloud told James Walker (1980:140) that the Sun and
Wakan Tanka were one and the same. The Cheyennes carry a similar notion and believe that the Sun is the quintessential representation of Ma heo (Grinnell 1972:2:89) and the greatest life-giver among the Above Powers (Powell 1969:2:437; Moore, J. 1996:207).

In Lakota thought, fire embodies the essence of the Sun (Walker 1980:186, 230), and all ceremonial fires carry the rays of the Sun and its spiritualized ton or power (Walker 1980:220; Black Elk in Brown 1971:32). Like the Sun, fire is highly sacred (Bucko 1998:203), capable of sparking or renewing life. It is a potent purifying force (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:284). In Lakota traditions, as told by Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:300, 311, 313), Moves Walking brought knowledge of fire and the ceremonial pipe to the people from the North.

In Lakota traditions, the Sun is closely connected to the bison and their progenitor, Tatanka, with whom he stays at night in the underworld (Little Wound in Walker 1987:67; Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a: 42-43; Hall 1997:133-134). Bison also come from the North and thus are linked to the North Wind, Waziyata, who is driven away by the Sun’s helper, fire, so that life can be regenerated as evidenced in the liturgical texts from the Pte San Lowanpi (Buffalo Sing), a ceremony celebrating a young girl’s passage into womanhood (Walker 1980:245). When a ceremonial fire or pipe is lit, just like the arrival of the Sun, it brings the return of the bison (Black Elk in Brown 1971:314; Goodman 1992:7). In both Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, the Sun represented by the East or the South and the spiritual embodiment of the North stand in an inverted, and sometimes antagonistic, relation to each other. The old man of winter and frost, known as Waziya in Lakota and Hoimaha in Cheyenne is represented respectively as the North Wind, Waziyata or Notamota (Moore, J. 1996:208). The Cheyennes believe that he arrives in a white cloud and tells the Sun to back away (Grinnell 1972:2:94-95). At the time of the vernal equinox, the Sun reasserts its power, and as it gets higher in the sky, it orders the old man of the north to return to the place from which he comes (Grinnell 1972:2:95; Moore, J. 1996:207). Grinnell (1972:2:95) points out that in the winter the Cheyennes held a feast and offered a pipe to the old man, requesting him to withhold the snow so that the people might hunt and live.

Among the Lakotas, red is the color representing the Sun but paradoxically it also represents the direction of Waziyata, the North Wind (Walker 1980:231, 232, 233). Insofar as blood stands for the unity of life and death, it makes sense the spiritual figures that stand for life-taking and life-giving potentialities would be represented by the same color. Not coincidentally, red is also the color associated with the bison that stand for the totality of all that exists (Black Elk in Brown 1992:13).

At least in Cheyenne traditions, and perhaps in Lakota as well, there appears to be particular and important connections of the Buffalo Gap area to the Sun, not only because the Sun Dance is believed to have originated at this location but also because this is the place where the quill workers guild, the Me e no ist st, is believed to have originated (Grinnell 1972:1:159-169). Like eagle feathers, porcupine quills are believed to hold the sun’s rays (Brown 1992:102, Sundstrom 2002:108). Also, the yellow hair of bison calves in Cheyenne teachings is closely associated with the sun, who gifts the bison to humans (Moore, J. 1974a:163). In fact, the Lakotas hold a special ceremony at the Buffalo Gap around the time of the vernal equinox to light their ceremonial pipes (Black Elk, C. in Goodman 1992:49-50), and they once followed this route to reach locations near Harney Peak where they performed additional ceremonial observances in the spring (Looking Horse 1987a: 42-43).

The Lakotas and the Cheyennes set up their ceremonial calendars according to the position of the sun and its relation to other celestial bodies. Places in and around the Black Hills, notably Bear Lodge Butte, the Race Track, and the Buffalo Gap, were believed to mirror certain
constellations in the sky, and as a result, they were locations where important and highly sacred transformative processes were known to take place at certain times of the year (Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a:42-43; Goodman 1992:7; see also, Chapters 14 and 15 for further details).

It is important to remember that in many American Indian traditions, including the Lakotas, openings to the underworld are also portals to the sky. In the daytime, the night sky is underneath the earth, and during the nighttime, the sun travels to the subterranean world (Hall 1997:133-134). This helps to explain why certain elemental figures in tribal cosmologies are envisioned simultaneously as having sky and earth origins or homes, which are accessible at the highest pinnacles on the earth's surface such as mountain peaks and also from its lowest depths where these homes are approached through the openings to caves (see, again, Chapters 14 and 15 for more details).

D. Air/Wind

*Taku Skanskan or Skan,* the spiritual figure that presides over movement represents the Sky and the Blue Dome (Walker 1917:84, 1980:272), but his presence is also manifest in the stone that gave him birth and in the Four Winds (Densmore 1918:205-206) The Wind, *Tate,* is a close associate of *Taku Skanskan* and is one of his direct descendents. *Tate* is also, according to Red Rabbit (in Walker 1980:127), the younger brother of the Sun and a spiritual figure who has little interaction with humans. The Wind is a spiritual presence without material manifestations, except in its effects, and it is directly associated with the hunt and the meat of ruminant species (Buechel 1970:472; Sword in Walker 1980:99). Little is known about this spiritual figure, however, because his powers are part of the secret knowledge of Lakota holy men, *wicasa wakan* (Little Wound in Walker 1980:67; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:124-127). His essence or *ton* is revealed in the smoke of sage (Little Wound 1980:197). He is the father of the four winds or directions and the whirlwind, and it is through them that *Tate* s action is manifested. The idea that the Wind and his sons are part of the central integrating and ordering principals in the universe is something the Lakotas and Cheyennes share (Jahner in Walker 1983:200-203; Moore, J. 1996: 206-208).

The dwelling place of the Wind is associated with the air and the northern lights where the *wasicunpi* [spirits] stay (Little Wound in Walker 1980:197), but he is also known to reside at certain underground locations, notably caves. Indeed, the element of the wind is closely associated in Lakota traditions with the area of Wind Cave (Campbell 1937), known in sacred language as *Tate Waxun* [Cave of the Wind] or *Tatoye Oyrlokapi* [The Opening of the Four Winds] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:209).

In Lakota traditions, wind is equated with the breath of life, *ni,* and it is a foundation for all movement. This is made explicit in Pete Catches description (in Gonzalez 1996:67), quoted earlier, that clearly connects the Black Hills and Wind Cave, in particular, with the wind and the breath of life. *Ni* is connected simultaneously to caves and bison because both emit visible vapors in the wintertime (Densmore 1918:67-68; Sword in Walker 1980:100), the quintessential physical sign of the presence of breath. This connection, which is elaborated upon in much more detail in subsequent chapters, also underlies certain Lakota understandings of what happens in sweat lodges. Indeed, in many ways, as alluded to earlier, the interactions of stone, water, and fire in sweatlodes, mimic broader elemental relationships that are manifest in particular landforms and landscapes, including Wind Cave and the areas that surround it.

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13 The Cheyennes also make this connection (Moore 1974a:160).
E. Water/Thunder

Water, mni in Lakota (Buechel 1970:337) or map in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:1095), is another basic element. The Cheyennes and the Lakotas understand water as a life-giving force (Kemnitzer 1970:73; Grinnell 1972:2:134-135). According to the Lakota intellectual, George Sword (in Walker 1980:100), water is also closely linked to breath. As he puts it:

The spirit of the water is good for the ni and it will make it strong. Anything hot will make the spirit of the water free and it goes upward. It is like the ni, which can be seen with the breath on a cold day...

The Lakotas and Cheyennes had at least two kinds of spiritual figures, usually identified as potentially dangerous, that were associated with water in its land-based form. Among the Cheyennes, they were known as mihn and described as large lizards with horns, or as giant snakes (Grinnell 1972:2:96). These water spirits and their underwater people were known to possess buffalo, and they were also believed to play a role in their appearance and disappearance on earth (Grinnell 1972:2:97). According to John Moore (1974a:164), the waters of lakes and rivers come from underground water that swells up out of the deep earth, and it is conceptually different from the water that falls from the sky. The creatures that inhabit these waters are known to bring harm to humans when offended, but they are not seen as particularly dangerous. When respected and gifted, they are known to be of assistance to humans (Grinnell 1972:2:96-97). In addition, the Cheyennes believe that a class of diminutive beings, Ho ho tama itsi hyo ist, that live in the ground and travel by night, commonly inhabit bluffs near springs, whose source is also the deep earth. Like the other spirits connected to the water, they can bring harm to people if offended and not propitiated (Grinnell 1972:2:126).

In Walker’s rendition (1983) of the Lakota creation story, the female figure Unk is identified with the spiritualized essence of water (Walker 1980:50-51). Along with her offspring, the unktehi, unkcegila, miniwatu, wamnitu, or mini wasicun [water spirits], she is an ambiguous figure, sometimes reviled and feared, characterized as a monster and a harbinger of evil and bad luck. In other cases, however, she is respected and petitioned (Dorsey, J. 1894:438-441; Good Seat in Walker 1980:72; Sword, No Flesh, Bad Wound and Tyon in Walker 1980:194, Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:108, Short Feather in Walker 1980:115-116; Walker 1980:118, 122, 123, 208). The Lakotas envision the Unktehi and Unkcegila, as giant reptiles with horns, four legs, and a ridged backbone, and they believe that their remains are encased in the badlands of Nebraska and South Dakota and also at spots along the Race Track (Dorsey, J. 1894:440-441; La Pointe 1976:17-20; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:108, Tyon in Walker 1980:122).14

The Lakota also have spiritual figures known as little people, who are called by several different names, including Wiwila15, Ca otila, Unglagica, Gicila, or simply Gica. They are known to occupy caves, rocky outcroppings, and forested areas near springs and other sources of water. They can be potentially dangerous to humans if the places where they live are not treated with respect, but they can be benefactors too, gifting humans in a wide variety of different ways (Dorsey, J. 1894:473; Howard 1955:462-472; LaPointe 1976:45, 84; Powers, W. 1977:52-53;

14 Generally speaking, the cosmological beliefs surrounding the unktehi and other water spirits are much more elaborate among the Dakota who resided in regions east of the Missouri River than they are among the Lakotas who resided near the Black Hills.

15 Wiwila, a name David White (2002:217) reports for Little People, is also the word for a spring, and it can be translated as little life.

In its airborne manifestation, water is associated with the Thunders in Lakota and Cheyenne thought. The Thunders, Wakinyan in Lakota and Nonoma in Cheyenne, are envisioned as huge birds, which bring the rain and the storms that green and revivify the earth in the spring (Powell 1969:2:436, 438; Black Elk in Brown 1971:31; Grinnell 1972:2:95; Moore, J. 1974a:157-158; Schlesier 1987:8). The Cheyennes and the Lakotas once held ceremonies and offered the pipe in the spring to celebrate the Thunders return (Grinnell 1972:2:96; Goodman 1992:50). The Thunders stand in perpetual conflict with the spiritual embodiments of water on earth, the Unktehi or Mih n in Cheyenne (Moore, J. 1974a:165; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:105, 108; Walker 1980 118). In Lakota traditions, the home of the Thunders is commonly associated with Harney Peak in the Black Hills. They are also typically linked in Lakota thought with the West Wind and in Cheyenne worldviews with the South Wind. The West Wind is connected in Cheyenne traditions to water spirits.

Water is understood as the elemental medium by which medicines are transported in Lakota healing (Kemnitzer 1970:73), and this is also true for the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:134-135). Water figured prominently in Nicholas Black Elk’s visions and healing treatments (in DeMallie 1984:119-121, 123-124, 138-140, 179, 215, 217, 223, 237-239, 240, 244; Standing Bear 1978:52. Luther Standing Bear (1978:50-52) wrote extensively about how water was taken as a preventive health measure. Lakota children were admonished never to eat food until they had a generous drink of water in the morning, and adults were reported to drink copious amounts of water, often flavored with mint, to maintain their health.

The spiritual essence of water is also embodied in the Black Hills, and, according to Pete Catches (in Gonzalez 1996:67), it is especially apparent in the thermal waters of the Hot Springs region. Catches (in Parlow 1983a: 2) talked about these thermal waters as follows:

And you look at Hot Springs and its perpetual warmth, it was a place very sacred to the Lakota people. They go there to bathe and were doctored. The water, a spiritual gift that he brought to the Black Hills and to the Lakota people.

In general, the spiritual strength of water is revealed anywhere springs issue forth from underneath the earth’s surface. Since springs are found throughout the Black Hills, including locations within Wind Cave National Park, there are many places in this region where the spiritual power of water is revealed.

IV. WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK AND THE ELEMENTS

It is through the relationships and interactions of the elemental forces described here that Ma heo of the Cheyennes and Wakan Tanka of the Lakotas reveals its totality and brings about the perpetuation of the cosmos. There are special landscapes that typify these relationships, and one of these encompasses the Black Hills, including the region where Wind Cave National Park is located. As argued in Section Four, the Lakotas and Cheyennes practice what Yi-Fu Tuan (1978) calls geopiety, that is, they have a special reverence for the geography of the places in which they live. This reverence involves a totalistic way of viewing a landscape, one in which land forms and their associated elements, plants, animals, minerals, and soils are synergistically related
as a synecdoche, where each phenomenon stands and speaks for the other as interchangeable representations of various spiritual essences or forces.

Certain landforms function as hierophanies, that is, they stand as physical representations of the cosmos. Bear Butte, as one example, represents and encapsulates a complex set of ideas about the workings of the universe. Known as "Nowah wus" [The Teaching Mountain], it is spiritually important to the Cheyennes because it contains within its reach areas accessible to humans that represent all seven levels of the universe, from the Nsthoaman, the deepest level of earth, to the otatavoom, the blue sky. It holds the Ma’heonoxsz, the sacred caves of the Maiyun, and it houses the heszevooxsz, the subterranean cavern homes where the spirits of the animals reside (Schlesier 1987:4-6). The Ma’heonoxsz are places where some humans, such as the Cheyenne culture heroes, Sweet Medicine and Stands on the Ground, were given extraordinary knowledge about the workings of the cosmos, and as a result, these caves serve as models for the ceremonial lodges where the Cheyennes conduct some of their most important ritual observances. Although for different reasons, Mato Paha [Bear Butte] or Paha Wakan [Sacred Mountain] also possesses hierophanic meanings for the Lakotas (Forbes-Boyte 1996, 1999). Indeed, it is one of the places in the Black Hills that many tribes hold sacred, including the Arapahos (Trenholm 1970:80), Kiowas (Mooney 1979:322-324), and Plains Apaches (McAllister 1937:162, 1964). It is widely recognized by several different tribal nations as a place where the borders between the physical and spiritual world intersect and where animals and humans can reveal their spiritual essences to each other, and as a consequence, it is highly sacred.

Although the region of Wind Cave National Park is not explicitly referenced in this way in the existing literature, the information presented in the next two sections can be used to build a case that shows how this area served to convey important cosmological understandings for both the Lakotas and the Cheyennes and probably for other tribes too, including the Arapahos, Poncas, Arikaras, and Apaches. In the following chapters, the significance of the area is described in terms of the particular mix of animals, plants, minerals, and soils that make up its landscape. Some of these, notably bison, kinnikinick, and gypsum, also manifest metaphoric imagery. In Section Four, the importance of the park’s two major landforms, Wind Cave and the Race Track, are described, and some of their symbolic imagery is revealed. When related to the neighboring Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs, these landforms constitute an integrated totality that reveals certain essential ideas about the workings of the cosmos. Together with the animals, plants, minerals, and soils that make up their respective landscapes, they speak to and speak for each other; they form an inseparable and unique totality that makes this a distinct place in the Lakotas and Cheyennes’ universe and in their conceptualization of the Black Hills. It is a place that teaches, as Bear Butte does, certain fundamental cosmic precepts. But in order to understand how and why this is so, it is necessary to first give some attention to the cultural uses and meanings of the different kinds of animals, plants, minerals, and soils that represent the biology and geology of Wind Cave National Park.
Chapter Ten

THE HOME AND GATHERING 
PLACE OF THE ANIMALS

In the lives and cosmologies of the Lakotas and Cheyennes, the two tribal nations most closely associated with the area of Wind Cave National Park, one of their most powerful and persistent cultural attachments to the region involves the animals. From some of the earliest to the most recent accounts, the Black Hills have always been known as the home, shelter, and gathering place of the animals. Where the drainages of local waterways cut through the sandstones of the Hogback, there are a series of gateways that once allowed the easy passage of animals from the grasslands to the Red Valley or Race Track. In the late fall, animals sought winter shelter at various locations inside the Hogback, and in the spring, they passed through these gateways to reach their feeding grounds on the surrounding grasslands. Humans followed their migrations. They sought the accessible and lower elevation recesses of the Hills for their winter campsites and left them in the spring as they began a cycle of travel that led in the late summer to the open plains for their large communal hunts. In the Black Hills, this transhumance pattern of migration for animals and humans is not only well known through written documents and oral traditions, but there is also considerable evidence for its occurrence in the prehistoric record.

In her important writings on the prehistory of the southern Black Hills, Linea Sundstrom (1989, 1990, 2000) has shown how the canyon passageways of the Hogback were used in prehistoric times. Some of her most interesting findings have to do with the rock art of the area, located most commonly in the canyon gateways of the southern Hills. The earliest rock art panels, which date from the Middle Archaic, some five thousand years ago, depict animals and the shamanistic activity associated with their hunting. Although rock art styles changed over time, many of them appear to have had something to do with ritualized practices bearing on the fertility and hunting of hoofed animals. In Craven, Red, and Whoop-Up Canyons, where the highest concentrations of rock art are found, most of the species depicted are members of the Cervid family, elk or deer. Since most rock art sites are located in and around major gateways to the Hills, Sundstrom (2000) argues that these may have been locations where various ungulate species were corralled and hunted in prehistoric and historic times.

Although not a major site for rock art, the passageway created by Beaver Creek, known as the Buffalo Gap, leads directly to Wind Cave, which is located west of the Race Track along the southeastern shoulder of the Limestone Plateau. Because so much of the cultural importance of this area and the related thermal waters at Hot Springs, are tied to the animals, especially bison, it is important not only to describe the habits of the species who historically resided here but also to explain their cultural place in the practices and worldviews of local tribes, especially the Lakotas and Cheyennes.

I. SOURCE MATERIAL

There is a rich body of material on animals in the histories and traditions of the tribal peoples of the northern Plains. The early nineteenth century trader Antoine Pierre Tabeau (in Abel 1939:76-87) offered detailed descriptions of the habits and habitats of some of the animals.
associated with the Black Hills, and he also described some of the ways in which they were procured by the tribal nations who traveled in the area, especially the Arikaras. Nearly fifty years later, in 1854, another trader, Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:xxiii, 5-6) would add to this knowledge and write very specifically about the Lakota’s relationship to the fauna of the Black Hills. In the intervening years, many explorers and travelers in the region, including Meriwether Lewis and William Clark (in Moulton 1983-87), Maxmilian, Prince of Wied (in Thwaites 1966:2:346-347), Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969), and E. De Girardin (1936:62) offered insights about the region’s animals and the ways in which they were procured. Most of the early discussions about the fauna of the Black Hills took place at some distance from the area, along the Missouri or Platte River, and much of it was based on secondhand knowledge derived from the eyewitness reports of traders and trappers who wintered in the Hills. In 1823, John Clyman (in Camp 1969), who accompanied a trapping brigade under the leadership of Jedediah Smith, was the first eyewitness observer to write about the Hills. Although his party probably entered the Hills at the Buffalo Gap and crossed the area at its southern reaches, he offers little detail about the animals other than the party’s infamous encounter with a grizzly bear.

It wasn’t until after the 1850s, when government sponsored expeditionary parties traveled the area, that we get a more detailed record of local animal populations and their whereabouts (Hayden 1862b; Hinman 1874; Grinnell 1875; Jenny 1875; Ludlow 1875; Dodge 1865; McLaïrd and Turchen 1973, 1974a, 1974b, 1974c; Krause and Olson 1974; Frost 1979; Dodge in Kime 1998). By this time, however, the region’s animal demography had changed considerably: bison, for one, no longer held a dominating presence in regions east of the Black Hills. Generally speaking, and with a few notable exceptions (Warren 1875:15-16), these writings offer little direct observation on tribal hunting practices in and around the Black Hills. In later years, a succession of naturalists and biologists came to the Black Hills to study the habits and habitats of the region’s fauna. Many of their observations are chronicled and reviewed in Ronald W. Turner’s important monograph, Mammals of the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming (1974). This is one of several sources (Seton 1929; Pettigrill and Whitney 1965; Froiland 1978; Melius 1995) that this report drew upon in reconstructing the faunal history of the region and also in understanding European American relationships with and attitudes towards various species.

Much of what is known about tribal connections to the animals of the Black Hills comes from Lakota and Cheyenne writings, oral traditions, and winter counts, most of which were published in the twentieth century. Within this literature, there is a rich body of material on tribal knowledge about the region’s fauna, on tribal patterns of procurement, and on the symbolism associated with animals in tribal cosmologies and ceremonialism. There are several general references to tribal hunting in and around the Black Hills, and even some statements regarding the specific locales where certain kinds of procurement took place. There is also a good deal of information about Lakota and Cheyenne understandings of the metaphysical significance of the Black Hills and its relationship to local animal populations. Some of the major sources on these subjects for the Cheyennes include George Bird Grinnell’s classic ethnography The Cheyenne Indians (1972) first published in 1923, Wooden Leg’s autobiography (in Marquis 1931), George Bent’s (in Hyde 1968) recollections, and John Stands in Timber (and Liberty 1967) historical and ethnographic commentaries. Karl Schlesier’s publications (1974, 1987 1990), John Moore’s writings (1974, 1981, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1996), and Linea Sundstrom’s recent article (2001) on pronghorn procurement are basic sources on these subjects for the Cheyennes as well. For the Lakotas, Francis Densmore’s monumental text Teton Music and Culture (1918), Royal B. Hassrick’s ethnography (1964) The Sioux: Life and Customs of a Warrior Society, James Walker’s various writings (1905, 1917, 1980, 1982, 1983), William Bordeaux’s account (1929), and Henry Standing Bear’s texts (1975, 1978, 1988) are essential sources. Also of importance are Joseph E. Brown’s book Animals of the Soul (1992), and William Power’s work Sacred
Language: The Nature of Supernatural Discourse in Lakota (1986). In addition, there are Nicholas Black Elk’s important accounts as told to John Neihardt (1961; in DeMallie 1984) and Joseph E. Brown (1971). Finally, many other sources, too numerous to mention here, provide additional information on Lakota and Cheyenne relationships to the world of animals.

It must be emphasized that most of the information that exists on the tribal use of animals in the Black Hills is very general. In relation to the vast body of data that exists on the hunting practices of the Lakotas and Cheyennes, and in terms of an equally extensive literature on tribal cultural attitudes towards the many animal species known to have existed in the Hills, only some of the sources actually specify the particular geographic locales where game was taken for food, clothing, shelter, medicine, and other purposes. Nonetheless, there is still a strong enough body of material to reconstruct some general aspects of procurement practices that would have taken place in and around the Hills and at Wind Cave National Park. There is an even more impressive body of material on tribal attitudes towards the animals that were historically associated with the region. Thus, the following discussion focuses largely on the general material about the animals that tribes of the area sought to procure with special attention given to the Lakotas and Cheyennes. It identifies the species historically located at the park, the cultural meanings that were attached to them, the ways in which they were used, some of the contexts in which they were taken, and equally important, the place they occupied in tribal cosmologies and ceremonies. The identification of animals presently located in the park comes from the park’s own website, and unless otherwise indicated, all references to animals populations at the park come from its website (Pisarowicz 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2001d). Since specific information on tribal relationships with animals is enormous, much of it, including the tribal names for different species, is placed in an appendix at the end of the report (Appendix A).

II. FAUNAL DIVERSITY AND CHANGE

In historic times before 1877, the Black Hills contained most of the mammalian species known to local tribes with the possible exception of the raccoon, which had not reached much farther than the mouth of the White River when Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:143) wrote about the fauna of the region in the 1850s. Local tribal peoples saw the Hills as a home and meeting place of the animals, an observation reflective of the region’s overall faunal diversity and also the movements of animals in and around the Hills. The area of Wind Cave National Park is especially significant in this regard because part of its land covers a race course where all the animals once gathered and raced against each other to determine who would be the hunter or the prey (see Chapter Fourteen for a detailed discussion of the story).

A. Contemporary Animal Populations

Most of the species present in the Black Hills when European Americans arrived are now part of the panoply of animals that make up the Hill’s fauna. Many of these animals are also present at Wind Cave National Park. Today, the Black Hills embrace a large and highly varied number of animal species. More than sixty different varieties of mammals have been reported in the Hills. Over the past century, many of these animals, especially the smaller ones, appear to have maintained their numbers, but some of the larger game disappeared and had to be reintroduced in the early twentieth century. Two species, grizzly bears and wolves, were extirpated from the Black Hills by the early twentieth century and have not been reintroduced. In more recent times, the black bear has disappeared from the Hills as well. Other species always existed here in small numbers, and one, the blackfooted ferret, remains in such small numbers that it is now regarded
as an endangered species (Turner 1974:129-132). The last reported sighting of one at Wind Cave was in 1977 (Ferrell 2002: Personal Communication).

More than two hundred species of birds are also reported in the Black Hills. Of these, one hundred and thirty-nine appear regularly as permanent year-round residents or regular seasonal inhabitants. Eighty-seven other species are described as occasional in the reporting of experienced observers. As with plants, this is an area of hybridization for a number of species from different parts of the continent. The Hills are western and eastern limits for several birds and also outlier zones for some boreal species that nest in the region (Froiland 1978:106-108). Most of the birds found in the Hills have been sighted at Wind Cave National Park, but many of them are uncommon or rare in their appearance. Only forty-one species, or approximately twenty percent of the varieties reported in the Hills, are commonly found inside park boundaries.

There are also at least twenty different species of reptiles and amphibians in the Hills, and some of these are present at Wind Cave National Park (Froiland 1978:97-105). Only a few varieties of fish, crustaceans, and mollusks, however, were ever common in the streams and waterways of the Black Hills. Today, some of the native fish species, or closely related ones, are being restocked in streams managed by government agencies. In the waterways that traverse Wind Cave National Park, including Beaver, Highland and Cold Spring creeks, six species are reported, including one, the brook trout, which is not native to the region (Pisarowicz 2001d).

B. Historic Animal Populations

At the dawn of the nineteenth century, Pierre Antoine Tabeau (in Abel 1939:77), a French fur-trader, was one of the first European American observers to link the Black Hills with the migrations of game and with the movements of the human populations who followed them. He wrote about the abundance of buffalo, deer, and pronghorn along the waterways surrounding the Hills (in Abel 1939:76, 87), including the Cheyenne and White rivers, and he reported on the bear and bighorn that occupied their interiors. In the same decade, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark (Moulton 1983-87:3:133-135, 179-180, 182, 222, 482, 4:16, 6:338), based on information they secured from local traders, also described these migrations and some of the distinctive species of animals known to frequent the Hills, notably, the pronghorns, the bighorns, and white booted turkeys. As Clark (Moulton 1983-87:3:482) wrote: The Black hills is Said to abound in Bear of every kind, and in addition to all those animals common on the Missouri an Animal with verry large horns Curved about the Size of a Small Elk, and a Booted Turkey commonly white...

Over the next three decades, other observers would continue to report on the abundance of game in the Black Hills. Based on his twenty years of experience as a fur-trader on the upper Missouri, Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:5-6) described the large numbers of bighorns, mountain lions, and bears of the Hills interiors and the rich herds of buffalo, elk, and blacktail deer at their base. In the 1840s, Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:154, 271-272) gave evidence of the richness of game in the general area,1 and so did E. De Girardin (1936:62). From these and other early reports, there is no question the Black Hills was an area rich in game and a destination to which local tribal nations traveled on a regular and recurring basis to hunt.

Until the 1840s, the Black Hills stood above some the best bison country in the northwestern plains. As John Ewers (1938:12), one of the Smithsonian Institution’s most highly respected

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1 Again, even though some of his descriptions of the Black Hills actually refer to the Laramie Mountains, they provide good evidence of the transhumance migrations of local tribes in pursuit of game from the open grasslands to the higher elevation interiors of local mountain ranges.
ethnologists, put it: The Black Hills furnished the favorite winter home for the buffalo. In subsequent decades, European American observers began to report declines in bison populations, especially in areas east of the Hills and also at locations in the south towards the Platte River (Twiss 1855b:83; Denig in Ewers 1961:22, 25; Hyde 1961:29; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:200; Hurt 1974:242; Price, C. 1996:46-50). Curiously, when E. De Girardin (1936:62) lists the mammals associated with the Hills in 1849, he omits the bison. Elk, bighorns, and antelope, however, were on his list of the species that abound there. Although bison could still be found around the Black Hills in the 1850s, as evidenced by Warren’s description (1875:15-16) of a Lakota bison hunt on the western side of the Hills near Inyan Kara Mountain in 1857, and General William F. Raynolds sighting of bison near the northern Hills in 1859 (Turner 1974:144), it is clear that the Hills were no longer at the center of the best bison hunting ranges in the plains. In 1862, Ferdinand Hayden (1862a:274) wrote that along the Cheyenne River: Game is also quite abundant, as elk, deer, and antelope, and in former years, vast herds of buffalo roamed over this region, though at the present time, only now and then a stray bull is seen along this river from mouth to source.

Much has been written about the diminishment of the bison herds on the Great Plains (Bamforth 1987; Flores 1991; Krech 1999). Andrew Isenberg’s recent historical synthesis (2000) indicates that a complex set of factors were involved in the bison’s decline. In his perspective, a combination of forces, including overkilling by humans, predation from wolves and other carnivores, long periods of drought, severe winters, competition from cattle for good grazing land, and disease brought about their near demise in the 1870s (Isenberg 2000:27). As he observes, populations of bison and other wild ungulates follow erratic cycles of rapid growth and sudden collapse. In the Plains, drought was one of the major forces leading ungulate populations to crash (Isenberg 2000:28-29). By the 1870s, bison had probably overreached the carrying capacity of the grasslands when a sequence of dry years, followed by especially severe winters, reduced available forage. In a situation where bison numbers were already declining from natural forces, an expanding commercial market for their hides contributed even more to the animal’s demise.

Before commercial market forces influenced tribal procurement strategies, Isenberg (2000: 85-86) maintains that native hunting practices resulted in sustainable production cycles, in which a tribe’s annual take rarely exceeded the predation of their fellow carnivores, notably wolves and bears. He also argues, however, that the increased hunting of local tribes to meet market demands was not an inconsequential part of the bison’s eventual decline. When Plains Indians became engaged in a market-oriented production of hides, the scale and intensity of their production increased substantially over what was required for subsistence and indigenous forms of trade (Albers 1996:123-124).

One writer (Krech 1999:142-143) suggests that Plains Indians may not have held a conservation ethic as popularly assumed, or their traditional ethics were compromised by market demands because many bison were wasted in some of the large kills reported in the nineteenth century. It is true that many of the bison taken in large surrounds were not consumed. Cows lean from lactation would not have been selected for food when hunted in the spring because their meat was unpalatable and even toxic, although at this time of the year their hides were desirable for certain purposes (Grinnell 1972:1:226; Geist 1996:48). Other cultural factors may also explain why tribes did not take all of the animals at a kill site. For example, there was a belief among many northern Plains tribes that all of the animals surrounded at a communal kill site had to be slaughtered in order to prevent them from warning others what had happened (Geist 1996:45-48; Krech 1999:147-148).
Although the forces of nature and tribal hunting for the market were certainly necessary conditions in the demise of Plains bison herds, these were probably never sufficient to bring the bison to the brink of extinction. The pivotal last straw for the bison was the work of the professional bison hunters who moved into the plains in the 1870s to make a livelihood off the animal's hide. Facilitated by the arrival of the railroads, and with the assistance of the U.S. military, bison were slaughtered in mass killings until only a few stragglers remained in isolated areas of Montana and South Dakota. It was from these herds that most of today's bison descend (Geist 1996:70-99; Isenberg 2000:123-163).

Whatever the ultimate cause of the bison's decline, their ranges began to constrict dramatically after the 1850s. Although shortages of bison were reported in earlier decades, this was a local fluctuation caused by unusually mild winters and the failure of some of the bison to return to their favorite winter haunts along the valley of the Missouri River (Clow 1995:260-260). By the 1860s, however, the large herds had largely disappeared from the Missouri River and the eastern flanks of the Black Hills, and in subsequent decades, only a few stragglers remained. Ronald Turner (1974:144) claims that 1866 was the date when the last sighting of bison was reported around the Black Hills (Turner 1974:144). In the spring of 1879, Valentine McGillacuddy, the agent at Pine Ridge, wrote in his diary that there is no buffalo to amount to anything around the Black Hills, which suggests that some strays were still to be found in the area. Indeed, early settlers in the Black Hills remember the last bison being killed at the Buffalo Gap in 1881 (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:221), at Hot Springs in 1882 (Clark, B. 1983:22-23), and at Custer in 1884 (Sundstrom, J. 1994:110).

When military posts were abandoned along the Platte River in regions directly west of the Hills in the 1860s, bison were still abundant, but by 1871, they had largely disappeared from eastern Wyoming and the western edge of the Black Hills (Turner 1974:144). Members of the 1874 Black Hills Expedition did not sight any bison on their long march from the Missouri River to the Black Hills, even though a small number of stragglers still inhabited the country north of the Hills towards the Grand River (Turner 1974:144). Large herds, however, could still be found along the Tongue, Powder, and Yellowstone rivers, and they also remained plentiful along the Arkansas and Republican rivers until professional non-Indian hunters exterminated them in the late 1870s. It was to these regions that many of the Cheyennes, Lakotas, and Arapahos gravitated, often traveling hundreds of miles from some of their winter camps at the base of the Black Hills (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:154-165).

Even though bison were well on the road to their precipitous decline by the 1850s, other species of game especially deer, pronghorn, and elk were still reported as plentiful in the Black Hills through the mid-1870s (Twiss 1856b:95; Hayden 1862b:138-151; Hinman 1874:93; Grinnell 1875:79-84; Saville 1875:250; Tabeau in Abel 1939:76, 77, 87; Denig in Ewers 1961:5-6, 19-20; Dodge 1965:12, 123; Maximilian in Thwaites 1966:2:346-347; Knappen in Krause and Olson 1974:28; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:63, 64, 69; Curtis in Krause and Olson

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2 Valerius Geist (1996:75-77:83-94) argues that the United States military contributed in no small way to the demise of the bison. He presents evidence to show how this arm of the federal government actively aided and abetted the work of professional bison hunters in bringing the bison to the brink of extinction. In his address before a joint assembly of Congress, he claimed that the professional bison hunters were national heroes who had done more in their actions to settle the vexed Indian question, than the entire regular army has done in the last thirty years (quoted in Geist 1996:91). The military not only thwarted congressional legislation to save the bison but they actively assisted professional bison hunters in their work by providing them free arms and ammunition (Geist 1996:90). Indeed, Geist (1996:90-94) argues that the destruction of the bison was a basic strategy in the U.S. Army's Total War against the tribal nations of the plains.
1974:136, 149, 192; Lewis and Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:133-135, 179-180, 182, 222, 482, 6:338; McClintock 2000:33). In 1862, Hayden (1862a:274), based on his observations in the 1850s, wrote that: In the vicinity of the Black Hills, the clear, beautiful streams that flow from the mountains swarm with beaver, the prairies are covered with antelope and the wooded valleys and hills are favorite resorts for elk and deer. Like observers six decades earlier, Hayden (1862b:150) described the relationship of the Black Hills to the migratory patterns of certain animals, especially pronghorn, when he noted:

In the beginning of the winter they may be seen for days following each other in files (if not disturbed) on their way towards the Northwest, leaving the prairie for the more rugged portions of the country near the Black hills, or the foot of the mountains. In the spring, usually about March, they may be seen returning again, and distributing themselves over the open prairie.

In later years, George Bird Grinnell (1875:164) reported the same pattern, and Ernest Thompson Seton (1929:2:421) wrote, ...those on the open country about the Black Hills flock thither from all points of the compass. After the arrival of miners and cattle in 1875, the famed movements of the pronghorns between the Hills and the surrounding grasslands were reduced and ultimately curtailed.

Most of the other large ungulate species, including elk, mule deer, and bighorn, which had been abundant in the region, also started to decline. Early European American settlers commonly hunted all of these animals for sport and subsistence (Bingham 1973:4; Fall River County Historical Society 1974:176, 232, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:103, 298, 1994:31; Friggens 1983:88-89). Some of the settlers even earned their livelihood from hunting and selling the meat and hides of large game animals (Parker, W. 1966:149; Bingham 1973:6-8; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:164; Sundstrom, J. 1994:29-30). By the end of the nineteenth century, the once plentiful herds of elk had been extirpated from the Hills (McAdam 1973:17; Progulske 1974:123-124; Turner 1974:136, 137, 144). Bighorn were rare, and the numbers of antelope and mule deer were declining too (McAdam 1973:17; Turner 1974:137, 147-148). The fact that one of the park’s early superintendents reported a single mule deer sighting suggests that this was once a rare occurrence (WCNP Annual Reports, June 3, 1919). Of the major ungulate species, only the whitetail deer appear to have held its own (Turner 1974:139).

Another diminishing species was the beaver (Froiland 1978:143). Some of the first European American trappers who arrived in the Black Hills at the turn of the nineteenth century came in search of this animal. Many stream names in the area, notably French Creek and Beaver Creek, give evidence of their presence. The relative abundance of this fur-bearing animal in the Black Hills, however, was a subject of some debate. Tabeau (Abel 1939:83-84), for one, was not very optimistic about the success of beaver trapping in the Hills when he wrote:

The Ricaras, to whom mice are mountains, say, of course, that in all the little rivers and on the land which separates them from the Black Hills, the beaver is plentiful; but it is evident that, when asked to enter into details, they regard as an immense number dwellings which they meet with, scattered here and there, and that if they knew and wished to hunt there they would destroy in a year all those that exist in a circle of two hundred leagues (in Abel 1939:84).

Around the same period of time, Lewis and Clark were told by a trader named Jon Vall, who wintered and spent considerable time in the area, that even though there were few beaver on the Cheyenne River, many were to be found in the Black Hills (Moulton 1983-87:3:133). Whatever their supply, it is clear that a number of traders and their engages trapped in the Black Hills
during the early part of the nineteenth century. After the mid-nineteenth century, beaver were described as abundant along many of the western streams that fed the Missouri River (Grinnell 1875:77; De Girardin 1936:62; Progulske 1974:122; Turner 1974:88). Hayden (1862b:146) wrote: The streams that issue from the Black Hills are favorite resorts of them, and I have often known them to strip the streams of all the timber which skirted their borders. At the end of the nineteenth century, however, a new wave of European American commercial trappers, who included homesteaders and their children, led to the extreme decline of local beaver populations (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:402, 419; Turner 1974:88-89). In the 1930s, several streams in the region, including Cold Spring Creek at Wind Cave National Park, were restocked but with populations from outside locations (Turner 1974:88-89). By the 1950s, they had become so numerous they were in danger of starvation, having denuded much of their riparian food base (Progulske 1974:124).

Carnivores were also abundant in the area (Grinnell 1875:74; De Giradin 1936:62; Tabeau in Abel 1939:78, 81, 163; Denig in Ewers 1961:6; Dodge 1965:123). William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition wrote in 1804: The Black hills is Said to abound in Bear of every kind... (Moulton 1983-87:3:482), and Thaddeus Culbertson (in McDermitt 1952:57), a Missouri River fur trader wrote in 1851:

Last night we had a good deal of talk around our fire about the Black Hills. Joe, an experienced hunter, tells me that they are covered with the finest pine timber so thick that a person on horseback cannot pass through it in some places. There is an abundance of fine water but no fish; plenty of other game. Grizzly bears are found there sometimes in bands like buffalo; they live on fruit, meat, and ants; to get to these they turn over the largest logs and eat them off the underside if there.

George Bird Grinnell (1875:75) ,while traveling with the Black Hills Expedition in 1874, commented about wolves that hardly a day passed without my seeing several. Early European Americans recalled their presence in and around Wind Cave National Park, and they also remembered seeing coyotes, mountain lions, and bobcats (McAdam 1973:18; Smith, A. 1973:16).

Since many carnivorous species were considered a threat to the livestock of incoming European Americans, they were subject to bounties and systematic policies of extermination (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:253-254, 347, 676; Turner 1974:125). Wind Cave National Park participated in this process too, and the reports of park superintendents reveal that they authorized, participated in, or, at the very least, sanctioned the removal and eradication of wolves, coyotes, skunks, ferrets, and bobcats (WCNP Annual Reports, Dec. 22, 1913, Feb. 2, 1917, Feb. 4, 1918, June 3, 1919, Nov. 1, 1919; Bohi 1962:437). Wolves were extirpated from the area by the early twentieth century and grizzlies at the end of the nineteenth. Black bears had largely disappeared from the region by the 1950s. While cougars, lynxes, bobcats, and several mustela populations still remain in the Hills, they do so in small numbers (Bohi 1962:437; Turner 1974:125, 127, 129-132, 134). Only the coyote, skunk, badger, and some of the fox populations escaped the threat of extinction in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park (Turner 1974:124, 126, 132).

Many of the smaller herbivorous mammals appear to have maintained their numbers because most of them were not generally taken for sport or food (Turner 1974:59, 63-64, 71, 76, 83, 105-118, 143, 144). Rabbits were widely hunted, however, and they were an important source of food for some European American settlers (Sundstrom, J. 1977:261). It is hard to judge how other animal populations, notably birds, reptiles, and amphibians, fared over time, since they were rarely singled out or described in the writings of early European American observers, or with the
exception of the wild turkey, specifically identified with the Black Hills. Even though early naturalists (Hayden 1862b; Grinnell 1875), who accompanied the expeditionary parties that traveled the Hills from the 1850s to the 1870s, listed a wide variety of species, they provided very little detail on their habits or habitats. One of the park's early superintendents noted in 1919 that sixty species of birds stayed in the park at different seasons, and that bobwhites and grouse were actually increasing in numbers. Magpies, although prevalent in the park, were viewed with some disdain, and like other carnivores, their extermination was encouraged (Bohi 1962:436-437).

By the turn of the twentieth century, what had once been the grand gathering place of the animals and a destination to which tribes from all four directions came in pursuit of game, had become a shadow of its former self, a place where only memories sustained the former glory days of the animals and their predatory human companions. It was not until 1911, when the state of South Dakota began to legislate game laws and when game preserves were established a few years later at Wind Cave National Park and Custer State Park, that the Black Hills could begin to reclaim its former identity as the home and gathering place of the animals.

After being extirpated from the Black Hills for nearly half a century, bison were returned to the area of Wind Cave National Park in 1913 as a gift from the National Bison Society. Seven bulls and seven cows were purchased from the New York Zoological Gardens whose stock had been acquired a decade earlier at the Berkshire Hills Game Preserve in Massachusetts (Turner 1974:144). The game preserve adjacent to Wind Cave National Park became one of five federally owned locations where bison were preserved in 1914. At this point in time, ten percent of the total bison population in the United States was located on federal lands (Isenberg 2000:185). In the coming years, the nation's bison population would expand not only on public lands as protected herds but also on private properties as commercially raised stock. Today, bison are no longer a novelty. Their meat, which is low in fat, has become a popular replacement for beef (Giest 1996:120-127; Isenberg 2000:164-192). Many ranchers in South Dakota, including those who own properties near Wind Cave National Park, now raise bison commercially for food and/or sports hunting (O'Brien, D. 2002). Today, the largest portion of the bison population in the United States is privately owned and managed.

Bison native to the region of South Dakota were saved through the efforts of Frederick Dupree from the Cheyenne River Reservation. He captured some bison in 1881 and began to domesticate them. Some of these bison were sold to James Scotty Philips, originally a mining prospector in the Black Hills, who took up ranching and married an Oglala woman who encouraged her husband to raise bison. Before Philips died in 1919, he managed to build the largest herd of bison in North America on his West River ranch (Casey 1949:17; Schell 1961:247-248; Sundstrom, J. 1977:112; Isenberg 2000:176). His stock formed the base for Custer State Park's bison herd, and one source (Casey 1949:17) claims that some of these ended up at Wind Cave National Park. There is no evidence in park records for the direct acquisition of bison from Philips' stock; however, there is evidence that bison from the two parks sometimes intermingled when the fences separating these parks were not secure (Bohi 1962:462-463). Also, it should be noted that in the summer of 1939, the park donated several live bison to local tribes, including the Oglalas, adding yet another dimension to the close and long-standing connection of this area to the bison in Lakota traditions (Bohi 1962:459-460).

Through the reintroduction of extirpated species and a wide range of conservation efforts, the large game populations of the Black Hills rebounded in the twentieth century. Now, only a few of the carnivores, notably the wolf and the bear, remain absent from the panoply of mammalian species represented in the Black Hills ecosystem (Turner 1974). Today, even though game is still pursued in the Hills, much of the hunting is done as a sport or as a conservation measure rather
than as a means of sustaining peoples livelihoods. Much of the contemporary appreciation of the region's game by European Americans has evolved out of a tradition of spectatorship associated with the culture of modern tourism. Even more specifically, this industry has been a central component of historical developments at Wind Cave National Park, which draws large numbers of tourists each year not only to the cave, its most prominent attraction, but also to its wildlife, especially its bison, elk, pronghorn, and prairie dogs. In fact, by 1920, some of the park's animal populations were drawing more park visitors than the cave (Bohi 1962:437).

For American Indian people, particularly the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, the Black Hills are no longer a major hunting ground. Even though tribal members from the Pine Ridge Reservation continued to pursue game in the Hills through the early decades of the twentieth century (Jones 1904:125-128; U.S. Senate 1904; Stewart 1967-1970:71; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:24, 33, 47, 72, 176, 213, 262, 264; Clark, B. 1983:68-69), there is little published documentation on the legal or illegal continuation of this practice. By contrast, an impressive body of evidence exists on the persistence of Lakota and Cheyenne cosmological and ceremonial attachments to the Black Hills, which center in one way or another around the animals historically associated with the area and Wind Cave National Park in particular. Today, as in the past, the Hills are still equated with game animals, and they remain a quintessential symbol of nourishment and well-being for the Lakotas as well as the Cheyennes.

III. THE BLACK HILLS IN TRIBAL SUBSISTENCE CYCLES

During the deliberations over the relinquishment of the Black Hills, Red Cloud proposed to sell the Hills interiors to the federal government (although some people argue his intention was to lease them), but he wanted to retain the area extending between the Race Track and the surrounding plains. As he put it, Now I will tell you how much of the country I give you. Around the hills is a race-track, (trail) and I sell to the Government inside of that trail (in Allison 1875:189). Iron Nation gave the same message a year later, in 1876, when he agreed to give up the Black Hills but only that part from the Racing Ground [meaning the road that runs along the eastern base of the mountain] (in U.S. Senate 1876:79). Red Cloud and Iron Nation's words are worth remembering because, while the interiors of the Hills inside the Race Track played a role in the annual procurement cycles of local tribes, it was the area extending from the Race Track, through the Hogback, to the surrounding grasslands that was of prime importance in tribal subsistence practices. Commenting on the Cheyennes probable reaction to Red Cloud's words Father Peter Powell (1981:2:931) wrote:

Little Wolf and other Ohmeseheso Chiefs present must have been struck by Red Cloud's statement. The racetrack around the Black Hills was sacred to the People, for it was there that Magpie won the Great Race for the People, so that ever afterward the People ate buffalo, instead of the buffalo eating people, as they had done before the Great Race.

Historically, the Race Track and Hogback zones of the Black Hills were the locations where the most abundant populations of game were found, especially during the winter season when Lakota and Cheyenne bands typically encamped at the base of the Hills or in the recesses of their lower elevation valleys. This was the area where some of the richest prehistoric sites are found that give evidence of the importance of the Hills in Native livelihoods (Sundstrom, L. 1990). Importantly, some of the land area that makes up Wind Cave National Park is situated in these zones.
A. Specific Hunting Locations in the Black Hills

In the nineteenth century, many Lakotas and Cheyennes frequented the rich grasslands near Alliance, Nebraska, where bison that wintered inside the Buffalo Gap were known to feed in the summer (Crow Dog in Kadlecek and Kadlecek 1981:96). These were the bison that Luther Standing Bear’s tiospaye followed when he was a child, and it was their pattern of migration that probably led his family to winter at the Buffalo Gap and to do so even after bison had been extirpated from the region (Standing Bear 1975:3, 17-23). The area behind the Buffalo Gap is known in Lakota as Tatanka makalhpaya [The Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull] (Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:95; Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:242). And this land, which includes Wind Cave National Park, is commonly referenced in stories about hunters and hunting during the winter months (Curtis 1907-1930:3: 111-118; Wounded Horse in Koller 1970:1-2; Red Cloud in Matson 1975:16-18; LaPointe 1976:80-84; Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:24-36, 95; Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:242; Swift Bird in Kadlecek and Kadlecek 1981:147-148; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:401-402).

Probably as late as the 1840s, large herds of bison, deer, elk, and pronghorn pressed through the Buffalo Gap to winter inside the Hogback at the foot of Wind Cave, and today, the depression encircling the Hills, known as the Race Track or Red Valley, is a location the National Park Service’s bison, elk, and pronghorn herds still frequent (Turner 1974:19-20). Other gateways to the Race Track, near Inyan Kara Mountain, Devil’s Tower, and Bear Butte, were also important entries and exits for game and the humans who hunted them, but the Buffalo Gap remains the most famous and the one most often associated with human-bison relationships (Barrett 1913:3-5; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:1, 7, 20, 33, 47-48, 58; Vestal 1934:5-6; Hyde 1937:152-153, 1961:106; Odell 1942:24-25; McKelvie 1960:92-93; Praus 1962:13; Grinnell 1972:1:277, 278; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:27; Standing Bear 1975:3, 17, 1988:43-45; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:4-5; Powell 1982:112; Walking Bull 1980:25; One Bull and White Bull in Stone 1982:23-25; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:155-156, 164, 371; Standing Bear in DeMallie 1984:158; Moore, J. 1987:165; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:107; White, D. 2002:23).

The Black Hills were also the area where local tribes traveled to hunt elk and bighorn, even from locations as far away as the Missouri and Platte rivers (Bordeaux 1929:191-192; Denig in Ewers 1961:5-6; Maxmilian in Thwaites 1966:2:346-347; Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:482; Bettelyoun and Wagonner 1988:21; White, D. 2002:23). Like other ruminant species, elk follow well established trails in their seasonal movements, and this makes them easy to hunt through driving techniques (Turner 1974:137). At one location, just west of the Black Hills, is a cliff over which the Arapahos were known to drive elk. It was also the Arapahos practice, and possibly the Cheyennes, to stack elk horns in ritually arranged ways (Grinnell 1972:1:277). One of these stacks was reported by several members of the Black Hills Expedition at Reynold’s Prairie, also known as Elkhorn Prairie, in 1874 (Grinnell 1875:78; Ludlow 1875:17; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:250). David White (2002:23), based on information gathered by Max Knowles in 1919, writes that elk migrating between the Black Hills and the Badlands were hunted in the vicinity of Rapid City. Bighorns were also taken in the Hills, especially around Bear Butte (Vestal 1934:161-162; Powell 1981:1:112; Grinnell 1972:1:277). Although there is no documentation of tribal elk or bighorn hunting at Wind Cave National Park, locations along its portion of the Race Track were probably ideal winter-feeding

3 The word, makalhpaya refers to a place where the earth has been compressed.
grounds for elk (Turner 1974:19-20). The park’s numerous rock shelters and caves may have also offered protection for bighorn, which typically seek out such places during winter storms, and these would have been good spots for local tribes to pursue them in the wintertime.

Deer were also hunted in the Black Hills. The upper reaches of the Cheyenne and White rivers were singled out as two of their favorite haunts in the nineteenth century (Tabeau in Abel 1939:76, 87; Hayden 1862b:149). When members of the 1874 Black Hills expedition encountered one Stab’s party in Floral Valley, deer were undoubtedly the game this Lakota group was pursuing (Ludlow 1875:16; Calhoun in Frost 1979:53-54, 59; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:173-174; Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:250; Forsyth in Krause and Olson 1974:255-256; McAndrews 1974:81). On the same expedition, George Bird Grinnell (1875:78) met a group of Lakota hunting whitetail deer at the head of Elk Creek, and he reported that they waited for deer near this place because it was a spot where these animals eat the ground --- in other words a salt lick. Black Elk remembered sighting deer near the Buffalo Gap in May of 1874 while hunting there with his father, and he noted other instances of deer hunts in the region when he was a child (DeMallie 1984:155-156, 335, 342, 357, 369). Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:47-48), a Cheyenne, recounted an incident where a man was bitten by a snake while hunting deer in the Black Hills. Finally, rock art evidence suggests that the Black Hills, especially the southern Hogback, was a popular site for hunting various cervid species in prehistoric times (Sundstrom, L. 1990).

Pronghorn, according to White Bull (Vestal 1934:161), were found in such abundance on the plains that a single herd might stretch more than thirty miles. Several sites for hunting this animal were located at the edges of the Black Hills. In 1851, Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:17, 18) remarked about Sicangu Lakotas hunting them on the upper reaches of the White River at a location directly east of the Buffalo Gap. In the same area, near Cache Butte, Samuel Hinman (1874:93) described the remains of antelope and deer at a large abandoned pit and corral. George Hyde (1961:19) also mentioned this area in his history of the Sicangu leader Spotted Tail. Northwest of the Black Hills at the headwaters of the Little Missouri River and on the outskirts of Belle Fourche, South Dakota, is another antelope hunting location commonly mentioned in the oral traditions of the Cheyennes (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:84-85; Grinnell 1972:1:277; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:12). In addition, several pronghorn kill sites have been reported in the archaeological literature on the Black Hills, including a number in Fall River County, South Dakota (Sundstrom, L. 2000:126-128).

The Hills were also associated with the hunting of carnivores, especially cougars and bears. Historically, both animals were listed among the animals typically found in the Black Hills (Denig in Ewers 1961:6). White Bull (in Vestal 1934:162) remembered mountain lions in the Black Hills as a child, and another Lakota was reported to have killed four of these animals in the area during the year 1845 (Swift Dog in Praus 1969:16). James Howard (1965a:41) reports that the Poncas recalled hunting bears in the Black Hills over the winter months. White Bull (in Howard, J. 1998:36) talked about hunting bears in the Hills during his early twenties, and Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:157) remembered people eating bear meat near Rapid Creek. Finally, according to Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:7), the Cheyennes hunted wolves in the Black Hills on horseback.

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4 Ernest Thompson Seton (1929:3:556) observed: The Sheep and the White Goat are the only horned ruminants herein treated, that habitually use caves for shelter. Elk, Antelope, and buffalo might seek the lee side of a cliff during a blizzard; but the Sheep have well-known selected caves in the rocks, into which they crowd in bad weather.
Of all the species of birds found in the region, eagles are the ones most consistently associated with the Black Hills in tribal cultural traditions. Indeed, the Hills were considered a prime location to trap eagles. The Mandans and Hidatsas considered the Hills one of their favorite locations for eagle trapping (Bowers 1963:209-210). John Stands in Timber (and Liberty 1967:51-52) and Father Peter Powell (1969:415, 427) reported that areas near Bear Butte were favored by the Cheyennes for this purpose. Iron Shell (in Hassrick 1964:171-172) mentions the Hills as a general location for Lakota eagle trapping but does not cite specific locations for the activity. However, the John Colhoff winter count (in Powers, W. 1963:29) mentions Bald Mountain as a site for this activity, and Samuel Hinman (1874:93) sighted pits for eagle trapping on his journey between the White River and the southeastern Hills.

Another bird with a connection to the Black Hills is the junco. It is a common and permanent resident of Wind Cave National Park, and one variety is known to breed in the Hills. In 1875, George Bird Grinnell (p. 84) described them as the most common bird in the more elevated portions of the Black Hills. The Lakotas took this bird as a source of food. It had important symbolic value as well, although none of the sources studied for this report give any direct evidence of the bird being hunted in the Black Hills.

For the most part, the Black Hills were linked with the taking of eagles and big game, although smaller avian and mammalian species were undoubtedly hunted here too. Other than fishing, which Luther Standing Bear (1988:65-66) and Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:156-157, 161) fondly recalled taking place in Black Hills streams during their childhood, we were unable to find any specific references to the procurement of these and other small species of animals in this area.

B. Transhumance Movements of Animals and Humans

There is a varied body of information, both historic and ethnographic, that gives evidence of tribal procurement activity in the Black Hills at different seasons and locations. Yet, until recent times, it was the conventional wisdom of many European American writers that the Cheyennes and Lakotas did not use the interiors of the Black Hills. This idea first appeared in Edwin Denig’s writings (in Ewers 1961:5-6), but it did not dominate European American observations until the years of military exploration in the 1870s, as revealed, for example, in the writings of Richard Dodge (1965, in Kime 1998). There is no question, as already discussed, that this idea was much influenced by the historical conditions under which these observations were made. But there is also another consideration, and that is, that most of these writers had little understanding of tribal patterns of transhumance movement, much less an appreciation of how local tribes adapted to and made use of the Hills different environmental zones in the course of their annual, seasonal production cycles.

It is true that the higher elevation locations of the Black Hills, including the crystalline core and limestone plateau, had the most restricted seasonal use. During the Middle Archaic period, these regions were inhabited on a year-round basis. By the historic era, however, they were utilized mostly in the late spring and early summer months on a regular and recurring basis. Small family and band groups customarily entered these regions to secure lodgepoles, to gather medicinal plants, and to perform ceremonial observances including eagle trapping (Hinman 1874:95; Jenny 1875:182; Newton and Jenny 1880:323; Bordeaux 1929:191-192; Bushnell 1922:70; Chittenden 1935:728; DeGirardin 1936:63; Denig in Ewers 1961:6; Hassrick 1964:155; Dodge 1965:137, Dodge in Kime 1998:105; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:270-271; Standing Bear 1975:6-17; Moore, J. 1981:14; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:156-157, 161, 173; Brown 1992:12; Good-
In this season, fishing commonly took place along some of the Hills' higher elevation waterways (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:156-157, 161; Standing Bear 1988:65-66). In the summer of 1846, according to Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:270-271), the Hills were thickly populated by people securing lodgepoles. By the 1870s, when military expeditions started to enter the Hills in the summer months, the number of tribal people sighted in the area was small. As already reported, members of the 1874 Black Hills Expedition encountered a small band in the Floral Valley led by the Lakota leader One Stab (Grinnell 1875:78; Ludlow 1875:17; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:250), and the following year, Dodge's party (in Kime 1998:79) came across the remains of a recent encampment near this location. At many of these camps, there was evidence of lodgepole processing and other procurement activity. Since skins were being dried and processed at One Stab's camp, we can also presume that animals were being taken at this time of the year, but this was not the prime season for hunting in the Hills (Hassrick 1964:154-155).

The period between late fall and early spring was the time of the year tribes typically hunted in the Black Hills. The higher elevation interior areas of the Black Hills were probably systematically hunted for bighorn, elk, bear, mountain lion, and other animals when their hides and furs were in prime condition. In 1875, Henry Newton and Walter Jenney (1875:302) reported that the interiors were traveled when snow covered the ground because stones placed in the forks of trees marked the main trails. In commenting on Cheyenne use of the interior Black Hills, Father Peter Powell (1981:2:932) reports that the Cheyennes did not typically camp in this region, although they frequently entered it to hunt. Much of this hunting, however, was conducted by hunters operating alone, with a companion, or in small parties (Howard, J. 1965:41). The hunting probably included the French trappers, who sometimes remained over the winter months in the interiors of mountainous areas, such as the Black Hills, with their American Indian wives, families, and companions (Parkman in Feltskog 1969:272).

It was the lower elevation areas of the Hills, between the edge of the limestone plateau and the Hogback perimeter, that were the most important locations for hunting game over the late fall and early winter months. This includes the region where Wind Cave National Park is now located. These were the places where some bands typically wintered and where hunters from near and far commonly came to procure deer and elk (Barrett 1913:3-5; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:1, 7, 20, 33, 47-48, 58; Vestal 1934:5-6; Hyde 1937:152-153, 1961:106; Odell 1942:24-25; McKelvie 1960:92-93; Praus 1962; Hassrick 1964:12-13, 164; Grinnell 1972:1:277, 278; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:27; Standing Bear 1975:3, 17, 1988:43-45; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:4-5; Powell 1982:112; One Bull and White Bull in Stone 1982:23-25; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:155-156, 164, 371; Standing Bear in DeMallie 1984:158; Moore, J. 1987:165; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:107). They were also the locations where herds of bison and pronghorn once sought shelter during wintertime, and again, it is not insignificant that most of the Lakota traditions about Wind Cave involve hunters and hunting. As described earlier in Chapter Seven, the bands with localized relations to the Black Hills would have drawn on this area's game resources from early November through March, a span of time covering much of their yearly subsistence cycle. But even small hunting parties from bands that wintered some distance from the Black Hills still traveled to the area and spent significant amounts of time there during some of their late fall and early winter hunts (Howard, J. 1965a:41; Maximilian in Thwaites 1966:2:346-347; Clark in Moulton 1983-87:3:482; Bettelyoun and Wagonner 1988:2).

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5 This is deduced from the fact that eagles were commonly trapped in the Black Hills (see earlier discussion) and the common seasons for carrying out this activity were spring and fall (Grinnell 1972:1:299-300).
The best time of the year to hunt bison and other game animals for meat is from August through December when their body mass contains a high proportion of fat (Binnema 2001:50-51). After January, the fat is rapidly depleted, and by early spring, the meat is unpalatable and even toxic because of the reduction in fat (Binnema 2001:51). Animals might have been around at this time of the year, but they were probably not taken for their meat. Early spring was the season when the Lakotas were reported to procure elk, deer, and pronghorn for their skins (Hassrick 1964:154-155). The Cheyenne told George Bird Grinnell (1972:1:226) that bison were taken at this time of the year for making tipis because their hides were easier to dress.

Surrounding the Hills, the upland prairies and sagebrush steppes, or the flats as they are called in the contemporary English vernacular of the Lakotas, held rich bison and antelope hunting ranges until the 1840s. These were also the locations where tribes moved to hold their annual or semiannual communal hunts, but they were rarely occupied for more than a few months in the late summer and early fall (Hassrick 1964:156). The river valleys of the Cheyenne and the neighboring White River were utilized on a more sustained basis, however. These were popular spots for the winter encampments of some bands, and the locations where the Cheyennes and possibly the Lakotas practiced casual forms of horticulture. They were areas where hunters pursued deer, especially the whitetails, which were known to frequent their wooded valleys, and they were also the places where tribes built corrals and pits to drive pronghorn in historic times (Hinman 1874:93; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88; Ewers 1938:4; Denig in Ewers 1961:17, 18; Hyde 1961:19; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:84-85; Grinnell 1972:1:277; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:12; Sundstrom. L. 2000:126-128).

Once again, it is important to stress the fact that historic tribal economic adaptations were associated with nomadism and the ability to quickly and constantly relocate settlements according to the migrations of local game (see Chapter Seven). Tribal movements were closely attuned to the seasonal routes the game followed, and many of these involved transhumance migratory patterns. But they were also influenced by broader and more long-lasting shifts in game locations. Over long spans of time, the ranges covered by bison in the plains underwent dramatic expansions and contractions due to long-term climatic changes and also the effects of contagious disease on their human predators (Geist 1996:38-41; Isenberg 2000:27). There is good evidence that epidemic diseases swept the plains and reduced local tribal populations well before European Americans actually arrived in the area (Geist 1996:38-41). In the short-term, local bison populations fluctuated in their appearance (Epp 1988). Sometimes the animals failed to return to their customary wintering grounds during unusually mild winters. In 1832 and 1833, many of the Lakotas encamped along the valley of the Missouri River faced hunger and starvation when bison failed to return and remained on the high plains (Clow 1995). Periodic and localized shortages of bison were also reported along the Platte River in the 1840s during drought years. Tribal populations needed to be prepared for these eventualities, and Andrew Isenberg (2000:39) argues that one way they did so was by following flexible land use patterns and multiple game strategies that provided safety nets in the face of the bison’s unpredictable movements. Reliance on a wide spectrum of game and other food sources made tribes, as he put it, less vulnerable to fluctuations in environment and food resources (Isenberg 2000:39). One of the reasons why the Black Hills and the area of Wind Cave National Park were so highly valued is that they provided local tribes with a broad spectrum of game and plant food. They were, indeed, an emergency reserve or safe as Spotted Bear (in Allison 1875:188) once put it, a place groups could always rely on and periodically return to when other areas failed to provide sufficient supplies of food (cf. Circle Bear 1971:13).

Food was not the only consideration in determining tribal movements. As suggested by some of the evidence presented in previous chapters, the accessibility of good pasturage for a tribe’s
growing herds of horses was also a factor. In addition, the locations of traders influenced patterns of movement. In the early part of the nineteenth century, tribes living in the area of the Black Hills regularly traveled to the Missouri River to trade, and after 1830, many started to trade at posts along the Platte River. These trips usually took place in the fall after the communal bison hunts, when tribes had bison robes and dried berries to trade, but they also appear to have taken place in spring and early summer, a time when horses were often bartered. Whatever the case, the Cheyennes and the Lakotas covered large stretches of territory in their annual travels. In doing so, they drew on different kinds of economic partnerships, including intertribal ones, and they relied on multiple kinds of environments in which the Black Hills played an important role in their lives. While most of the bands never lived inside the Hogback year-round, many certainly spent enough time in this area over certain seasons, notably late fall to early spring, to classify this as their home and homeland.

As documented in earlier chapters, some of the groups who customarily wintered at or near the Black Hills and/or who used them in the spring for subsistence and ceremonial purposes moved away from the area to find locations where productive bison hunting ranges still remained and/or where there was adequate pasturage for their expanding horse herds. Nonetheless, they still returned to the Hills for specialized kinds of procurement and/or to conduct religious observances (Moore, J. 1981:14). Even after the Black Hills were taken in 1877, there is evidence that Lakotas continued to procure small game (e.g., grouse) in some parts of the Hills during the fall through the early decades of the twentieth century (Jones 1904:125-128; U.S. Senate 1904; Stewart 1967-1970:71; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:24, 33, 47, 72, 176, 213, 262, 264; Clark, B. 1983:68-69). In later years, there is little information on the utilization of the Hills for this purpose, although there is considerable evidence that the Lakotas and the Cheyennes continued to return to the Hills in the late spring and summer to cut their lodgepoles, to gather plants for food and medicine, and to collect stones for healing and religious observance (see Chapter Eleven).

IV. METHODS OF TAKING ANIMALS

The Cheyennes and Lakotas followed a wide range of techniques for taking animals, and it is best to describe these according to the kinds of animals they pursued, beginning with the most important ones, the ungulates, followed by carnivores, small herbivores, birds, reptiles/amphibians, and then, fish/mollusks.

A. Ungulates

Of the ungulates, bison were of paramount significance in the livelihoods of local tribes. This animal provided materials for many functions and served as a primary, but probably never an exclusive, source of meat (Wedel and Frison 2001:56). Other large ruminants, bighorn, pronghorn, deer, and elk, occupied a substantial place in tribal diets as well. Indeed, some scholars (Ewers 1938:17; Hassrick 1964:164; Grinnell 1972:1:276) argue that these species were probably as important as bison during the winter and early spring, and this would have been especially true after 1840 when bison ranges became contracted and restricted to areas away from the Hills.

When deer and elk were the principal source of game in late fall and early winter, solitary hunters or small groups used stalking or snaring techniques to capture them (Vestal 1934:160-161; Hassrick 1964:167; Grinnell 1972:1:272, 277; Standing Bear 1988:55-56). Bison and pronghorn were pursued more opportunistically as well at this time of the year. Lone hunters were reported to hunt them on foot, but the animals were difficult to take this way (White Bull in Vestal
1934:161; Grinnell 1972:1:262; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:155-156). The small hunting parties that prevailed in the late fall and winter seasons were known in Lakota as the *tate* (Hassrick 1964:166), the same name used for one of the spiritual patrons of the hunt, the Wind. Importantly, the season of elk and deer hunting was the time of the year when Lakotas and Cheyennes were geographically dispersed at camping sites in and around the Black Hills and other mountainous locations or wooded river valleys (Hassrick 1964:166; Grinnell 1972:1:262).

Deer, elk, and other game were also taken during the wintertime using communal hunting methods. Throughout the Plains region, Native peoples drove game over cliffs and banks or into snowdrifts, natural enclosures, and specially constructed corrals or pounds to kill them. Most of the hunts that relied on these methods appear to have taken place on the grasslands and in the river valleys surrounding the Hills, but there is evidence that some of the Black Hills narrow canyon gateways were a location for this kind of hunting prehistorically, and so were sites inside the Hogback, including the Sanson bison jump (CU02) on lands adjoining Wind Cave National Park and possibly inside park properties near the modern day bison corrals (Sundstrom, L. 2000:127-128). As described in various accounts (Hayden 1862b:150; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88; Ewers 1938:42-43; Hassrick 1964:167, 176, 177-178; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:85; Grinnell 1972:1:264-265, 268, 277-290; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:27; Schlesier 1987:52-61; Sundstrom, L. 2000:119-121), pens or corrals for impounding game were typically constructed under a bluff or cutbank with at least one wall serving as a side for the enclosure. The opposite side was constructed of brush and sticks. The two sides were fashioned into a v-shaped chute formation, with the opening of the enclosure facing the prairie. The animals were both enticed and driven into this space with the participation of all members of the camp, men, women, children, and the elderly. Once the herd was in the enclosure, they were killed with lances or arrows.

Another technique involved driving animals over cliffs or steep embankments. Here animals were driven between parallel lanes constructed of stones and brush and forced to plunge over the precipices to which they were directed. Although this method has been mentioned in the writings on Lakotas and Cheyennes (Ewers 1938:42-45; Grinnell 1972:1:267-268), there are no detailed descriptions of it in the literature. William Bordeaux (1929:122), however, describes a practice where bison were driven into bogs and marshes. The absence of detailed descriptions of this hunting method might suggest that it was used less frequently than among tribes living on the high plains of Montana. Another very common method, reported in historic sources on the Lakotas and Cheyennes, was to drive bison into snowdrifts (Bordeaux 1929:122; Ewers 1938:42; Grinnell 1972:1:268; Hassrick 1964:177-178; Clow 1995). This was accomplished on foot, usually with the use of snowshoes. In fact, during the winter season when the ground is covered with deep snow, horses are not very helpful in the pursuit of game (Binnema 2001:49).

Prior to the widespread adoption of horses, bison were typically hunted using various driving techniques during late fall and early winter. The early months of winter were the best time of the year to take bison because their robes were thick and the nutritional value of their meat was high (Binnema 2001:50-51). Unlike the far northern plains, where there are rich eyewitness accounts of communal winter hunts, using pedestrian driving and impounding techniques (Binnema 2001:35, 37-54), little has been written about these methods of hunting in the Black Hills area. We can presume, however, that when bison were still prevalent in and around the Hills, prior to 1840, they were pursued in this way during the wintertime. Indeed, much of the area inside the Hogback and in the vicinity of the Buffalo Gap would have been well suited to this type of hunting. Severt Young Bear (in Parlow 1983a:26-27), however, reports that there were strictures against hunting bison in the Black Hills during the winter months. This may very well have been the case in late historic times when bison were taken mostly through equestrian methods rather than on foot, and
it may very well have applied to interior locations inside the circular depression of the Race Track.

With the arrival of horses, the communal hunting of bison typically took place on the grasslands where the herds gathered in the late summer and early fall. After 1840, these areas were generally situated at some distance from the Black Hills, although Warren (1875:15-16) observed one of these hunts near Inyan Kara Mountain in 1857. Here bison were surrounded, or as some observers claim herded (Seton 1929:2:688) and hunted on horseback using lances, bows and arrows, and rifles as weapons. Large groups of hunters were assembled for the communal hunts, and they often traveled long-distances, five to seven days march, with their families and bands to reach the location of a large herd. According to Henry Crow Dog (in Kadleccek and Kadleccek 1981:96), the herds that wintered at the Buffalo Gap migrated to the grasslands around Alliance, Nebraska in the summer, a distance of more than one hundred miles, or five days travel, for the Lakota bands who wintered in the vicinity of the Buffalo Gap. Before the 1840s, the grasslands east of the Cheyenne River in South Dakota and south of the White River in Nebraska, were the locations where Lakotas and Cheyennes who wintered in and around the southern Hills probably traveled to hunt bison in the late summer and early fall. In later years, when bison began to disappear from these regions, local tribes had to travel farther for their summer hunts to destinations south of the Platte River or northwest of the Hills in the country of the Powder and Tongue rivers. Over time, and as the distances to these hunting grounds became greater, many bands began to relocate their winter camps at sites in closer proximity to the bison. As a result, fewer people probably used the southern Hills and the area around the Buffalo Gap after 1850. As discussed in Chapter Seven, the bands that remained in the Black Hills were the ones who followed more variegated subsistence strategies, which included, besides bison, a heavy reliance on elk, deer, and pronghorn.

During the season of the communal bison surrounds, the hunters and their camps operated under strict marshal law. This law was in effect during the trip to the bison range, after they arrived at their destination and began preparations for the hunt, and during the actual chase. Detailed descriptions of these hunts among the Lakotas and Cheyennes are found in many different sources (Warren 1875:15-16; Densmore 1918:436-447; Curtis 1907-30:3:8-10; Bordeaux 1929:122, 124; Ewers 1938:42-44; Hoebel 1960:53; Hassrick 1964:174-178; Grinnell 1972:1:262-263; Standing Bear, L. 1975:49-53, 58-66; Walker 1982:74-94; Black Elk in DeMallie1984:147-148; Standing Bear in DeMallie 1984:147-148), and these are summarized in Appendix A. Over time, the surround hunts in the late summer supplanted the communal pursuit of bison in the wintertime. Among the Cheyennes, however, if a lone hunter or small party came upon a large herd of bison during the winter months, they could not chase them on their own. Instead, they had to make the herd's presence known to the entire camp, so the leaders and their marshals could organize a communal hunt, which usually involved drives and corrals (Grinnell 1972:1:262).

The older and more traditional methods of taking game by driving and impounding were highly ritualized, and according to Karl Schlesier (1987:53), the Cheyennes considered these to be the proper and most respectful way to kill game. When Cheyennes drove bison into pounds, they often left stacked piles of bison horn in a manner similar to the Araphoe practice of piling up elk horns. These stacks appear to be connected to a widespread pattern of propitiating the spirits of slain animals common among many of the tribal nations who spoke an Algonkian language. This custom has not been described for the Lakotas. Grinnell reported that numerous piles of bison horns were seen at locations west of the Hills when he traveled there with the Black Hills Expedition in 1874 (Grinnell 1972:1:268). He also reported the ritualized display of skulls, a practice of both tribes (Grinnell 1875).
The Cheyennes and the Lakotas relied on spiritually gifted people to attract game, to sanctify their communal hunts, and to offer gratitude to the spirits of the animal at its conclusion. This applied to hunts that followed surround as well as impounding procedures (Densmore 1918:436-447; Howard, J. 1980:50-51; Walker 1982:90-91; Schlesier 1987:53). Unlike bison, pronghorns continued to be commonly taken using some of the older and more traditional methods of impounding (Hayden 1862b:150; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88; Hassrick 1964:167, 176, 177-178; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:85; Grinnell 1972:1:277-290; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:27; Schlesier 1987:52-61; Sundstrom. L. 2000:119-121). Mule deer were also sometimes captured in this manner, and the famous pound at Cache Butte, just east of the Buffalo Gap, contained the remains of deer as well as pronghorn (Hinman 1874:93).

**B. Carnivores**

As in European American taxonomic systems, the Lakotas and Cheyennes separated the carnivores from other species of mammals. Most of the larger carnivorous species these tribes hunted, including wolves, coyotes, cats, and bears, were not taken as food except under emergency conditions or for ceremonial purposes, although some of the smaller species, particularly badgers and skunks, were widely eaten. Generally speaking, carnivores were hunted mostly for their skins and rarely for their meat. Some of them, such as coyotes and wolves, were also kept as pets (Hassrick 1964:172; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:318). Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:318) recalled a Lakota named Moves Walking, who trained the wolf pups he reared to become pack dogs. Before and even after the arrival horses, dogs were vital to the Lakotas and Cheyennes as beasts of burden, a means of protection, and also for hunting smaller mammals (Hassrick 1964:156-159; Grinnell 1972:1:55-56).

Most carnivorous species were taken by trapping them in deadfalls whose structure and size varied according to the animal. Coyotes and small wolves were caught in this way, and among the Lakotas, young boys sometimes did the trapping (Vestal 1934:7). Larger wolves were trapped by the Cheyennes in deep holes, baited with meat and covered with leaves and twigs (Grinnell 1972:1:297-299). They were also hunted them on horseback (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:7). Bears were taken by both tribes (Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Grinnell 1972:1:290), and among the Lakotas, they were typically captured in deadfalls (Hassrick 1964:167). The Lakotas and Cheyennes used pens and a variety of other trapping devices to catch foxes (Vestal 1934:7; Hoebel 1960:64; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:167, 168; Grinnell 1972:2:298-299). Badgers were also captured in pens, or they were taken by jumping on the animal’s back and crushing its backbone (Hassrick 1964:169, 172). Mountain lions, lynxes, and bobcats were pursued as well, but none of the sources we reviewed describe how they were taken (Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Praus 1962:16; Hassrick 1964:1 68; Grinnell 1972:1:256; Walker 1980:169). The same is true for skunks (Beckwith, M. 1930:380-381, 420; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:168).

**C. Small Herbivores**

Many of the smaller herbivorous mammals were a common source of food pursued mostly by women and young boys. In fact, Standing Bear (1988:13-15) writes, it was not only a common practice for boys to pursue rabbits, prairie dogs, and other small game, but also a fundamental part of their educational training to become adult hunters. Lakotas and Cheyennes captured all species of rabbits (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90; Denig in Ewers 1961:13). The typical mode of taking a rabbit was to surround the animal and kill it with clubs (Hassrick 1964:168; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:158-159; Standing Bear 1988:13-15). Squirrels were also important in the
hunting forays of young Lakota boys, who killed them with bows and arrows (Black Elk in De Mallie 1984:158-159; Standing Bear 1988:15). Lakota boys shot prairie dogs with arrows as well (Hassrick 1964:168), although White Bull told Stanley Vestal (1934:7) that he usually snared these animals with a noose. Cheyenne women hunted prairie dogs by surrounding and clubbing them (Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9).

Most of the smaller herbivores were hunted opportunistically, although adult men pursued some of them systematically. Beaver, for example, were one of the smaller mammals commonly trapped by men (Standing Bear 1978:34). The Cheyennes used dogs to drive them out of their dams, after which they shot or clubbed them (Grinnell 1972:1:296). The Lakotas smoked the animals from their holes and then clubbed them to death (Hassrick 1964:168). Porcupines were also widely hunted by both tribes (Lyford 1940:42; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Grinnell 1972:1:204-205). John Ewers (1938:59) maintained that capturing porcupines was men’s work. Later ethnographic descriptions, however, reveal that both men and women took porcupines by twisting and tangling their fur with sticks and killing them with clubs after they were dragged from their dens (Hassrick 1964:168). Men, however, appear to have been the only ones who pursued them with bows and arrows (Ewers 1938:59; Lyford 1940:42).

The smallest species of mammals, including mice, voles, shrews, and gophers, were not usually taken by the Lakotas and Cheyennes for food, although some of them were captured and used for manufacturing purposes. One species, the pocket gopher, was widely avoided because it was believed to cause scrofulous swellings.

D. Birds and Insects

Traditionally at least, the animals associated with the sky, which also includes bats, were viewed as a source of protection rather than an object of consumption. Nevertheless, a few species of birds were hunted and trapped for food (Hassrick 1964:168), but a greater number were captured for their feathers, which played significant symbolic and ceremonial roles in Lakota and Cheyenne cultures. Some culturally significant insects were taken for healing and ceremonial use as well, and during times of starvation, the Lakotas were reported to have eaten grasshoppers (Kelly 1933:123-124).

Birds were commonly clubbed, snared, and trapped but rarely shot (Bordeaux 1929:200; Hassrick 1964:169, 170-171; Grinnell 1972:1:247-248, 299-307). Lakota hunters captured crows by hiding under pine boughs to which small pieces of fat were affixed, and they trapped magpies for food in the same way (Hassrick 1964:172). Young boys often took small land and game birds in mimicking adult hunting (Vestal 1934:7; Hassrick 1964:168; Grinnell 1972:1:114-115). According to Royal B. Hassrick (1964:278), the taking of birds by boys not only supplied added food, even delicacies, to the diet, but it also gave a child a feeling of good service to his family. Luther Standing Bear (1975:10-11) details the important role that bird hunting played in the lives of young boys when he was a child. The Lakotas and Cheyennes also kept certain species of birds, notably crows and hawks, as pets (Hassrick 1964:172; Grinnell 1972:2:108).

Eagle trapping was considered a sacred endeavor and conducted with careful ritual preparation. Among the Cheyennes, as described by George Bird Grinnell (1972:1:299-302), only older men with experience as warriors were allowed to catch eagles. After weeks of ritual preparation, the trapper dug a pit large enough to sit down in, covered it with sticks and grass, and baited it with wolf skin and a bit of meat. During the night just before sunrise, the trapper entered the pit and waited until the eagle arrived, at which point he grabbed its feet and strangled the bird.
Similar ritual preparations surrounded eagle trapping among the Lakotas as described by Iron Shell (in Hassrick 1964:171-172), William Bordeaux (1929:199-200), and Luther Standing Bear (1988:79-84). Eagles were usually caught in the spring at the time of their arrival in tribal territories and in the fall before their departure to warmer climates (Grinnell 1972:1:300). Plains Apaches considered the spring the best time to trap eagles because their feathers were less likely to be blemished (Blackbear in Schweinfurth 2002:68).

E. Amphibians and Reptiles

Most amphibians and reptiles were not procured for any practical purpose. Instead, they were valued as a source of protection, and when taken, they were used in healing and religious observances. The only animal that was routinely captured for food was the turtle. Adults and children of both tribes caught turtles by waiting for them to surface and then diving into the water to catch them with their hands, or else, they watched for them to sun themselves in the early morning on the shores of lakes and rivers (Bordeaux 1929:200; Hassrick 1964:173; Grinnell 1972:1:07; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Standing Bear 1988:63-65).

F. Fish, Mollusks, and Crustaceans

The northern plains region is not typically associated with fish, and at least historically, some observers claim that certain tribes were loathe to eat them. Although fishing was not a major subsistence pursuit for the Cheyennes and Lakotas, it was a routine activity that supplemented and added variety to local diets (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:89; Hoebel 1960:64; Hassrick 1964:173; Grinnell 1972:1:114; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9). It was also another common occupation for young boys (Grinnell 1972:1:114; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:156-157, 161; Standing Bear 1988:65-66). The Lakotas and Cheyennes fished for suckers, dace, and catfish, and they used a variety of different techniques to do so. Some of the more popular methods entailed seining fish (Hassrick 1964:173; Grinnell 1972:1:48, 308) and catching them with bone hooks, some of which were made from the ribs of mice. The hooks were attached to a long line made of bison sinew or horsehair (Bordeaux 1929:130; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:89; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Standing Bear 1988:66-67). The Cheyennes and Arikaras also caught fish in pens made of willow saplings, which were built under the supervision of a medicine man. Such traps were commonly used to capture suckers (Curtis 1907-30:6:156; Gilmore 1924; Grinnell 1972:1:311). The Lakotas speared fish and often used spiritually talented people to call them to the sites where they were taken (Hassrick 1964:173; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:156-157, 161). Both tribes also collected mollusks and crustaceans, but there are no reports of how this was done (Bordeaux 1929:334).

V. ANIMAL HUMAN-RELATIONSHIPS

The relationship of local tribal nations to the animals of the Black Hills was a source of their sustenance, tools, and shelter, but more critically, it was a foundation of their spiritual strength and protection. Importantly, Lakota and Cheyenne understandings of the animals, and by extension, their relationship to the Black Hills, was not merely about their access to animals in a pragmatic sense; it was also about their relationships to the spirits of these animals whose places of origin and regeneration were located in the Hills. Historically, the Black Hills were understood as the place where the very nature of tribal relationships to the animals was defined and codified. Even today, the Black Hills remain a very special area to the Lakotas and Cheyennes because they speak to and engage broader cosmological questions that stand at the very heart of the way
these tribal nations see their place in the universe. As such, it becomes especially critical to gain a more particular appreciation of how the Lakotas and their closely related allies, the Cheyennes, saw themselves in relationship to the various animal species which historically inhabited their worlds and the Black Hills in particular.

A. Conceptualization and Classification

In Cheyenne and Lakota worldviews, animals are categorized not so much by their anatomical properties and phylogenetic relationships as they are by their behaviors and spiritual potentialities. Consistent with their larger cosmological precepts, the Cheyennes tend to distinguish animals, plants, and other living things according to the particular strata they occupy in the universe from the highest Blue Sky position, Otatavoom, to the lowest depths of the earth, Nsthoaman (Schlesier 1987:4-6). By contrast, the Lakotas tend to organize much of their phenomenal world along directional lines (Powers, W. 1977:75-77, 191-193, 198-199, 1982:54, 1986:81-82, 138-140). The Lakotas have vertical divisions too, just as the Cheyennes have horizontal orderings. While the differences between the two tribes are clearly ones of emphasis, they are substantial enough to create very different sensibilities about the relationship of humans to their landscapes and the animals, plants, and other living beings that reside there.

The Cheyennes believe that all life forms are associated with seven different levels of the universe (Schlesier 1987:8-9; Moore, J. 1986:179-180; 1996a:203-206, 211). The highest point at the zenith, Otatavoom, the Blue-Sky, is occupied by the male spiritual presence, Ma heo, the Sun, Moon, and the Stars as well as the sacred or holy birds, vultures, magpies, woodpeckers, eagles, and butterflies. At the nadir or the deep earth, Nsthoaman, is the place of the female spiritual presence, Esceheman, and the sacred caves of the Maiyan, the spiritual guardians that steward and protect game animals. Below the blue sky are two spaces: the Setovoom is the tier occupied by clouds, mountain peaks, and great birds, the hawks and crows, and the Taxtavoom is the region of the atmosphere just above the earth, the source of air and wind, which is occupied by small, ordinary birds and most flying insects. The surface of the earth, the Votostoom, includes the land on which most animals and humans reside and the waters in which fish and various aquatic species dwell. The Votostoom and Taxtavoom are the tiers that ordinary creatures, who lack special powers, inhabit. The Atonoom, the area just below the earth’s surface, is occupied by the animals who burrow in the ground and the bison, bears, badgers, and wolves who live in earth depressions, caves, and dens (Schlesier 1987:8-9; Moore, J. 1986:179-180; 1996a:203-206, 211).

According to John Moore (1986:184), the Cheyennes’ concept of species implies symbolic or religious rather than reproductive significance. So when the appearance of an individual animal changes, its symbolic importance changes, and therefore its species also changes. The Cheyennes divide avian species, for example, into three families (which also includes many insects) identified as the holy [Ma heonevekseo], the great [Maxevekseo], and the ordinary [xamaevekseo]. These three groups are considered to live in different tiers of the cosmos, the Blue Sky-Space [Otovoom], the Near Sky-Space [Setovoom], and the Atmosphere [Taxtavoom]. Each of these families of birds has a different function in Cheyenne religious observances. Holy birds are the ones used by the priests who conduct major ceremonies such as the Sun Dance and the renewal of the Sacred Arrows (Moore, J. 1986:178-179, 1996a:210-211). Under the category of holy birds is a special class called whirlwinds, which is made up of two insects, butterflies and dragonflies, two birds, eagles and vultures, and a meteorological event, the tornado. All five share the funnel-shaped configuration, which John Moore (1986:182) states is a very significant feature in Cheyenne religious symbolism. The four kinds of whirlwinds form a complete cosmological set: white and green represent the north and south axis, while red or yellow and black
symbolize the east and west. Great birds are used by people Moore (Ibid:178-179) calls war doctors, but they are also associated with healing and other kinds of religious practice. Ordinary birds, which are used by healers in treating various diseases and injuries, represent the largest class of birds. According to Moore (Ibid:181), the ordinary birds are divided, in turn, into three groups: the small birds, ground birds, and water birds. Most of the birds emphasized in the Cheyenne's taxonomic system represent species the Cheyennes observed when they still lived in the vicinity of the Black Hills.

Animals [manston] are divided into four groups (Moore 1996:210-211), distinguished by size, habitat, and forms of locomotion. Besides the birds [zeesessomo-tomevo], there are the land animals [zeesohoeva], which include the predators [emhoneyeo], the game animals [mevavon], and small animals [veshovan]. Another group is made up of the crawling creatures [zeamevonseo], the snakes, reptiles, and amphibians, and the final consists of the water creatures [zeevasomapeva], the fish, mollusks, and crustaceans. Among the land animals, the most significant in religious terms are those who dwell in caves or dens. This includes the buffalo, the canines, the bears, and the badgers. The other species that inhabit the earth's surface, elk, deer, pronghorn, rabbits, mice, turtles, and fish have important spiritual and symbolic associations, but none have the powers of the animals that dwell below the surface of the earth (Moore, J. 1974a:239-240). The Maiyun spirits, who guard and steward the animals, usually appear in the guise of animals associated with the subterranean world, especially wolves and bison (Schlesier 1987:8-9, 53-54, 76-80, 90-92, 98).

Like the Cheyennes, the Lakotas divided animals in several ways according to their actions, habitats, and/or forms of locomotion. Several different systems of categorization are found in James Walker's interpretation of the Lakota genesis story (1983). One of these is revealed in the story about how Gnaski [Crazy Buffalo] attempts to foment hostility among the animals by getting each of the animal communities or nations to choose chiefs. There are the diggers, which include the wolf, prairie dog, badger, and gopher; the builders, which consist of the raccoon, beaver, squirrel, and mouse; the hoofs, made up of elk, deer, antelope, and bighorn; and finally the claws, which contain the cats (Walker 1983:269-271). In another story Gnaski and Inktomi (Spider) trick the animals into gathering for a feast (Walker 1983:358-362). Here the animals are grouped into birds, reptiles/amphibians (turtles, frogs, lizards, snakes), small fur-bearing mammals (otters, beavers, muskrats, weasels), small mammals who burrow in the ground (badgers, gophers, prairie dogs, rabbits), predators (wolf, coyote, fox, cats, skunks, raccoons), and big game (antelopes, deer, elk, bighorns). Significantly, two mammals, bison and bear, are not included in their expected categories. This is due no doubt to their status as members of the Tobtob, the Lakota pantheon of sacred beings (see Chapter Nine). There are other and more conventional classificatory systems. William Powers (1986:162) describes one of these, which includes four classes: (1) wakinyan, things that fly, (2) washloan, things that crawl, (3) wahutopa, things that walk on four legs, and (4) wahununpa, things that walk on two legs. Father Eugene Buechel (1970:663, 699, 701, 718) orders living creatures into a different set of classes, which include: (1) wakinyanpi winged creatures, (2) hogan marine life, which includes fish, frogs, and turtles, (3) wabluska denotes bugs, most probably land-based insects; and (4) wamakaskan applies to mammals in general and also reptiles.

The Lakotas did not see animals, in either their spiritual or materialized form, as under the stewardship of master animals or guardians in the same way the Cheyennes did. There were particular animals, however, that were considered chiefs or leaders of other species because they had significant spiritual and symbolic powers, and these were usually white or albino in their coloration (Howard, J. 1979:3; Flying By in Parlow 1983a: 37-38). Tatanka [Bison bull] and Hununp [Grizzly], members of the Tobtob, were the leaders of animals associated respectively
with provisioning and healing. Another animal, *Wanbli* [Eagle], also occupied a chiefly position in relation to war and the creatures that fly, but it was not considered a member of the *Tobtob*. It often stood in an interchangeable relationship with bison, however, as in the symbolic equation of an eagle feather with the bison and the breath of life (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:240-241; Brown 1992:43). Finally, *Inktomi* [Spider] did not hold a chiefly position in relation to other animals and stood outside all systems of classification -- not only because he embodied features that linked him to all classes of animals but because he transversed different tiers of the Lakota cosmos (Brown 1992:47; Powers, W. 1986:155-156).

More significant in Lakota schemes for organizing animals, especially those used in religious contexts, was the figure *Tate*, the Wind, and his five sons, four of whom represent each of the four cardinal directions, and the fifth, *Yamni*, who signifies the Whirlwind. In the Lakota language, the name *Tate* is closely related, if not synonymous etymologically, to the verb *tate*, meaning to hunt or to chase. The word *ta*, according to Father Eugene Buechel (1970:472), is a generic reference to ruminating animals since it is prefixed to the word for fresh meat, *talo*, and three game species of special importance to the Lakotas, *tatanka*, the buffalo, *tatoka*, the pronghorn, and *tahca*, the deer.6 Two of *Tate’s* sons, the North Wind and the West Wind, are linked to *Taku Skanskan*, the spirit that presides over movement, hunts, and war (Walker 1917:84, 1980:272).

In Lakota cosmology, the Four Winds and their youngest brother, the Whirlwind, were begotten through the union of *Tate* and *ite*, a member of the *Pte Oyate* [Buffalo Nation], who resided in the subterranean world. As such, the Four Winds play an important mediating role in Lakota cosmology, connecting the celestial and subterranean spaces of the universe. Most of the major species of animals in the Lakota universe are ordered according to their partnership with one of the Four Winds and are variously described as their *akicita*, soldiers, helpers, or servants. In contrast to the Cheyennes, the Lakotas’ cosmological ordering stresses the directionality of the cosmos over its stratified layers. Animals are linked with the underworld, the earth’s surface, and the sky too. And even though they are identified with different stratified levels of the cosmos, they are united because of their specific ties to the Four Winds. Several different families and species of birds and insects are linked together, for example, in one taxonomic class associated with the West Wind and the Thunders. Thus, blacktail deer, horses, lizards, dragonflies, and swallows, which represent sky and earth spaces, share an essential affinity to each other as the assistants of the West Wind. Speaking of this, Black Elk told John Neihardt (1961:133-134) about the species linked to the West Wind and how these were different from those connected to the North Wind:

The eagle, hawk, swallow, dragon-fly, all possess great speed in flight and ability to strike swiftly and surely; and they seem to bear a sort of charmed life before bullets, arrows, hail and lightning, for one does not find them killed or injured by these forces, while buffalo, wolves, and magpies are united through their allegiance to the North Wind.

Besides the animals Black Elk spoke about, coyotes, juncos, and geese are also tied to the North Wind. Whitetail deer and owls are generally identified with the East Wind, while cranes and meadowlarks are the common associates of the South Wind (Powers, W. 1977:75-77, 191-193, 198-199, 1982:54, 1986:81-82, 138-140; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163). The association of major species of birds and land animals with the Four Winds appears repeatedly in Lakota

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6 This is an old connection in the Siouan language family. The Omahas and Poncas also prefix *ta* to major ungulate species as in *tachu ge* [antelope] or *ta xti* [deer], and they call dried meat *ta* (Fletcher and La Flesche 1972:1:279); in Lakota it’s *talo*. The Omaha/Ponca name for the wind is *tad* (Ibid:110).
sacred stories and liturgical texts. Some animals, however, like the elk, are multidirectional and identified with several different Winds. Although the Lakotas have other taxonomic schemes for ordering animals, the one with the greatest metaphysical importance appears to be the one connected with Tate and his sons.

Earlier in cosmological time, when the animals were actually created, they were made to serve as associates of other and greater spiritual presences in the universe. The fish, reptiles, and amphibians become part of Unk’s domain, the flying birds with claws were the subjects of Wakinyan, and the water birds and land birds belonged to Wohpe. The land animals who became part of Maka’s domain including the ones with horns and hoofs made by Wi and his associate, Hanwi; those with claws and pointed teeth were created by Inyan and Wakinyan; and finally, the mammals with claws and blunt teeth were shaped by Maka and Wohpe (Walker 1983:235-241).

**B. Animal Partnerships**

The Lakotas and the Cheyennes believe that humans and animals can communicate with each other, entering into mutually beneficial partnerships. Among the Cheyennes, the hematasooma [soul] of an animal and a human may form a relationship with each other. In dreams and visions, animal hematasooma reveal themselves to humans and give them knowledge of healing, protection for warfare, or talents in hunting. People who are spiritually partnered with specific animals are able to draw on their relationships to further various human needs and desires. People with spiritual antelope partners, for example, are able to call the animals of this species when hunting them. These special talents or abilities, however, entail obligations to propitiate their spiritual animal partners in reverent ways (Schlesier 1987:10-11). According to Schlesier (1987:12),

Animals were celebrated as beautiful, mysterious, powerful, dangerous, and benevolent. In Cheyenne memories, animals talked with humans, took pity on them, protected and taught them, gave to them special power and knowledge, healed them from wounds and sicknesses, kept them alive with self-sacrifice, and finally, became human themselves to help them in great need.

In this kind of perspective, humans do not live simply by their own ingenuity, but by the grace of the animals that lend their spiritual assistance and their own materialized lives for the benefit of humankind.

Like the Cheyennes, the Lakotas believed that the well-being of humans is dependent on their knowledge of and spiritual partnerships with the animals. As Royal B. Hassrick (1964:170) put it:

Skill, knowledge, and diligence were not regarded as sufficient attributes in themselves to guarantee success in hunting. There must be an understanding of the animals, and a recognition of their spiritual qualities as well. The nations of animals, in permitting their members to be taken by the Sioux, demanded respect and specific propitiation in return...

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7 As mentioned in Chapter Nine, there is considerable variation among Lakota religionists in how they match particular animals with each of the Winds. Some animals, however, are consistently tied to a specific wind, for example, bison are invariably linked to the North Wind and swallows with the West Wind. Elk, by contrast, have more flexible assignments. This species is sometimes linked to the East Wind (Densmore 1918:178; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163), but in other cases, it appears as an associate of the North Wind (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:114-115).
To a degree, all animals were sacred because of their *wakan* character, and as a result, religious rites to propitiate them were an accepted prelude to hunting. The Sioux philosophy that conceived humans as an integral part of nature, yet dependent upon animals for spiritual power, made propitiation all important. As such, there was no joy in killing; instead, a sense of gravity prevailed. Hunting was a serious and mystical business—a combination of skill, organization, and power obtained from the supernaturals.

More than a century earlier, Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:287) wrote something very similar about the Lakotas:

To him all nature is instinct with mystic influence. Among those mountains not a wild beast was prowling, a bird singing, or a leaf fluttering that might not tend to direct his destiny, or give warning of what was in store for him; and he watches the world of nature around him as the astrologer watches the stars. So closely is he linked with it that his guardian spirit, no insubstantial creation of the fancy, is usually embodied in the form of some living thing, --a bear, a wolf, an eagle, or a serpent...

The Lakotas believe that all living forms hold a spiritual or immaterial essence or *sicun* that can be transferred from one species or *oyate* [nation] to another. In dreams or visions, animals appear to humans enabling them to partake of their spiritual essences for any of a variety of life goals and functions.

In the rest of the discussion, attention is given to the particular characteristics of animals important in Lakota and Cheyenne cosmologies, especially those with whom humans enter into spiritual partnerships. For purposes of presentation, they will be organized into four sections: 1) animals linked to the sky, that fly, primarily birds, insects, and bats; 2) animals associated with the earth, largely mammals, 3) those connected to water, mostly reptiles, amphibians, and fish; and 4) spiders because they transverse all tiers of the universe. Except for the bison, which hold a very special relationship to the area of Wind Cave National Park, most of the details on spiritual partnerships between humans and various species of animals are found in Appendix A.

### 1. The Creatures of the Sky

Birds and certain insects that fly occupy a pivotal place in the cosmologies of the Cheyennes and Lakotas, and conceptually, they are linked together by both tribes. As *Siya ka*, a Lakota, told Francis Densmore (1918:188):

All the birds and insects which I have seen in my dream were things on which I know I should keep my mind and learn their ways. When the season returns, the birds and insects return with the same colorings as the previous year. They are not all on the earth, but are above it. My mind must be the same.

The Lakotas and Cheyennes consider birds the messengers of the spirits and often rank them among the animals with the greatest spiritual potentialities (Walker 1983:321, 327; Moore, J. 1984, 1986). Speaking for the Lakotas, Black Elk (in Brown 1992:199-200) said:

The most important of all creatures are the wingeds, for they are nearest to the heavens, and are not bound to the earth as are the four-legged, or little crawling people. Their religion is the same as ours. They see everything that happens on the earth, and they never miss their prey.
For both tribes, the highest-ranking birds are raptors. John Moore (1984, 1986) described in
great detail how and why raptors are classified by the Cheyennes as holy and great birds.
Vultures are considered holy birds, along with eagles, dragonflies, and nighthawks, because
they move in the fashion of a whirlwind, as evidenced by the funnel-shaped configurations they make
when seeking thermals or when circling carrion (Moore, J. 1986:189). Hawks and falcons are
generally identified among the great birds and strongly associated with predatory behavior and
protective powers relating to warfare (Grinnell 1972:2:105, 107-108; Moore, J. 1984:298, 1986:
184-186).

Among the Lakotas, raptors are highly revered as well. As Joseph Eppes Brown (1992:41)
writes: For Lakota raptors seemed to lead a charmed life not only because they possessed great
speed and agility but also because they appeared to be immune to bullets, arrows, and lightening
strikes. While vultures are relatively unimportant to the Lakotas, golden eagles are very signif­
icant, highly sacred, and ranked as the chief of the wingeds (Black Elk quoted in Brown
They are among the most sacred birds, commonly linked to the West Wind, healing, war parties
and battles (Sword in Walker 1980:103; Tyon in Walker 1980:122), but in some contexts to the
North Wind or the East Wind (Curtis 1905-1930:3:77). They are also identified as messengers
of the sun, and the sun's tonwan is believed to be carried in their tail quills (Walker 1980:230-
231, 232). Hawks, associates of the West Wind, are linked to war and healing as well, and they
are believed to be highly sacred, able to bring luck and to rule over endurance and swiftness
(Dorsey, J. 1889:500; Densmore 1918:139; Bordeaux 1929:109; Black Elk in Neihardt 1959:133-

There are many visionary narratives of Lakota encounters with eagles and hawks, and several
of these are associated with the Black Hills (Hassrick 1964:232-233, 234; Bordeaux in Kadle­
ceck and Kadlececk 1981:90-91; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:115, 117-118, 121, 136, 140-142,
142-143, 147). Peter Bordeaux (in Kadlecek and Kadlecek 1981:90-91), for instance, told the
following story in 1969:

There were some white eagles, twice as large as the ordinary eagles, that increased and existed
in the air and space above the vast country and nestled on the land of the Black Hills all the
time prior to the year 1875. A warrior observed the ceremony of the fast on the top of one of
the Black Hills; on his third day, one of the said white eagles flew down and landed on the
altar hill by the fasting warrior and talked to him in plain Sioux language. He said that the
white men will invade your Black Hills in the very near future and will take over the
resources under their possession and give you a bad time. Then the white eagles relinquished
their roaming from the vast country of the Black Hills.

Eagles figured prominently in many of Black Elk's visions (in DeMallie 1984). When he saw an
eagle and heard it piping while hunting with his father at the Buffalo Gap, he was reminded of the
spirit eagle that once came to him in a dream (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:155-156). Among the
Lakotas, eagle dreamers often became healers, practicing in a manner not dissimilar to

Nighthawks are also considered sacred by both tribes. The Cheyennes place the bird in their
highest and most sacred class and associate it with the West Wind, death, and twilight (Moore, J.
1986:182-184). The Lakotas link this bird to the West Wind too, the Wakinyan or Thunders, and

8 Bald eagles are also identified with the East Wind.
the Heyoka [Contraries] (Hassrick 1964:214). The Lakotas consider all species of swallows sacred, and like nighthawks, they are messengers of the Thunders and the West Wind and associates of the Heyoka. They are commonly appealed to in visions and healing (Sword in Walker 1980:102; Bordeaux 1929:109 Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:84). Although much has been written about swallows among the Lakotas, little appears in the literature on the Cheyennes, except that they are considered ordinary birds with connections to war and thunders (Moore, J. 1986:184; Grinnell 1972:1:201).

Owls are highly respected by the Lakotas for their wisdom, courage, and gentleness, and as a result, they are linked to healing and the visions of healers (Densmore 1918:181; Fire and Erdoes 1972:136; Standing Bear 1988:72; Brown 1992:44, 61; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:30, 31, 109, 111, 134-135, 139, 142, 143, 187). They are commonly associated with the East Wind and believed to bear messages of death (Walker 1980:118; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:125; Brown 1992:44). In Cheyenne culture, owls are not considered a natural bird, but a mista or night spook (Moore, J. 1986:186). They are widely feared, but, as with the Lakotas, they are known to have healing powers (Grinnell 1972:1:125, 2:109, 156). In both tribes, owls were historically linked to warfare too (Wissler 1912:41-42; Grinnell 1972:2:105). There are a number of stories in Cheyenne and Lakota traditions that associate owl-like figures with locations in the high elevation interiors of the Black Hills (Marriott and Rachlin 1974:43-47; Deloria E. 1978:113-116; LaPointe 1976:89-91).

Other birds associated with healing and visions among the Lakotas are water birds and shorebirds, especially ducks, geese, and cranes (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:95, 98, 114; Standing Bear 1988:70-71). Ducks, along with cranes, also symbolize fertility and are frequently seen as associates of Wohpe and Itokagata, the South Wind (Densmore 1918:139; Standing Bear 1978:158; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:127; Walker 1980:217-218, 252). These birds are similarly connected to reproduction and healing among the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:109, 110, 205), but some also have strong associations with war (Moore, J. 1986:178, 184, 186, 187). Many other water birds and shorebirds are named in Lakota and Cheyenne taxonomies, but seem to have had little symbolic value. Similarly, most game birds do not appear to have occupied any significant position in Cheyenne cosmology, perhaps because, as Moore (1986:184) argues, they are edible birds, existing in a stable state rather than full of energy and drive like the species that are important symbolically. Among the Lakotas, however, grouse are symbolically linked to war and the dances and songs associated with this endeavor (Wissler 1912:15; Standing Bear 1988:57, 60; Young Bear and Theisz 1994:31-33). One example of a visionary contact with this bird took place in central interiors of the Black Hills (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:31-32).

The closely related families of kingfishers and woodpeckers represent another group of birds highly respected and admired by both tribes. Kingfishers are associated with healing and protective medicine in war (Buechel 1970:186; Grinnell 1972:1:120; Moore, J. 1974a:244; Tyon in Walker 1980:161; Moore, J. 1986:178, 186). The Cheyennes associate the redheaded woodpecker with great power, male fertility, and blood paint (Moore, J. 1986:182-184). The Lakotas link this bird to the East Wind and associate it with strong family ties (Densmore 1918:70-71; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:398). Yellow-shafted flickers are linked to war, thunders, and the West Wind in Lakota beliefs (Densmore 1918:111-112). Contrastingly, the Cheyennes see the flicker as a bird of peace, healing, and associate it with female symbolism (Grinnell 1972:2:232; Moore, J. 1986:182-184). These birds occupy an important position in the Sun Dance of both tribes (Grinnell 1972:2:109, 232-233, 265, 268; Black Elk in Brown 1971:78). There is nothing in the published literature, however, that specifically associates these species of birds with any area in the Black Hills.
In contrast, the magpie, and in some stories, the crow are very important symbolically and spiritually because they are believed to have won the Great Race, which took place on lands at Wind Cave National Park (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:24; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:397, 403-404). Crows and magpies are believed to be able to communicate with humans and warn them of danger (Densmore 1918:186-188; Grinnell 1972:2:107; Walker 1982:43; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:385-386; Moore, J. 1986:3). The magpie is included in the Cheyenne's Holy class of birds: it is associated with war and viewed as the messenger of Ma he o, the holiest of holies (Grinnell 1972:2:105, 124; Moore, J. 1986:182-183). It is also considered the chief of the birds that the Cheyennes designate as blue, which includes jays, kingfishers, and the blue-winged teals (Moore, J. 1974a:238). Lakotas associate this bird with the North Wind, and their attitudes towards it appear highly ambivalent (Beckwith, M. 1930:388, 434; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:397, 403-404; Powers, W. 1977:191; Walker 1983:335-336). By contrast, the crow, which is associated in Lakota beliefs with either the North or East Wind, is generally admired and believed to be of great assistance in matters of war (Densmore 1918:181; Walker 1980:260, 1982:32, 37; Powers, W. 1986:139-140; Brown 1992:43). One of the Lakota akicita or soldier societies was known as the Kangi yuha (Crow Owners), and its defining symbol was the crow (Blish 1924:87). The Cheyennes associate the crow with war too, and in addition, they consider it helpful in locating bison (Grinnell 1972:2:105, 110; Moore, J. 1986:183).

Many other species of land birds found in the Black Hills are neither named nor symbolically marked in Lakota and Cheyenne ornithological nomenclatures. Among the Cheyennes, most land birds are ordinary and in the subclasses ve kse ohes, which includes small birds who build tree nests and inhabit riparian forests and hoeve kseo, which refers largely to edible ground birds (Moore, J. 1986:184-186). Even when these birds are named, they are generally not associated with any complex symbolic meanings (see Appendix A). There are a few exceptions, however. One is the meadowlark. This is another bird the Lakotas believe can speak intelligible words in their language (Buechel 1970:267, Powers, W. 1986:28; Standing Bear 1988:60; Brown 1992:45). It is a symbol of fidelity, clarity, courage, and goodness, it is connected to the South Wind and the elk, and it is thought to have the gift of prophecy (Walker 1917:129, 249; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:127; Powers, W. 1986:28, 139-140; Rice 1993:99, 154, 156-157). It is also associated with the Sun Dance because of the sunflower painted on their breasts (Dorsey, J. 1889a: 157). The snowbird or junco is also important to the Lakotas because it was the bird that led the first man, Tokahe, and his followers to meat and safety when they emerged out of a cave, which many Lakota identify today as Wind Cave (Hassrick 1964:214; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101; Walker 1983:371). This bird has a high degree of symbolic importance for the Lakotas. Historically, it was also a source of food. Among the Cheyennes, the scarlet tanager [Piranga olivacea] was associated with the thunders and played an important role in the symbolism of the Contraries.

Both the Lakotas and Cheyennes classify bats with birds because of their ability to fly. The Lakotas viewed them as helpers of the West Wind and the Thunders (Walker 1980:125; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:111). Like other flying creatures that are linked to these two spiritual entities, bats are associated with war. Warriors commonly wore bats on their heads as a talisman, or wotawe as these are called in Lakota, when they entered battle (Buechel 1970, 196; Grinnell 1972:1:120).

All three have capacity to avoid danger quickly through making abrupt motions and deceiving those who follow them. Therefore they served as appropriate protectors of warriors. The Lakota link them on the basis of these most observable behavioral qualities, quickness of flight and erratic movement through space, all diagnostic of the devil duster, the dragon and butterfly.

In fact, the Cheyennes consider the butterfly and the dragonfly to be types of birds in the class of their most holy animals known as messengers (Moore, J. 1986:178, 182). Since butterflies are often observed by the Cheyennes to swarm around sites where animals are butchered and to drink their blood, they are strongly associated with killing and warfare (Moore, J. 1986:182). Not surprisingly, butterflies are also linked with the Thunders. According to George Bird Grinnell (1972:1:96), these insects are often seen in association with thunderstorms. The Cheyennes believe that when the thunders are angry, they shake themselves causing the butterflies, which are their parasites, to fall off of them. The Lakotas also link these flying insects with the thunders and war (Blish 1934:185; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101; Brown 1992:46; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:111). Like the Cheyennes, the Lakotas believe that butterflies and dragonflies are able to escape injury by humans, animals, and even the thunders because of their rapid, whirlwind-like movements (Wissler 1905:258-259). Dragonflies are also significant because of how they change color during their lifecycle, and their dual association with the thunders and the deep waters of the earth from which they hatch (Moore, J. 1974a:158).

Whether other flying insects have importance is difficult to determine because there is little direct evidence about them in the ethnographic and linguistic sources we reviewed. Grasshoppers, for example, must have had some significance because their images are painted on the bodies of Cheyenne Sun dancers and on the tipis that held the Sacred Arrows and the Sacred Hat (Powell 1969:2:833; Grinnell 1972:1:89), but exactly what they meant has not been reported in the literature. One unidentified species helped Cheyennes and Lakotas locate bison (Holy Elk 1937: 44; Grinnell 1972:2:264). Another cicada-like species was known to assist in the ripening of berries (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:21). Either of these roles may help explain why this class of insects is painted on Cheyenne Sun dancers and associated with a ceremony whose purpose is to increase the fertility of the earth and renew life (Powell 1969:795, 833, 843; Grinnell 1972:2:264). But there is also another possible reason. Some early naturalists reported that the Black Hills were the breeding grounds of local grasshopper species, which left the Hills in huge swarms every spring to cover the surrounding grasslands (Progulske 1974:123). If this is the case, it would certainly have reaffirmed tribal observations about animals originating in the Hills.

Most of the cultural associations of birds and other wingeds with the Black Hills center around the high elevation interiors at places like Harney Peak, Castle Rock, and the Cathedral Spires. Many of these flying creatures, including eagles, hawks, dragonflies, butterflies, swallows, and nighthawks, have very specific ties to the Thunders and the West Wind in Lakota traditions. Owls, also associated with locations in the interiors, are usually connected to the East Wind. In the area of Wind Cave National Park, there are only a few specific links to avian species. The snowbird (Junco) appears in the story of Tokahe and the emergence of the first humans from Wind Cave. However, to the extent that all birds participated in the Great Race and were the first to arrive in the Hills when the race was announced, all of them have a connection to the Race Track, a portion of which crosses park properties. Two birds, however, stand out in this story: the crow and the magpie, because they won the race for humans. Even though other birds are often named in different versions of the Great Race story, including the sparrow, blackbird, meadowlark, and swift hawk, the crow and magpie are clearly the most important (Marquis and
Limbaugh 1973:30-31; Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:94-96; Ant in Lehman 1987:245-250. Curiously, the birds that have important connections to the area of Wind Cave, notably the snowbird, the magpie, and the crow, are generally associated with the North Wind, Waziyata, in Lakota stories and liturgical texts, confirming again the connection of this region with winter and breath.

2. The Creatures of the Land

The animals associated with the land, mostly mammals, are the most important class of animals in terms of their practical importance to the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, but many are also highly significant in symbolic and spiritual terms. In Lakota traditions, many mammals are associated with the earth’s surface, but certain species, including badgers, bears, wolves, bison, badgers, prairie dogs, and gophers, are connected to the subterranean world because they sleep in burrows, dens, caves, or other depressions and come to the earth’s surface to feed. The ability of certain animals to transverse more than one plane of the universe makes them highly significant to the Lakotas on spiritual grounds (Powers, W. 1986:113).

Among the Cheyennes, mammals are believed to originate from cavern homes in the deep recesses of the earth (Schlesier 1987:4-5; Moore, J. 1996a:211). In their subterranean sanctuaries, mammals exist in a spiritual form awaiting their materialized reappearance on the earth’s surface (Schlesier 1987:4-5). As Karl Schlesier explains:

Plant, animal, and human physical forms originate from reproduction processes as given in each species. The initiation of new life is not simply the result of biology but also the infusion of spiritual forms that remain with the organism until death. The spiritual forms of every living being under the laws of venom consist of the immortal gift of breath, monotone, which comes from exhausted, cosmic power and the immortal, hematasooma, the spiritual potential consisting of four separate forces (Schlesier 1987:9).

The Cheyennes also believe that the hematasooma of an animal, including the human species, is released at death to travel to the sky spaces of the universe, but the monotone remains in the bones, teeth, claws, and feathers until these parts have decayed, at which point it rejoins its respective hematasooma to await the process of rematerialization that begins in the underworld. It is from the subterranean depths of the earth that animals and humans receive the immortal gift of breath and are reborn (Schlesier 1984:9). The Lakotas similarly believe that animals and also humans are transmogrified from a spiritualized state to their material form through the acquisition of ni or breath, a process usually associated with the underworld and its vast cavernous spaces (Walker 1917:91).

a. Bison

Of all the mammals, the bison was clearly the most important historically to the Lakotas and Cheyennes, both as a provisioner of their life necessities and as an important spiritual presence. The Lakotas considered the bison the chief of all the animals, and a penultimate metaphor for the workings of the cosmos. As Nicolas Black Elk (in Brown 1992:13) said: The buffalo is the chief of all animals and represents the earth, the totality of all that is. It is the feminine, creating earth principle which gives rise to all living forms. In a similar vein, Lame Deer (in Fire and Erdoes 1972:130) speaks about the close link between humans and bison:

We Sioux have a close relationship with the buffalo. He is our brother... the buffalo is very sacred to us. You can’t understand about nature, about the feeling we have toward it, unless
you understand how close we are to the buffalo. That animal was almost like a part of ourselves, a part of our souls.

The near extinction of bison was experienced as a great loss to the Cheyennes and Lakotas. Expressing a sense of tragedy for his people, the famous Oglala leader Red Cloud (Walker in 1980:138-139) said in his abdication speech:

We told them [the commissioners] that the supernatural powers, Taku Wakan, had given to the Lakotas the buffalo for food and clothing. We told them that where the buffalo ranged, that was our country. We told them that the country of the buffalo was the country of the Lakotas. We told them that the buffalo must have their country and the Lakotas must have the buffalo.

Now where the buffalo ranged there are wires on posts that mark the land where the white man labors and sweats to get food from the earth; and in the place of the buffalo there are cattle that must be cared for to keep them alive; and where the Lakota could ride as he wished from the rising to the setting of the sun for days and days on his own lands, now he crosses the bounds the white man has set about us, the white man says to us Indians, You must not be on the lands that are not on the road.

Among the Cheyennes, where predatory mammals and birds occupied some of the highest spiritual positions in the cosmic order of things and stood in control over game animals (e.g., pronghorn), bison were an exception (Moore, J. 1974a:240). The buffalo, according to Karl Schlesier (1987:8), was regarded both as a game animal and a powerful spiritual being.

Although bison held a much-revered place in the cosmologies of the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, the spiritual figures representing bison were conceptualized and interpreted in different ways. In Lakota and Cheyenne cosmology, there were several masculine and feminine benevolent spirits who were represented in the image of bison. At least as reported in the ethnographic literature, the Cheyennes placed much greater emphasis on feminine bison representations and very little on masculine imagery. The Lakotas, by contrast, had prominent male and female bison figures. Both tribes had many lesser spiritual figures envisioned as bison too, and both knew of dangerous bison spirits who killed and consumed humans.


He represents the people and the universe and should always be treated with respect, for was he not here before the two-legged peoples, and is he not generous in that he gives us our homes and our food? The buffalo is wise in many things, and thus, we should learn from him and should always be as a relative with him.

Along with Tate and Taku Skanskan, two of the other Tobtob, Tatanka ruled over the hunt; he was addressed and propitiated in all rituals associated with hunting (Hassrick 1964:207, 214; Walker 1982:75, 76, 91). He is a figure of industry and generosity (Hassrick 1964:207, 214; Little Wound in Walker 1980:67; Tyon in Walker 1980:121, Brown 1992:25). Historically, Tatanka was one of the major spiritual figures addressed during the Lakota Hunka ceremony, and it is his spirit that resided in the skull at this and indeed all other major Lakota ceremonies. He served as a model of parental duty and domestic harmony (Takes the Gun in Walker 1980:214; Walker
1982:75, 76, 91). Tatanka is also linked to the fecundity of women and guards over their pregnancies and menstrual cycles (Hassrick 1964:207, 214; Bad Wound in Walker 1980:124; Tyon in Walker 1980:121). Finally, Tatanka, who is often envisioned in the image of a white buffalo, stands for cosmic regeneration (Flying By in Parlow 1983a:37-39). Consequently, he is a major figure to whom appeals are made and offerings given during the Lakota Sun Dance and many other major ceremonies (Densmore 1918:98-125).

The feminine representation of the bison in Lakota thought is complex. On one and probably an older level, there is an elderly spiritual female figure whose home is under the earth; she sometimes appears in stories that unfold at springs or caves (Haflen and Haflen 1956:268-272). There are many stories in the oral and written traditions of the Lakotas of a benevolent old woman who assists people in need, and they bear a remarkable resemblance to a number of Cheyenne, Arikara, Pawnee, and Kiowa narratives. The Lakota tradition is not as well developed as it is among some of these other tribal nations, and when it appears, as discussed in greater detail in the next section, it is more often connected to a younger female figure who lives underneath the Black Hills and guards the animals. Some of the stories about her also take place at springs and openings to caves, including Wind Cave (Herman in One Feather 1972:149; Black Elk, H. in Theisz 1973:16-18; LaPointe 1979:79-80). In many respects, as among the Cheyennes, female bison figures are really manifestations in animal form of the highly revered earth, Maka, who ranks with the sky, stone, and the sun as one of highest spiritual presences in the Lakota’s pantheon of spiritual beings.

In Lakota traditions, another prominent female spiritual figure, understood as an associate or companion to the earth, is Wohpe [Falling Star or Meteor]. In the Lakota creation story, as given to James Walker (1983:229-244) by George Sword, she is the daughter of Skan, the Sky, and comes to earth to live with Tate, the Wind and his sons. She is a mediator who is behind many creative actions, including the making of vegetation and other life forms (Walker 1983:229-244). Later in cosmological time, she is reincarnated as Pte San Winyan, the White Buffalo Calf Woman, who brings the sacred pipe to the Lakotas and advises them in the performance of their seven sacred rituals (Black Elk in Brown 1971:3-9). There are numerous stories about how she appeared to the Lakotas (Densmore 1918:63-66; Hassrick 1964:217-219; Finger in Walker 1980:109; Black Elk in Brown 1971:3-9; Powers, W. 1977:54; Powers, M. 1986:43-49; Looking Horse 1987:68-69; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:38-41), but today, as in the past, she remains a highly significant figure, a model of female generosity, nurturance, and everything else that represents the highest virtues of womanhood (Powers, M. 1986:70-72; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:41-42). She is one of the primary protector figures in Lakota traditions, and many Lakotas believe that she appeared to them near Bear Lodge Butte a.k.a. Devil’s Tower (Bird Horse in U. S. Senate 1986:168, 207; Looking Horse 1987:67-68; Goodman 1992:2, 12-13).

The Cheyennes represent the spiritual essence of bison in a predominately feminine form (for example, the lead bison in the story of the Great Race was a cow, Slim Walking Woman), but it is the bison bull that talked to them (Grinnell 1972:2:104). Whatever this means, and Grinnell does not elaborate upon it, bison are the supreme symbols of the family, fecundity, and regeneration for the Cheyennes as they are for the Lakotas. In comparison to female bison figures, very little has been written about the Cheyennes’ spiritual understandings of the bull. As noted in the last chapter, Esceheman [Our Grandmother], the deep spirit of the earth, is identified with game animals and is their protector (Powell 1969:2:437; Schlesier 1987:5, 8, 82). Her helpers, and the ones through which she usually reveals herself, are the badger, buffalo, bear, and

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9 The protective behavior of bison bulls when predators threaten calves and cows, as reported in ethological studies of bison, conforms to some of the paternalistic images that the Lakotas have of them (Geist 1996:54-58).
The Isiwun or Esevone, the Sacred Hat, one of the two most important sacred symbols of the Cheyennes (the other being the Sacred Arrows), is an embodiment of the female spiritual presence of Esceheman and the buffalo (Ibid:443), or as Father Peter Powell (1969:2:443) puts it, the living symbol and source of female power. He further describes her power as follows:

The Sacred Hat emanates power for renewing and attracting the buffalo — the great sources of food and life. The Buffalo continues to symbolize the good life for the Cheyennes. Isiwun's power continues to assure food for the people, even though the great herds are gone. The Sacred Cap was given to Standing on the Ground or Erect Homs, the Suhtaio culture hero, at Bear Butte, but it is also closely associated with the origin of the Sun Dance, which is traced in some Cheyenne stories to the Race Track and the Buffalo Gap, the place where the Buffalo People promised to turn their dance over to the people (Powell 1969:2:444).

The interpretation of its origins and its relation to the Great Race vary among the Cheyennes with significant differences between the northern and southern branches of the tribe. Most of the connections made to the Buffalo Gap come from Northern Cheyennes, who were settled on the Tongue Reservation in Montana and who are descended from the Suhtaio division of the Cheyennes, whose people lived in the vicinity of the Black Hills until the U.S. government seized them in 1877. It is probably not surprising that this story and the Sun Dance are associated with the Buffalo Gap area because this is the location where bison emerged onto the grasslands every spring with their newborn calves. The yellow coloration of a bison calf's coat at birth is strongly associated in Cheyenne beliefs with sun symbolism (Moore, J. 1974a:163).

Esceheman's daughter, Ehyophstah (Yellow Hair on Top Woman), comes from a union with the Thunder, Nonoma (appearing in the Maussam as a coyote or wolf) (Schlesier 1987:78). She is represented as the figure in the story of Sweet Medicine and his friend's journey to Bear Butte. She is the one who marries the friend and brings the buffalo to his people (Grinnell 1907, 1926: 244-251; Schlesier 1987:76-79). She also manifests herself in the form of a bison. Ehyophstah is viewed as the patroness of one of the Cheyenne's most important sweatlodges (Anderson, R. 1956; Schlesier 1987:62), and she is an important figure in the Maussam where she plays a role similar to her mother as a guardian of the animals. In this ceremony, she impersonates a kit-fox, who symbolizes Rigel, known in Cheyenne as the Voh kis [Blue Star] (Schlesier 1987:12, 84, 104-109), and thus, she has a dual positioning in Cheyenne cosmology and may exist simultaneously as an earth and celestial or star figure.

Besides the beneficent bison in Cheyenne and Lakota cosmology, there is a group of hostile figures, male as well as female, who prey on humans. In Lakota traditions, Gnaskiyan (Crazy Buffalo), in his various manifestations, represents the spiritual antithesis to the giving and

10 Although the instructions for the Sun Dance were learned by the Cheyennes at Bear Butte (Powell 1969:2:467-471) and the first dance held by the people took place near Sundance, Wyoming (Ibid:477), the place where the buffalo first performed this ceremony and made a compact to turn it over to humans was located at the Buffalo Gap, the site where the Great Race begins and ends (Powell 1969:2:477; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:72) (see more detailed discussion of this subject in Chapters Twelve and Fourteen).

11 The same is true of Esceheman who is linked to the star Sirius and is represented by Eversev Honche or the Horned Wolf in this ceremony (Schlesier 1987:82-83). In some respects, Ehyophstah is also the cosmic equivalent of the Lakotas figure, Wophe a.k.a. Pte San Winyan.
protective qualities of Tatanka (Bad Wound in Walker 1980:124). From the conversation of George Sword, Bad Wound, No Flesh, and Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:94), Gnashtinyan is the most feared of the evil spiritual beings. He is the grand artist of deception, appearing in a benevolent guise but persuading the people to do terrible things (see also, Little Wound in Walker 1980:67). In many ways, he symbolizes the life-taking side of the bison and is the alter ego of Tatanka, who stands for the bison in their life life-giving aspects. 

The Cheyenne have a figure remarkably similar to the Lakotas Crazy Bull, called His towunini hotu a [The Double-toothed bull] or Hestovonenehota, who is male and known to eat people (Petter 1913-15:193; Grinnell 1972:2:99). Grinnell (1972:1:269) suggests that he was modeled after the actual behavior and pugnacity of bulls, which are known to suddenly charge humans during their rutting season in June and July. There were female bison figures who attacked and ate humans too. Although they are not as well defined as the males, they appear in many Cheyenne and Lakota stories, the most famous of which is in the role of the mother-in-law of the human man who marries a buffalo woman (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24).

In addition to these more personified spiritual figures, there are many generalized ideas about the nature of the bison s spiritualized essence. Notwithstanding variations of interpretation in Lakota traditions, bison are typically linked to the wind and cardinal direction of the north, Waziyata, in a multitude of different oral traditions and sacred liturgical texts (Curtis 1907-30:3:68:11-118, 159; Wissler 1912:19-20; Black Elk in Brown 1971:133; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:127; Walker 1980:232; Powers 1986:139; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163). If not identified with Waziyata directly, bison are certainly linked to his season, winter, as recounted in some Lakota visionary accounts (Vestal 1934:109-110), and they are also linked to his grandfather, the old man Waziya, who symbolizes frost and snow. The association of bison with the North Wind and winter also holds true for the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1910:567).

In Lakota traditions, bison are not only associated with the procreative powers of the earth, Maka, but also the formative powers of stone, Inyan (Short Bull in Walker 1980:144, 229; Little Wound in Walker 1980:124; Brown 1992:25; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:110). Bison come from the subterranean world; their tipi, or home, is made of stone, located inside the earth, and frequently identified with caves (Bushotter in Dorsey 1894:476-477; Little Wound in Walker 1980:67; Bad Wound in Walker 1980:124). The Lakotas also associate bison with the Sun, who stays in the underworld at night with his close bison companions (Little Wound in Walker 1980:67). Stone, earth, and fire are fundamentally connected to the creation of ni [breath] (Curtis 1907-30:3:159; Brown 1992:111-115). The breath of life, as revealed in the last chapter, is strongly associated in Lakota traditions with winter, the season of Waziya and Waziyata. Bison symbolize the breath of life, and it is the major game animal that stands metaphorically for the entire cosmos (Black Elk in Brown 1971:72). Bison, like golden eagles, also symbolize the sun and its generative power (Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a:42).

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12 Some of the Dakota divisions, including the Yanktannai, Sisseton, and Wahpeton, considered the appearance of a Crazy Bull near camp a sign of good fortune and successful bison hunting (Howard 1976:31).

13 Valerius Geist (1996:30-31, 34-35) even suggests that stories of killer bison may represent ancient cultural memories of a time when larger and more aggressive bison, Bison antiquus and Bison occidentalis, roamed the American Plains. If this is so, then the Race Track story, described in Chapter Fourteen, marks the transition of bison to their modern form as Bison bison.
The *Pte Oyate* [Buffalo Nation] represent the spirits of the bison who dwell underground and who materialize when they reach the surface of the earth. These spirits may also take on human forms. It is worth quoting James Walker's interpretation (1917:91) of them:

The Buffalo People...have the power to transmogrify and may appear on the world as animals or as mankind, and may mingle with the Lakota and become their spouses. They can transmogrify their spouses and take them to the regions under the world.

The offspring of a buffalo person and a Lakota has the powers of its buffalo parent and controls its other parent. A Lakota espoused to a buffalo person, or having buffalo children, can be freed from their control only by a Shaman whose fetish has the potency of the Buffalo God.

Some Lakota believe that the original transformation of the buffalo people into humans took place at Wind Cave. Originally, the *Pte Oyate* were created to act as the messengers of the Lakotas' highest sacred beings, the Earth, *Maka*, the Sky, *Skan*, the Stone, *Inyan*, and the Sun, *Wi*. They were molded out of crystalline structures under the earth. The first *Pte Oyate* [Buffalo Nation or People], *Waziya* [Old Man] and *Wakanka* [Old Woman], have a daughter *Ite* [Face], who marries *Tate* [Wind] and mothers the Four Winds and the Whirlwind. The *Pte Oyate* appear throughout the Lakota origin cycle after their creation (Walker 1983), and they are specifically referenced in the sacred liturgy of the *Hunka* as kinspeople who come from the underworld where they live in the midst of the Sun during the night (Walker 1980:229). The buffalo are believed to be the closest spiritual relatives of humans (Black Elk in Brown 1971:117; Flying By in Parlow 1983a:38-39).

In Cheyenne cosmology, the animals that come from zones beneath the earth typically occupy a lower spiritual status than the animals associated with the blue sky, notably golden eagles, magpies, and vultures. These and other birds are associated with the supreme *Maiyun* (Moore, J. 1984). Although many animals of the earth are considered sacred and sources of beneficial spiritual power, only bison and wolves are appealed to and propitiated in the context of major Cheyenne ceremonies such as the *Massaum* or Sun Dance as representatives of the *Maiyun* (thunder, sun, rain, and earth), the superior sacred potentialities of the universe. Indeed, the *Maiyun*, representing the earth and the thunder, generally reveal themselves either through bison or wolf impersonations (Dorsey, G. 1905; Grinnell 1972:2:211-336; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967, 91-114; Powell 1969:2:481-858; Schlesier 1987:43-109).

The Buffalo People, who represent the spirits of the materialized bison, were the ones against whom humans raced in the Black Hills, forming the circular depression known as the Race Track. These people are sometimes identified interchangeably with the Suhtaio division of the Cheyenne nation and their culture hero, *Tomsi vsi* [Stands on the Ground or Erect Horns], who is most closely associated with the origin of the Sun Dance. The Suhtaio are also associated with the *Vonhaom*, an older healing lodge whose origin is tied to bison and was run largely by buffalo dreamers (Grinnell 1919; Anderson, R. 1956; Powell 1969:2:324-327, 341, 343, 344, 388, 408).

Historically, among the Cheyennes, dreams of bison gave people protection in war, assistance in hunting, and/or the gift of healing (Grinnell 1919; Anderson, R. 1956; Powell 1969:324-327, 341, 343, 344, 388, 408; Grinnell 1972:1:196, 151; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:34). Some of the shamans who were able to call game and properly propitiate them had partnerships with bison spirits associated with *Esceheman*. Also, many of the people who had spiritual partnerships with bison served as leaders for major religious observances, including the Animal Dance and the

This was also true for the Lakotas, who strongly associated bison with herbal medicine and healing (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:128-129; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:134-135). Thomas Tyon told James Walker (1980:153) that men who dreamed of buffalo knew about the medicines and all other things for doctoring. Indeed, Walker (1980:62) claimed that these dreamers were considered to be the most reputable healers. The tatanka kagapi [bison makers or imitators] and tatanka inhanblayaci [bison dreamers] also played very important roles in calling the bison, and they acted as the chief intercessors over many major ceremonies (Hassrick 1964:253; Tyon in Walker 1980:153; Walker 1980:249; Powers, W. 1986:185). One important Lakota story about the life-giving and healing powers of the bison took place at the Buffalo Gap (Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:94-96). The Hunka Lowanpi, the Pte San Lowanpi, and the Tapawanka Yeyapi are three of the ceremonies where the bison figure Tatanka is the most important spiritual benefactor, and all of these are described in great length in a number of different sources (Brown 1971:116-126, 133-136; Hassrick 1964:113, 257, 260-264; Walker 1980:249). These men also presided over Spirit Keeping rites, Wanagi cagapi, which are also detailed elsewhere (Densmore 1918:77-83), and they generally led the Wiwanyan Wacipi [Sun Dance], the most significant Lakota ceremony with spiritual connections to bison. Men with bison power were the ones who led the Buffalo dance at the Sun Dance and who blessed the feast on the day the center tree was felled (Hassrick 1964:242). Indeed, a major focus of this ritual involves the propitiation of the bison, the central figure in Lakota cosmology that brings prosperity, harmony, and life to the people.

Bison are also revered in the Cheyennes Sun Dance, the Oxheheom [The New Life Lodge] (Schlesier 1987:3). Offerings and propitiations are made to them and their guardian, Esceheman, in the renewal ceremonies that take place in the Lone Tipi, a symbolic representation of Bear Butte (Dorsey, G. 1905:91, 97; Hoebel 1960:13). At these ceremonies, the assistant Chief Priest and the Lodge Maker smoke a sacred pipe to bring the buffalo (Dorsey, G. 1905:100), and other rituals are performed in this dance to symbolize their regeneration (Hoebel 1960:15; Powell 1969:2:614-645). A second major ceremony where bison symbolism played a prominent role was the Massaum or Animal Dance, which Grinnell (1972:2:287) asserts is associated with the Cheyenne s arrival on the plains in the country of the buffalo. This ceremony, which is no longer practiced, reveals the dual positioning of bison as game animals and spiritual beings in Cheyenne cosmology. In the ceremony, which is described in greater detail in the discussion of wolves, a buffalo skull was placed in a bed dug in the ground because originally the bison came out of the earth (Grinnell 1972:2:330-334). Grinnell (1972:2:296) states that this is a reference to the buffalo s emergence from the underworld after the visit of their two culture heroes to the old woman in the hill, Esceheman. More than that, according to Karl Schlesier (1987:7), the ceremony reenacts the creation of the world and all of its life forms that lead up to the ritual hunt where humans slay the game on whose lives they depend.

In concluding, it cannot be emphasized enough how much bison were, and still are, revered by the Cheyennes and Lakotas, not only in a practical way as source of food, shelter, and medicine, but spiritually as a presence embodied in the very essence and workings of the cosmos. In the traditions of both tribes, bison are especially associated with the breath of life, winter, and the North Wind, but they are also associated with the sun, spring, and the East or South Wind. Many of the most sacred stories about them are located at sites in and around the Black Hills,

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14 Among the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, Grandmother Earth is frequently represented in the guise of an old women who inhabits springs and caves. Indeed, this is a common theme in many of their sacred stories.

b. Other Ungulates

The Cheyennes and Lakotas held other large ruminant species in high regard for food, the materials of life, healing, and spiritual protection. However, unlike the bison, none of them rank among their most influential spiritual figures, the **Tobtob** of the Lakotas or the **Maiyan** of the Cheyennes.

For both tribes, the elk is the cervid species held in highest regard. The Lakotas consider it among the most **wakan** of the animals (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101). The male of the species is admired for its strength, endurance, and courage, but particularly for its ability to attract and protect members of the opposite sex (Wissler 1905: 261-266; Fire and Erdoes 1972:165; Walking Bull 1980: 18-20; Standing Bear 1988:58; Brown 1992:16; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:110; Walking Bull 1980:18-21). Indeed, the **ton** of the elk is believed to preside over sexual relationships, passion, and desire (Wissler 1905:261; Blish 1934: 199; Standing Bear 1978:216; Walker 1980:121). Historically, much of the symbolism associated with the elk represented the epitome of Lakota ideas of maleness and manhood, and as a result, the elk was a favorite animal for young men to emulate (Densmore 1918:176). In many ways, the elk stood metaphorically as an embodiment of **Itokagata**, the South Wind, also connected with love and romance. Like **Itokagata**, the elk is associated with the flute, with the crane, and with the south cardinal direction, although in many visionary contexts the elk is linked to other directions (Wissler 1905; Brave Buffalo in Densmore 1918:176-178; Hassrick 1964:116, 146; Black Elk in DeMallie 1983:119, 126, 218; Powers 1986:139; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163; Young Bear and Theisz 1994:25-27). The multidirectionality of the elk is probably tied to **Yamni**, the Whirlwind, an associate of the South Wind, and it may be related to what early naturalists called the elk’s circle dance, where elk are reported to rapidly trot behind each other in a circular formation, kicking up dust like a whirlwind (Seton 1929:2:42). Lakota elk dreamers, **Hehaka inhanblapi**, were obligated to impersonate their spiritual benefactors in public performances, **Hehaka kaga**, which reminded people of life’s origins (Wissler 1912:85).

The Cheyennes viewed the elk with considerable reverence as well, although the symbolic meanings they attached to this animal are not as fully detailed in the ethnographic literature. Elk were seen to have a strong power, which like deer, had good as well as evil ends. They were admired for their ability to endure and escape capture (Grinnell 1972:2:104; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55). Men who dreamed of elk found their spiritual gifts to be of great assistance (Grinnell...
1972:2:104), and earlier times, they appear to have given special dance performances, *Mo he-tanio*, imitating the powers of elk (Hayden 1982b:281). In later years, these impersonations were performed on the fifth day of the Cheyennes *Massauum* ceremony (Grinnell 1972:2:335-336). In the dance, the animal men representing all of the important species in the Cheyenne universe danced and entered an enclosure where they were ritually hunted by members of the Bowstring Society or Contrary Warriors (Hoebel 1960:17). The Cheyennes also had a military organization called the *Himoweyuhkis*, Elk-Scrapers, which, according to Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:56), ranked among their three most important soldier societies. The Cheyennes appear to have associated elk mostly with warfare; they do not appear to have linked this animal to romantic attraction in the same way the Lakotas did. Some of the sexual attributes the Lakotas associate with the elk, the Cheyennes identify with deer.

As is the case with bison, there are no stories, at least in the published literature, that connect elk to any specific areas in the Black Hills. It is likely, however, that elk are strongly associated with Reynold's Prairie in the central hills, not only because a ritually arranged stack of elkhorns was noted there in the 1870s by members of the Black Hills Expedition (Grinnell 1875:78; Ludlow 1875:17), but also because one of the Lakota names for this prairie refers to elk.

Lakota and Cheyenne attitudes towards deer are highly ambivalent (Brown 1992:29-30; Whitman in Schwartz 1988:55). Among the Lakotas, blacktail or mule deer are generally considered sacred messengers of the thunder beings and linked to war (Densmore 1918:195; Beckwith 1930:12n2; Powers 1977:139), but in a few sources (Dorsey, J. 1894:422; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:114-115, 119, 127, 218), they are associated with the North or the East Wind. These deer are identified with endurance and the ability to withstand thirst and deflect bullets (Densmore 1918:125; Standing Bear 1988:56). Blacktail deer dreamers, much like elk dreamers, were able to capture the reflection of others through mirrors or their sacred hoops, and they were also able to strike people dead by their glance (Wissler 1912:90; Powers 1977:58). These dreamers, *Sintesapela inhanblapi*, received medicines for use in healing too (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:137), and they could be either women or men (Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:251-253, [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:429-434]). Like elk dreamers, those who dreamt of a blacktail deer held special dances, *Sintesapela kaga* (Wissler 1912:90; Hassrick 1964:239, Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:82).

In Lakota traditions, blacktail deer were also connected to the Double-Woman, *Winyan Nupakapika*, a spiritual deer figure able to transform herself into a human form and often appearing as twin sisters (Wissler 1912, 92; Hassrick 1964:191, 230; Howard, J. 1976:42; Sundstrom, L. 2002:102-106). When women dream of this spiritual figure, they are sometimes gifted with exceptional artistic talents in quillwork, beadwork, and quilmaking (Albers and Medicine 1983; Sundstrom. L. 2002). One story about the Hot Springs region and another about Wind Cave allude to this figure (Herman, n.d.; La Pointe 1976:80-84). There are rock art sites in nearby regions of the Black Hills that depict her as well (Sundstrom, L. 2002).

Despite some of their ambivalent attitudes towards deer, the Lakotas did hold them in high regard. Deer were associated with the origin of the bow and arrow, which the Lakota learned about at the Race Track (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:310-311, 314). When Takohe, the first human to emerge from Wind Cave, makes a young man a hunka [relative] and calls him sunk [younger brother], he explains the sacred stories and rituals that involve the use of deer hoofs and skins. He shows the young man how to place deerskins on an altar and make them sacred, and he tells him that only certain people who have undertaken special deeds have the privilege to have their hands painted red (Walker 1983:377-378).

The Cheyennes also carried ambivalent attitudes towards deer, whose power, they believed, could be used for good or evil. Wesley Whiteman (in Schwartz 1988:55) described them as tricky because they can turn themselves into other forms including humans. Another Cheyenne, Wooden Leg, told Thomas Marquis (1931:52) that all deer had strong spirit powers. Like the Lakotas, the Cheyennes associated blacktail deer with rocky ledges and springs where the females of the species sometimes transformed themselves into twin women (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:49-50). The Cheyennes also believed a whitetail doe could appear as a seductress (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:50-51), but unlike the Lakotas, it was this deer, rather than the elk, that was associated with love medicine (Grinnell 1972:1:134, 2:104, 135-137). At one time, there was a special medicine society of deer dreamers similar to the Oglalas, but no information has been published on it (Anderson, R. 1956:93).

Pronghorn were highly esteemed by the Cheyennes and frequently identified as spiritual partners (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:152-153; Grinnell 1972:2:104), even though few of the spiritual attributes of this animal were ever recorded in the ethnographic literature. There is little on what the Lakotas thought about this animal either. The same holds true for bighorn, which were associated with war medicine among the Lakotas and seen as a source of visionary power (Dorsey, J. 1894:497; Wissler 1912:95; Powers, W. 1977:59). The Cheyennes considered bighorns half mysterious, and they were animals with which people might enter into spiritual partnerships (Petter 1913-15:131). Most of the spiritually significant associations of pronghorn with sites around the Black Hills are reported for the Cheyenne and located to the north in areas along the Belle Fourche River (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:84-85; Grinnell 1972:1:277). However, a large historic pronghorn hunting pound for the Sicangu Lakotas was reported less than fifty miles due east of the Buffalo Gap at Cache Butte (Hinman 1874:91; Denig in Ewers 1961:17, 18).

c. Carnivores

As with the ungulates, the carnivores are ranked in terms of their relative spiritual importance. While the wolf is the most important and revered species for the Cheyennes, the bear ranks as the highest among the Lakotas. Next to the bison, the bear, especially the grizzly or Hununpa [Two-Legged], as he is addressed in sacred discourse (Walker 1980:50, 94), is the most revered land animal in Lakota culture. The Lakotas associate him with numerous qualities including wisdom, courage, and strength (Walker 1980:50-51, 53, 116, 121, 128, 227; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:109-110). Indeed, he is considered the principal guardian of wisdom (Walker 1980:50-51, 94). With respect to courage, Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:53) had this to say: The bear is not only a powerful animal in body but powerful in will also. He will stand and fight to the last. Though wounded he will not run but will die fighting. The bear is associated with success in warfare, and he is the one to whom appeals are made to insure the proper conduct of most sacred ceremonies (Walker 1980:227, 231, 232).
In James Walker's (1980:50-51, 128) interpretation of Lakota cosmology, the bear was listed with the third ranking Lakota deities of the Tobtob (4x4), which included Tatanka, the Four Winds, and the Whirlwind. The bear is considered highly wakan (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101; Lone Bear in Walker 1980:128), a friend of the great spirit (Short Feather in Walker 1980:116), and one of the messengers of the Thunders (Beckwith 1930:12n412). The bear is another animal that embodies the power of the whirlwind (Wissler 1905:262). Although the bear is associated in some contexts with the Thunders and the direction of the West Wind, he is also mentioned as coming from the direction of the North Wind (Densmore 1918:197). Bears, especially the grizzly, were closely linked to herbal medicine and healing (Dorsey, J. 1894:495; Siyaka in Densmore 1918:195; Walker 1980, 116, 161).


More so than the Lakotas, who associated the bear mostly with healing, the Cheyennes appear to have placed more emphasis on its relation to warfare. The bear's strength and courage and its death-defying abilities were much admired by Cheyenne warriors who painted their shields with bear imagery and covered them with bear skins too (Grinnell 1972:1:188, 193). Still, Cheyennes received medicine from bears for healing (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:152-153; Powell 2002a:69). Like bison, bears were associated with caverns and the powers of the deep earth (Moore, J. 1974a:163). The bear was believed to be a great medicine animal because it was not only able to heal itself but also heal other bears (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:105).

In relation to the Black Hills, bears figure mostly in stories that relate to locations in their northern reaches, especially the two outlier formations, Bear Butte and Bear Lodge Butte. They are largely absent in the traditions associated with the southern Hills where Wind Cave National Park is located. This may not be entirely coincidental because, with the exception of Jedediah Smith's encounter with a grizzly, which probably took place in the southern Hills, most of the historic reports, either from European Americans or American Indians, of bear sightings take place farther north in the high elevation interiors or at the base of the Hills or its surrounding outliers, Bear Lodge Butte and Bear Butte.
Wolves and coyotes are highly revered by the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, both of whom envision these carnivores as scouts or spies who are able to communicate with humans in various ways, warning of danger and death and predicting the direction of enemies and bison (Densmore 1918:180; Grinnell 1972:2:17-18, 106-107; Walker 1982:160, 1982:95; Powers 1986:187; Brown 1992:34). Considered highly *wakan* by the Lakotas, wolves were known as messengers of the North Wind, *Waziya* (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980: 101; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:125; Tyon in Walker 1980:160). Wolves were emulated because they were hardy, fast, and agile (Densmore 1918:71). They were able to produce wind or fog when they howled (Wissler 1912:91; Brown 1992:35). Those who dreamt of wolves were given powers to create foggy weather conditions. A day of dense mist and fog was known as a wolf’s day (Wissler 1912:54, 91). Wolves are closely connected to kinnikinick, or bearberry, a plant widely associated with the Black Hills; it was from a spiritual wolf that the Lakotas learned of its use (Standing Bear 1988:103). Historically, wolves were valued for their stealth and ability to come upon a camp unseen (Tyon in Walker 1980:160). According to the Lakota Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:121), the wolf presided over the chase and war parties. In the past, wolf dreamers were especially important to the Lakotas in helping to locate bison because wolves often traveled in the shadows of the herds; these men also played an important role in guiding war parties (Tyon in Walker 1980:121). Members of the *Hanskaska*, Chief Society or Big Bellies, were also reported to receive special warnings and directions from wolves in military matters (Wissler 1912:38-39). Wolf figures were highly respected as spiritual helpers, especially by warriors (Densmore 1918:179-183; Hassrick 1964:84; Tyon in Walker 1980:160). The men who dreamed of wolves constituted an informal association, *Sunkmanitu ihanblapi* [wolf dreamers] or *Sunkmanitou kaga* [wolf imitators], and they performed ceremonies to demonstrate their visionary power (Dorsey, J. 1894:480-481; Powers 1977:58; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:82). Wolf Society members were able to cure various sicknesses, but they were most well-known for preparing war medicines and making remedies to remove arrows (Powers, W. 1977:158; Walker 1980:90-91; Standing Bear 1988:103). Wolf dreamers were also known to make highly effective *wotawi* [war amulets] and shields (Wissler 1912:90-91; Walker 1982:95).

In Lakota traditions, the wolf is seen as an ally and partner of *Inktomi* (Walker 1980:129), the Trickster. Indeed, he played a very important role in helping *Inktomi* entice the *Pte Oyate* to the surface of the world in the *Tokahe* story, which is associated with Wind Cave (Walker 1917:181-182). In the past, Lakota sentiments about wolves were often ambivalent. On the one hand they could be associated with nefarious activities as servants of *Anog Ite*, the Double Face woman, or as helpers of *Inktomi* (Walker 1983:376). *Tatanka* and the *Pte Oyate* are often represented in perpetual conflict with wolves and coyotes (Tyon in Walker 1980:121). Wolves and coyotes are depicted as dangerous to humans in sacred liturgical texts associated with fertility and making kin (Walker 1980:222, 229, 231-232, 242, 249). Yet, at the same time, wolves could be represented as a guardians and protectors of people, as in the different renditions of the famous story of the Lakota woman who lived with the wolves (Deloria 1932:121-122; Hassrick 1964:138-139; Pijoan 1992: 66-70; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:115-117). One version of this story takes place in the Black Hills (Herman 1965b:6).

This stands in marked contrast to Cheyenne worldviews where wolves and coyotes are not only seen as companions and helpers to bison, but they occupy some of the more exalted positions in the Cheyennes cosmological order. The Cheyennes regard them as the primary animals that the spiritual masters of game impersonated (Grinnell 1972:2:334-336; Moore, J. 1974a:175-176; Schlesier 1987:98). It was in the Cheyenne’s *Massaum* or Animal Dance that the wolf figured most prominently. This ceremony, historically practiced in the Black Hills, was a symbolic recreation of the Cheyenne origin story, where the spirit of a male wolf saves the culture heroes, *Motseyoef* [Sweet Medicine] and *Tomoisvsi* [Erect Horn/Stands on the Ground] and instructs...
them in the teachings of life (Grinnell 1972:2:285; Schlesier 1987:53-54, 76-80). The ceremony, which lasts five days, involves the making of a wolf lodge that represents the universe before creation and the home of the wolves and their assistants, the foxes, who signify the spirit masters of the animals, released from heszevoxsz (the underworld), and who control the hunting of predators, including humans (Grinnell 1972:2 287-291; Schlesier 1987:80-83, 90-92, 98).

George Dorsey (1905:34) stated that the Cheyennes believe the wolf is the most tricky and cunning of all the animals and the friendliest one as well (Grinnell 1972:2:125). Wolves are much respected as spiritual guardians (Ibid:112-113), and historically, it was considered an honor for wolves and their brothers, the coyotes, to eat the flesh of dead warriors left on the prairie (Ibid:163). In the past, wolves were also strongly associated with warfare in Cheyenne traditions (Ibid:72), and Cheyenne men, who were able to interpret the howling of wolves, turned back on a war party if a wolf was killed (Ibid:105). Wolves were important spiritual partners not only in warfare but also in hunting, and they played a role in medicines associated with love and courtship (Moore, J. 1974a:175-176).

The coyote is also highly venerated by the Cheyennes. It is an animal that Ma heo sent to wander over the earth (Dorsey, G. 1905:20). This animal is believed to talk to people, and some men have the ability to interpret the coyote s howl (Dorsey, G. 1905:20; Grinnell 1972:2:105). George Bird Grinnell (Ibid.) states that coyotes have always been considered more sacred than wolves, possibly because they are more intelligent. The Cheyennes once prayed to coyotes, asking them to lead, guide, and warn them of danger (Ibid.). Coyotes are also one of the animals that assist the Cheyennes in doctoring (Ibid:151). In earlier times, they were also associated with warfare because of their intelligence and powers of endurance (Dorsey, G. 1905:19).

Lakota attitudes towards the coyote are highly ambivalent. The coyote is considered by some to be a cunning and sly animal. In the past, their howls and droppings were reported to reveal the presence of enemies (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:213-214, 217, 335-336). Coyotes were known to give information on the whereabouts of bison and sacred plants in visions (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:208, 225), and today, they are seen as a source of healing power (Fire and Erdoes 1972:135-136; Ingram 1989:189). The coyote is also described as the symbol of singers (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:73) and as a bearer of good news (Curtis 1909-1930:3:74). Joe Flying By, a well-known Lakota religionist from Standing Rock (in Ingram 1989:190) talked about them as follows:

The coyotes are part of the Sunka oyate, the Dog nation. Dogs, foxes, wolves, coyotes, prairie dogs -- these are all relatives in the Sunka oyate. They were the last of the sacred people who came to the world.

But according to James Walker (1983:350-351), the coyote was considered mischievous, associated with theft, cowardice, treachery, and other shameful behavior. In two important Lakota ceremonies, the Hunka and the Pte San Lowampi, the officiates warned participants against befriending the coyote because he would cause trouble (Walker 1980:231-232, 249).

Among many tribal nations of the West, the coyote is the central figure of their trickster stories. Ella Deloria (1978:29) noted that he played this role in certain Lakota stories too, including one she collected entitled, The Coyote and the Bear , (Ibid:27-29). When coyote is not playing the role of Inktomi, the Lakota s central trickster figure, he is often depicted as Inktomi s companion. Coyote and the wolf once entrapped Inktomi in his nefarious schemes, but Inktomi eventually made them his allies with the promise that he would do nothing to make them
ashamed (Walker 1983:296). Indeed, Old Horse told Walker (1980:129) that *Iktomi* rides wolves and coyotes. Coyote stands opposed to *Itoke* or *Iktomi* rides wolves and coyotes. Coyote stands opposed to *Itokagata*, the South Wind, and like the bison and the wolf, he serves as an associate of *Waziya*, the giant, the old man, and/or *Waziyata*, the North Wind.

In contrast to coyotes, the Lakotas consistently respected foxes. They were revered for their persistent strength and courage, wily, clever, and cunning nature, as well as their gentleness, nimbleness, and swiftness (Wissler 1912:14; Standing Bear 1978:143, 215; Brown 1992:27). The fox was the symbol of one of the most important military societies among the Lakotas, the *Tokala* or Kit Foxes. This society was formed to keep order and harmony in Lakota camps and to protect and oversee their movements, and in some Lakota traditions, the origins of this society and its regalia are associated with Red Canyon in the southern Hills and Warbonnet Creek at the southern base of the Hills (Wissler 1912:72; LaPointe 1979:54-55). Its members also policed some of the hunts, and they went out against tribes who invaded Lakota lands (Wissler 1912:14-23; Standing Bear 1978:143-147; No Flesh in Walker 1980:193; Tyon in Walker 1980:268). Foxes were commonly associated with warriors and warfare, but they were also known to have knowledge of medicine and healing. Like other members of the canine family, the fox was regarded as highly *wakan* (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101).

The fox was also much admired by the Cheyennes. John Stands in Timber (and Liberty 1967:60) described the swift fox as a beautiful animal, fleet of foot, who never lets his prey get away from him. As among the Lakotas, these qualities recommended the fox as a guardian for warriors (Grinnell 1972:2:48, 374; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:60). Indeed, the fox served as a symbol for one of the Cheyenne’s military societies, the *Wohkesh hetaniu*, originally created by Sweet Medicine (Grinnell 1972:2:48, 374; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:60). No evidence was uncovered on any connection of foxes to medicine and curing in Cheyenne traditions or to any specific landform and region in the Black Hills.

Another highly regarded carnivore was the badger. The Cheyennes and the Lakotas view the badger as a very powerful animal (Grinnell 1972:2:105; Walker 1980:169). Iron Shell, a Lakota, told Royal B. Hassrick (1964:168):

The badger is very strong. When a man kills a badger, if he turns it on its back, cuts open its chest and carefully removes its insides so that no blood is lost, when the blood thickens, by looking in the hunter can see his image. Should he see himself as he is, he knows he will die young. But if he sees himself as an old man with white hair, he cries, *Hye, hye*, thanking the spirits. Now he knows he can risk getting many coup and will live long to die with a cane in his hand.

Other Lakotas report the same kind of divination practice (Fire and Erdoes 1972:133; Tyon in Walker 1980:170), and the Cheyennes have described this as well (Petter 1913-15:74; Grinnell 1972:2:26-27; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:29). Among the Lakotas, badgers, like bears, are closely associated with herbs and healing, especially for children (Brown 1997:23). Eagle Shield told Francis Densmore (1918:266) that whenever he dug for certain kinds of roots, he left some tobacco for the badger. This was another animal that stood as a symbol for an important Lakota military organization, the *Ihoka*, which was entrusted with policing communal buffalo hunts, supervising the distribution of meat, and keeping order in the larger hunting encampments (Hassrick 1964:16, 173, 203; Walker 1982:32). When Cheyennes offered a pipe to the earth, it was

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*Inktomi* is also known as *Ikto* or *Iktomi*. 
dedicated in part to the badger (Grinnell 1972:2:105). The Cheyennes associated the badger with the feminine principal and the deep earth (Moore, J. 1974a:163), and they believed that badgers cleansed the blood spots from their Sacred Arrows when they were renewed. They also thought of the animal as a wise counselor (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55).

Members of the feline family, including mountain lions, lynxes, and bobcats, were considered very powerful by the Lakotas and Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:1:256; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101), but there is hardly any information about them in ethnographic sources for either tribal nation. Also, most of the species in the mustelid family have not been identified with any elaborate system of beliefs. Other than the badger and also the skunk, who was also associated with warfare and healing in the cultural traditions of these two tribes (Grinnell 1972:2:104; Brown 1992:34), little has been reported on the other species in this family, including weasels, ferrets, and minks, except that they were regarded as sacred and powerful (Bordeaux 1929:113; Buechel 1970:242; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101; Tyon in Walker 1980:168). David White (2002:160) notes that modern Lakotas place these small carnivores in high regards because of their fighting spirit and associate them with military matters. In the case of the Cheyennes, John Moore (1974a:240) argues that they classify most members of the mustelid family (excepting badgers and skunks) with the felines because of the strong odor of their urine. He also reports that they do not have any special religious significance. None of these carnivores are reported, at least in published sources, to have any special links with particular sites in the Black Hills, although some may very well be connected to locations where more private, individual spiritual encounters take place.

4. Small Herbivores

Among the smaller species of herbivorous mammals, only some appear to have occupied a special place in tribal cosmological traditions. The Lakotas respected rabbits for their industry and their ability to travel at night, and thus, they were sometimes associated with warfare (Beckwith, M. 1930:380). Among both the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, rabbits were connected to the Sun Dance because they symbolized the humble qualities people must exhibit when seeking spiritual gifts (Black Elk in Brown 1971:81; Grinnell 1972:1:218). The Lakotas considered them sacred (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101) and guardians of work, provision, and of domestic faithfulness (Black Elk in Brown 1971:121; Standing Bear 1988:61-63, 104). Historically, beavers were identified as messengers of the Thunders (Beckwith 1930:12n412) and probably connected to the West Wind. Although porcupines appear throughout the storytelling traditions of the Lakotas and Cheyennes, not much has been written about their particular spiritual qualities either. The only information found on the Lakotas is the association of the porcupine with the East Wind (Walker 1983:354, 404 n72), and its connection to the Sun (Brown 1992:102, Sundstrom, L. 2002:108). Like the tail feathers of an eagle, porcupine quills were identified with the Sun’s rays (Brown 1992:102). For the Cheyennes, there is an important and sacred story of the origin of quillwork that can be linked, at least indirectly, to the Buffalo Gap; the origin of quillwork came from the same man who married a buffalo woman and followed her to her people (Grinnell 1972:1:160-164:2:385-391). The Buffalo Wife story comes from the Suhtao division of the tribe, and in some renditions (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24; Powell 1969:472-480), it is related to the Great Race of the animals which started at the Buffalo Gap and crossed lands that now make up Wind Cave National Park.

Because of their burrowing habits, the Lakotas considered prairie dogs especially sacred (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101). As one unidentified Lakota shaman put it, Everything has a spirit. A prairie dog has a spirit. A prairie dog has two
spirits: one the spirit like a tree and one the spirit like the breath of life. The breath of life is given by *Wakanskskan* (in Walker 1980:118). This power of movement, which the prairie dog shared with the deer and the grouse, prevented hunters from hitting them (Standing Bear 1988:57). Standing Bear (1988:158-159) described some of their habits:

Prairie dogs were known as little farmers, for they cleared the ground about their dwelling places and soon after there began to grow a plant upon which they lived. Whether they had a system of planting or not we never found out, but it was noticeable that wherever these little animals took up their abode their food plants soon took the place of weeds. Neither did we ever see a prairie dog town in the process of changing location though it was done quite often. If these animals traveled overland they left no trails, though within their towns the trails were numerous, so it was supposed that they dug tunnels through which they traveled in a body. Yet at that we were mystified when they moved their towns from one side of a stream to the other. The deserted towns of the prairie-dog seemed to be refertilized, no doubt on account of the air and water that got into the soil, for they soon were covered with grass that afforded excellent feed for our stock. These grassy places we traveled with care, for when the prairie-dogs moved out, the rattlesnakes moved in.

He also observed that the clean soil found around their towns was used to heal wounds (Standing Bear 1978:215). The Cheyennes also linked the prairie dog to cultivation. They saw a relationship between corn and prairie dogs, both of which emerged from under the ground on small mounds. Prairie dog teeth were likened to kernels of com because of their yellow coloration — a color also connected symbolically to a newborn bison's coat (Anderson 1958; Moore, J. 1974a: 164).

William Bordeaux (1929:108) reported that prairie dogs were closely associated with herbal medicine among the Lakotas and that people who dreamed of this animal possessed secret medical knowledge on the use of certain plants. William Powers (1982:13) explains that soils brought up from underneath the earth by prairie dogs and badgers contain the purifying properties of the underworld, and as a result, they are considered especially efficacious for healing and religious activity. Elsewhere, he notes that animals who burrow in the earth are held sacred because they transverse the space between subterranean environments and the earth's surface in a manner that mirrors the Lakotas' own story of their emergence from the underworld (Powers, W. 1986: 113, 162). Insofar as prairie dogs, badgers, voles, and other burrowing animals dig up earth connected to the Race Track or the subterranean world of the bison at Wind Cave, they would be especially significant to the Lakotas. The soils they bring to the earth's surface from these locations would also have considerable cultural importance, especially for use in the making of ceremonial altars.

The smallest of the herbivores, the squirrels, chipmunks, voles, mice, rats, and shrews are mentioned in Lakota and Cheyenne stories told to children (Gilmore 1919:96; Ewers 1961:11; Hassrick 1964:179; Grinnell 1972:1:149, 254; Standing Bear 1978:57; Walker 1983:271, 371), and some are reported to serve as spiritual partners (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:116-117). Whatever special symbolic or spiritual significance is attached to them has not been elaborated upon in the sources we reviewed, although many of the stories about mice are associated with the value of generosity and reciprocity. One notable exception is the pocket gopher. Pocket gophers were considered sacred and feared because they were believed to shoot people with the tip of a certain grass that causes scrofulous lesions (Dorsey, J. 1894:496; Standing Bear 1988:62; Tyon in Walker 1980:169). Possibly related to this belief, the pocket gopher was strongly associated with warfare. The pulverized dirt found around gopher holes was used as a war medicine. Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:135 n25, 337, 340) reported that the famous Lakota medicine man Chips gave some of this dirt to Crazy Horse for protection in battle, and he also told about his own
vision of a gopher that transformed itself into a herb used in war and able to destroy a nation (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:135, 137). The Cheyennes believe that the loose soil around the gopher’s hole is highly dangerous and capable of causing cancer and other diseases (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55). Historically, they avoided the places where these animals built their mounds (Petter 1913-15:519). The idea that the dirt around gopher hills is powerful is connected with a wider belief applied to other animals who burrow in the ground that was discussed briefly in relation to prairie dogs and that also applies to voles (Powers, W.1992:160).

**e. Crawling Insects**

Like mammals that burrow in the ground, ants are held in high regard by the Lakotas because they constantly move between the subterranean world and the earth’s surface (Powers, W. 1986:113). Ants are known to afflict people with disease, but they are also strongly associated with healing in Cheyenne and Lakota traditions (Grinnell 1972:2:138; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:195). An ant appears in one of the Lakotas Falling Star stories and provides the hero protection in his travels (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:400, 405, 409). Little material exists on other crawling insects in either the Lakota or Cheyenne sources reviewed for this report.

**3. Creatures of the Water**

The Lakotas, along with the Cheyennes, hold the idea that certain insects, amphibians, and reptiles were especially sacred because they were able to transverse more than one tier of the cosmos (Powers, W. 1982:13). All of the creatures that swim and many of those that crawl on the land including reptiles, amphibians, fish, and mollusks, were associated with the powers of water. Reptiles, which are typically identified as land rather than water animals, were believed to have aquatic origins. Rather than being associated with the ground water of lakes, rivers, and springs, they were connected to water through the action of thunder, lightning, and rainfall. Lizards, frogs, and turtles for example, were simultaneously linked to the earth and the sky because, according to William Powers (1986:162), it was believed...that these species fell to the earth during rainstorms. This idea was also recorded in the ethnographic writings of George Bushotter (in Dorsey, J. 1889: 136). A similar belief also exists among the Cheyennes (Moore, J. 1974a:157).

In Lakota traditions, lizards are the *akicita* of the Thunders, and in information given by Thomas Tyon, William Garnett, Thunder Bear, George Sword, and John Blunt Horn (in Walker 1982:104), they are associated with increase, nourishment, and growth. They are also linked with healing (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:183). In some references, however, the lizard is considered the messenger of the Thunders’ enemy, the *Unktehi*, a class of water spirits (Seven Rabbits in Walker 1980:118; Dorsey, J. 1894:482). The Cheyennes admire the small quick moving lizards for their swift motion and ability to kill snakes. Lizards are considered powerful war charms, giving courage to their wearers and the power to move quickly and escape bullets and arrows (Grinnell 1972:2:110, 111). The Lakotas also admire them because they are known to kill snakes (Bordeaux 1929:113). The Cheyennes do not kill lizards, and if they do so accidentally, they make offerings to them. The Cheyennes also believe that the power associated with lizards is a source of protection but a danger too. In earlier times, certain doctors specialized in treating afflictions caused by this animal (Grinnell 1972:2:131).

Pouches in the shape of a lizard are made by the Lakotas to hold the umbilical cord of male infants in order to protect them from danger, especially the malevolent, *Anog-Ite*, the Two Faced Woman, who is seen as an enemy of the *Wakinyan* or Thunders (Standing Bear 1978:184; Tyon,

The lizard can disappear easily into small crevices and therefore represents not only areas above the earth and the earth's surface but also places beneath the earth. The word t'elanunči means almost dead and refers to the fact that the lizard can deceive enemies by holding itself very still. It is also regarded as capable of living to an old age, which is also true of the other creatures in this category.

Like the Lakotas, the Cheyennes make pouches in the shape of a lizard and also a salamander to hold an infant's umbilical cord (Grinnell 1972:2:110; Rockroads in Leman 1987:214), a practice followed by the Arapahos, who also make small paint bags in the likeness of lizards (Trenholm 1970:60, 73).

Turtles are associated with protection in Cheyenne and Lakota traditions too. In contrast to lizards, which are typically linked to male symbolism, turtles are generally connected to female imagery. The turtle's simultaneous link with earth and water imbues it with feminine and procreative symbolism in Lakota cosmology (Meeker 1901:163; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:112). The Lakotas believe that the turtle spirit is a wise protector of life. Its shield protects it from being wounded; thus, it is associated with powers over surgery, accidents, conception, birth, infants, and illnesses specific to women (Walker 1917:147; Tyon in Walker 1980:122; Walker 1980:249). In the Pte San Lowanpi, the turtle was held up as an animal for young women to emulate because it hears many things and does not tell anything (Walker 1980:249). As with lizards, pouches to hold an infant's umbilical cord are often made in the shape of a turtle (Wissler 1904:241). The Cheyennes also consider the turtle a sacred animal because it is difficult to kill (Marriott and Rachlin 1975:78; Grinnell 1972:1:193). Like the Lakotas, the Cheyennes connect the turtle to the womb and birth (Petter 1913-15:1072), and they place an infant's umbilical cord in pouches made in the form of a turtle (Grinnell 1972:2:110). The Cheyennes consider it a very sacred animal, and link it to the time when the earth was still shrouded in a primordial mist (Petter 1913-15:489, 1072; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:116). Cheyenne doctors also appeal to turtles in some of their healing treatments (Grinnell 1972:1:146).

Unlike other reptiles, which are highly valued by the Lakotas, snakes are generally feared and avoided (Brown 1992:40; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:113). Snakes are seen as sly and deceitful (Tyon in Walker 1980:122), and dreams of them generally portend death and disaster (Dorsey, J. 1894:479-80). In the past, they were considered the messengers of the much reviled water creatures, the Unktehi (Tyon in Walker 1980:118). Indeed, Good Seat (in Walker 1980:71) claimed that the spirits of this bad animal did not move on to the spirit world. In a Falling Star story, a snake is asked to raise the hero, but he declines saying No, I am the most unlike and most pitiful animal of all. I have no legs and have to crawl on my stomach and I eat dirt and can't get around much. I am not liked and I am not fit to raise him (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:397). In contrast, the Cheyennes and the Arapahos hold the snake in much higher regard. In the Arapaho creation story, the garter snake sacrificed itself by becoming the circumference of the universe. The outer rim of the Arapahos' sacred Wheel has one end tapered like the tail of a snake and the other fashioned into its head (Trenholm 1970:56; Harrod 1997:51). The Cheyennes believe the blue racer, which came from the sun, possesses great power (Grinnell 1972:1:150).

According to Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:122), frogs were closely associated with occult powers among the Lakotas. They were also viewed as the soldiers of the Thunders, Wakinýan...
The Cheyennes probably linked frogs to the thunders too because tadpoles were painted on the ankles of the blacktail deer dancers in their Sun Dance (Powell 1969:834). William Powers (1986:162) notes that the Lakotas view frogs as mediators between earth and water. Along with toads, they are linked with certain methods of healing among the Lakotas and the Cheyennes (Densmore 1948: 179; Grinnell 1972:1: 111, 150-151, 2:135; Tyon in Walker 1980:161; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:197).

Finally, Lakotas consider fish wakan, a patron of abolition, and a source of healing power connected to water (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:101; Tyon in Walker 1980:122; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:139). The Cheyennes also linked fish to healing (Grinnell 1972:2:151). Although both tribes have respect for the powers of fish, there are few details on what these entail in the ethnographic materials consulted for this report. Unlike mammals, there is little in the literature that connects water creatures to the area of Wind Cave National Park. There may very well be links to some of the park’s springs or the neighboring Hot Springs, but none of these are reported in the sources we covered for this report.

4. Spiders

The spider is one of the most significant spiritual presences in Lakota cosmology and important to the Cheyennes as well. In both tribal traditions, the spiritual figure of the trickster is revealed in the form of a spider (Grinnell 1972:2:111; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:35). The trickster is seen, according to Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:122), as the presiding genius of pranks and practical jokes with power to work magic over persons and things. Spider is the first animal of creation, the first to develop language and thus the one to name all other animals. He is cunning yet hapless, deceitful yet naive, arrogant yet cowardly; he is a creator and a destroyer, a quintessential symbol of cosmic foible and contradiction (Brown 1992:47-48). The spider appears in a wide range of traditional stories, many of which were used to instruct children (Grinnell 1926; Deloria 1978). But he also appears among the Lakotas as a central figure in their creation narratives (Walker 1983).

In many ways, the spider defies easy categorization in tribal cosmologies and naming practices. As Joseph Eppes Brown (1992:47) notes in reference to the Lakotas, the spider is special because it transcends classification because it carries features that tie it to all categories of animals. The spider is also powerful because it can move across all of the spaces in the Lakota and Cheyenne cosmos from the underworld to the sky, and because it makes a web that replicates the universe and reaches out to the four directions (Wissler 1904:248-249; Grinnell 1972:2:88-89; Powers, W. 1986:156). Luther Standing Bear (1978:26-27) told a story that reflects the spider’s ubiquitous presence as follows:

A Lakota brave was once holding his vigil and fasting. In his vision there came to him a human figure all in black. The person in black handed to the brave a plant and said, Wrap this plant in a piece of buckskin and hang it in your tipi. It will keep you in good health. When the brave asked who was speaking to him, the figure answered, I can walk on the water and I can go beneath the water. I can walk on the earth, and I can go into the earth. Also I can fly in the air. I can do more work than any other creature, and my handiwork is everywhere yet no one knows how I work. I am Spider. Go home and tell your people that the Spider has spoken to you. This happened long ago, but the Lakotas still use the Spider’s medicine.
Spiders are also described as mysterious and spiritually wise (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101; Powers, W. 1986:155-156); they are among a select group of spiritual figures that are appealed to in most major Lakota ceremonies (Walker 1980:208). They are also widely associated with healing power (Powers 1992:156-157; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:110-111, 156). George Bird Grinnell (1972:2:111) also wrote that the spider was an animal the Cheyennes associated with medicine, although he did not specify the nature of the connection.

Another source of the spider’s power is its link to the Thunders, also descended from Inyan. According to William Powers (1986:156), the Thunders are the only living beings that can attack spiders without fear of retaliation. There are a couple accounts about the dangerous consequences of killing spiders without offering them prayers (Dorsey, J. 1894:79; Tyon in Walker 1980:170). Historically, at least, the Lakotas believed the spider’s web to be indestructible, and they often imitated its design to ward off the dangers of the Thunders (Wissler 1904:44). The design was also used to deflect other sorts of danger too (Powers, W. 1986:159). Generally speaking, the spider was appealed to and imitated in a wide variety of contexts where people required protection.

The Lakotas also attached other symbolic associations to the spider, notably its connection to technology and industry. Oscar Howe (in St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:49-50) told a story of how the spider design, tohokmu, came to the people. In this story, a young hunter, while searching for game, took shelter in a cave and fell asleep. When he awoke the next morning, he saw a beautiful web above his head. Because he admired it and did not bring harm to its maker, the spider gifted him with knowledge of a hill where stones for making arrowheads could be found. She also instructed him how to make the arrowheads, a technology that the Lakotas believe was invented by spiders. In Lakota traditions, there is a fundamental connection between the spiritual powers of spiders and stones (Powers, W. 1982:12-13). Arrowheads and stone clubs abandoned on the prairie are commonly attributed to the work of spiders (DeMallie 1984:311n6; Brown 1992:47). In Yuwipi ceremonies, spiders and stones are often addressed simultaneously and even interchangeably in prayer and song (Powers, W. 1986:156-157).

The industry of the spider was not only linked to the making of arrowheads, but it was also associated with women’s work. In the buffalo sing for a young woman, the intercessor says, A spider, a turtle, the voice of the lark, a brave man, children, a smoking tipi (Walker 1980:249). According to Walker (1980:249), the spider served as a model for an industrious woman who provides adequate food and shelter for her children. Indeed, women who excel at quillwork often linked their abilities to the spiritual influence of the spider (Sundstrom. L. 2002:106).

There is still another symbolic association and that is, the connection of the spider’s web to the Four Winds and the Whirlwind. Like the whirlwind and its associates, the dragonfly and butterfly, the spider is understood to emerge from a cocoon, which holds the power that gives rise to its own movement and life force. In many ways, cocoons and caves are symbolic equivalents in so far as they both represent enclosed spaces where life is incubated, awaiting rebirth and regeneration (Brown 1992:49).

Finally, the spider’s web, tawogmunke, [meat trap] or tawokaske [to tie or imprison meat]16 was also associated with trickery and entrapment in Lakota traditions, especially in matters of romantic interest (Buechel 1970:485; Powers, W. 1986:152). Like the hoop of the elk dreamer, the spider’s web had the power to attract and catch a member of the opposite sex (Brown 1992:

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16 In these two words, ta is a contraction of talo or meat. In the first word, wogmunke means a trap; thus, the translation meat trap. In the second, wokaske refers to a tie (or knot) or the action of something being tied.
49), and so the spider’s image was often painted on the lower corner of a courting robe (Wissler 1905:267).

Spider symbolism is connected to the area of Wind Cave National Park in several different ways. First, and perhaps most importantly, it is the spider that uses its guile and trickery to bring Tokahe and other humans to the earth’s surface from their underground home at Wind Cave. Secondly, spiders are connected to the power of the Four Winds, whose life force is enveloped within and emerges from a chrysalis formation, which like a cave connects the spiritual and physical side of all life. And finally, the spider is closely linked to art and manufacture, especially the making of objects from flint found in many outcroppings in the park.

In concluding, the Lakotas and Cheyennes imbue the animals in their respective universes with diverse spiritual attributes, which are of considerable significance to humans as a source of protection, health, and general well-being. Their whereabouts, but especially their spiritual homes of origin, many of which are associated with the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park in particular, remain a matter of great importance to the Lakotas and Cheyennes in the practice of their religions and other cultural traditions. Today, it is the spiritual side of the human connection to animals that is most strongly upheld in their relationship to Wind Cave National Park and its environs.

VI. UTILIZATION PATTERNS

The importance of animals to the well-being of local tribes is not only evidenced in their reverential attitudes towards them, but also in the considerable knowledge they hold about their physical features, habits, and habitats. The Lakotas and Cheyennes hold complex naming systems for important species. This is especially true for the bison, for which they had as many as twenty different names that distinguished this animal by its sex, age, size, and other significant characteristics (see Appendix A). They also had an elaborate system of knowledge about animal anatomy and the uses to which different body parts could be put (see Figure 2). The Cheyennes and Lakotas used the body parts of animals for a wide variety of different purposes such as food and medicine, for shelter and tools, and in ritual and ceremony. Although some of these uses are described here, the reader is advised to consult Appendix A for more detailed information on this subject organized by the order and species of various animals.

A. As Food

A wide range of animals were taken as food by the tribal nations who lived in the region of the Black Hills, but the flesh of ruminant species was their main staple. Of the different ungulates that the Lakotas and Cheyennes consumed, bison provided a major source of meat, and nearly all parts of the animal were consumed (Curtis 1907-30:3:38; Ewers 1938:16; Hoebel 1960:64; Grinnell 1972:1:255). In reference to the Lakotas, James Walker (1982:74) wrote:

Some products of the buffalo were used in almost everything that the Oglalas did in their daily life, but the most important was the supply of food. They ate every part of the animal which could be masticated; for instance, they considered the testicles of the bulls a choice part and the fetus boiled in the water from the gravid uterus a great delicacy.

The tongue and the gristles around the nostrils were considered delicacies and often served at ceremonial feasts (Ewers 1938:16; Hassrick 1964:190; Grinnell 1972:1:255). The raw liver soaked in gall was highly prized and believed to enhance courage and bravery, while the equally de-
sirable raw kidneys were seen as necessary for good health (Bordeaux 1929:126; Ewers 1938:16; Hassrick 1964:190; Grinnell 1972:1:255; Standing Bear 1978:54; Walker 1982:64, 93-94; Whitman in Schwartz 1988:55). Pancreas and tripe were favorite dishes too (Grinnell 1972:1:255; Standing Bear 1978:54). The flesh from the hump of the buffalo was relished and served on ceremonial occasions; the elders favored this meat because of its tenderness (Ewers 1938:16; Grinnell 1964:190; Hassrick 1964:190; Walker 1982:64; Brown 1992:14). Other pieces of meat desired by the elders included the layer of meat that lies along the stomach and another that follows the hide along the back (Brown 1992:14). The brains were used to thicken soups (Standing Bear 1978:54), and the small intestines were made into sausages with bits of boiled or roasted meat, blood, and/or tallow (Bordeaux 1929:126; Hassrick 1964:190; Grinnell 1972:1:255; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:386; Brown 1992:14). The bones were split and the contents eaten, or they were boiled to release the marrow, a necessary ingredient in the making of pemmican (Grinnell 1972:1:255; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:386; Brown 1992:14). The shavings from scraped hides were used as thickeners in making soups and puddings. Hide scrapings were also consumed during difficult times, and even rawhide containers could be boiled and eaten under emergency circumstances (Ewers 1938:16). As John Ewers (1938:16) wrote: But in times of food shortage all parts of the buffalo, save the glands of the neck, the sinews, bull’s pizzle, horns, hoofs, and hair were eaten. The salivary glands were probably not eaten because a number of tribes in the northern plains believed that the light-colored tissues of these organs retained the remnants of human flesh from the time the bison were the predators and humans their prey (Grinnell 1926:93; Geist 1996:35).

Bison meat was butchered and prepared in many different ways. Some of the internal organs were eaten raw, but most food parts were either boiled in soups or roasted over hot coals (Bordeaux 1929:126; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:386). Much of the meat from the loins and back of the animal was cut into long slices and dried in the sun on large racks, or it was smoked over hot coals inside the lodge. After being dried, it was usually pounded and combined with dried fruit and tallow in small cakes, commonly called pemmican (Grinnell 1972:1:255; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:386; Brown 1992:14). Some of the Lakotas favorite cooked bison dishes, as reported in Ferdinand Hayden’s early writings (1862:370), included a boiled mixture of blood, brain, rosebuds, and rawhide scrapings and a stew of wild turnips or beans combined with beaver tail and the dried paunch of a bison. In modern times, a soup made from the intestines of bison, mixed with wild turnips and corn, is still served on special occasions (Albers 1966-1976).

For the Lakotas and Cheyennes, the three species of Cervidae, elk, mule deer, and whitetail deer provided important meat staples too. From the late fall through the early months of spring, their flesh was consumed as much as bison (Densmore 1918:447; Hoebel 1960:64; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:154-155; Grinnell 1972:1:257). Indeed, next to bison, elk and deer were the major sources of meat for the Lakotas who lived in the vicinity of the Black Hills (Ewers 1938:17; Hassrick 1964:164). Deer flesh was the meat that the Lakotas favored most after buffalo, and they considered it especially healthy because of the fresh leaves and berries on which this animal fed (Brown 1992:16, 30). Studies of browse utilization by deer in the Black Hills confirms this: ground juniper, bur oak, ponderosa pine, hop hornbeam, Oregon grape, bearberry, chokecherry, buffaloberry, blue aster, pussytoes, wild rose, and yucca are among the nutritious plants they consume (Turner 1974:140).

Pronghorns were a significant source of meat for the Cheyennes and Lakotas, and once again, they were probably as important in local diets as buffalo during certain seasons (Hoebel 1960:64; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:154-155; Grinnell 1972:1:257). Big-horn flesh was
highly valued in tribal diets as well, but it was probably not eaten as often as the meat of other ungulates (Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Grinnell 1972:1:272, 277; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Hoebel 1960:64; Brown 1997:17).

In Lakota and Cheyenne cultures, with the exception of a few species, carnivores were not usually taken as a source of food. The young puppies of coyotes and wolves were sometimes eaten by the Cheyennes (Hoebel 1960:64; Grinnell 1972:1:256, 2:198). Yet, George Bird Grinnell (1972:2:105) claims that in earlier times no one killed coyotes. The Cheyennes, however, occasionally hunted adult wolves for their meat (Hoebel 1960:64; Grinnell 1972:1:256, 2:198). Iron Teeth (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9), an elderly Cheyenne woman, reported that their meat was desirable, but Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:90) claimed that the flesh of older wolves was unpalatable and eaten only when other food was scarce. Although the Lakotas commonly ate the puppies of domesticated dogs on ceremonial occasions, only one source (Bordeaux 1929:126) mentions the consumption of wolves. There are no reports of foxes being hunted for food by either tribe.

The cubs of various wild cats were eaten by the Cheyennes, but only in times of starvation (Grinnell 1972:1:256). Some Lakotas were also known to eat feline flesh, but, as Hayden (1862b:140) reported, their consumption was considered very dangerous (Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:168; Walker 1980:169). Thomas Tyon told James Walker (1980:169):

> Whoever mutilates (*wicayupxun*) a mountain lion or a wild cat or even a house cat will have terrible things happen to him, it is said. That man’s hand or leg or foot becomes completely dislocated (*iataya napxunpsun*), it is said. Therefore, nobody eats cats, they believe. They are very afraid of them, all cats. This is the end of information on cats. So it is.

Royal B. Hassrick (1964:199) also reported that people had to take care when butchering wildcats and not tear their joints. Otherwise, they would suffer joint pain. The Cheyennes also ate bear meat (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90), and the Lakotas did so too, especially on ceremonial occasions (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:157).

The Cheyennes and Lakotas considered badger flesh a delicacy (Beckwith, M. 1930:381; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:169; Grinnell 1972:1:256), and both tribes consumed skunk meat as well. In fact, the Lakotas thought skunk was good for making people fat (Left Heron in Beckwith 1930:380-381, 420; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:168; Grinnell 1972:1:256). Other mustelids, such as ferrets, weasels, and minks, are not reported as a food source. William Bordeaux (1929:126) claimed the Lakotas never ate these small animals.

Several of the smaller herbivorous species were also believed to be a good source of meat. All species of rabbits and considered good food (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90; Denig in Ewers 1961:13). Porcupines were widely hunted not only for their quills but also their flesh (Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Lyford 1940:42). As Standing Bear (1975:16-17) wrote referring to his childhood: In those days we used to eat porcupine. Every portion of the body was used. The meat of the beaver was highly prized by both tribes as well (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Grinnell 1972:1:296), and again, Standing Bear (1988:63) wrote: The meat of the beaver is quite good, the tail being entirely of fat. When cooked, this tail tastes something like cheese, and we ate it with our lean meat like bread. Squirrels were also a favorite food, especially of elderly Lakota women who boiled the meat until it was so tender it did not have to be chewed (Hassrick 1964:168). Finally, prairie dogs were
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Lakota</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bladder</td>
<td>Waloh egnaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brain</td>
<td>Tanasuda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breast</td>
<td>Tatapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>........(breast-bone)</td>
<td>Tamakahsit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colon</td>
<td>Tascup owotanla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaphragm</td>
<td>Tapga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dung</td>
<td>Tacesili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ear (bison)</td>
<td>Ptece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye (bison)</td>
<td>Ptenakpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>Pteista</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flank</td>
<td>Cesiksice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flesh (in general)</td>
<td>Tucuste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(near knee)</td>
<td>Talo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(below knee)</td>
<td>Tahuwapahpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(foreleg)</td>
<td>Tanapkan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gall</td>
<td>Tanavicicte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gullet</td>
<td>Tapizi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair</td>
<td>Tavinapce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>Tahin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>........(A piece of fat) attached to the heart)</td>
<td>Tacanta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hide</td>
<td>Tacantopazan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intestines</td>
<td>Tahuka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney</td>
<td>Tasupa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney fat</td>
<td>Tajonka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver</td>
<td>Tapaksin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouth (roof of)</td>
<td>Tapi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscle</td>
<td>Taucaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neck</td>
<td>Tahpiyogin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nerve</td>
<td>atahu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>........(nerve running over back)</td>
<td>takan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paunch (bison)</td>
<td>Taniga Nige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>........(thin layer of fat covering paunch)</td>
<td>Tacankashuta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pericardium</td>
<td>Tacejiksica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rib</td>
<td>Tacanta ogin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder</td>
<td>Tuculu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder Blade</td>
<td>Tablo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder Sinew</td>
<td>Tabloku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spleen</td>
<td>Tablokan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spine ......(first bones of bison s spinal column)</td>
<td>Tapisleca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomach</td>
<td>Tacan hahake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tail</td>
<td>Tapo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tendon</td>
<td>Tasinta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongue</td>
<td>takan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udder</td>
<td>Taceji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urine</td>
<td>Taza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind-Pipe</td>
<td>Toglogloska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Womb</td>
<td>Tatamani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[*Drawn from Buechel 1970: 472-486, 663, 675*]
taken for their meat, which was considered very tasty (Vestal 1934:7; Hassrick 1964:168; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Moore, J. 1974a:164; Standing Bear 1988:158-159). The smallest herbivorous mammals, mice, gophers, voles, and shrews, are not reported as a source of food in either tribe.

Traditionally at least, animals associated with the sky were viewed as a means of protection rather than a source of nourishment. All game birds, many species of shorebirds and waterbirds, and some small land birds, however, were taken as food. The eggs of these and other kinds of birds were relished, commonly collected by women and children, and boiled for consumption (Bordeaux 1929:131; Hassrick 1964:169; Grinnell 1972:1:248). Different varieties of grouse, for example, were considered fine birds to eat by the Lakotas and Cheyennes; they were often taken in the fall when they fed on ripened buffaloberries and rosebuds (Bordeaux 1929:129, 200; Moore, J. 1986:184, 186; Standing Bear 1988:68). Ducks, geese, and wild turkey were also hunted at this time of the year (Moore, J. 1986:181, 186). The Lakotas sometimes took crows and magpies, but, normally, they did not eat either bird unless facing starvation (Bordeaux 1929:129; Hassrick 1964:172). The Cheyennes captured crows in times of hunger, but they never ate magpies, not even when starving, because they were so highly respected (Grinnell 1972:1:256). The snowbird or junco [Junco hyemalis] was another bird eaten by the Lakotas. It is significant because of its association with Wind Cave in the Lakota origin story (Hassrick 1964:214; Walker 1983:371). The Lakota call this bird cantku sa pela, (Buechel 1970:799), and according to Iron Shell (in Hassrick 1964:169):

To catch snowbirds, we took several horsehairs with nooses at one end and tied them to a stick, about six inches apart. This we laid on a bare spot of earth from which the snow had blown away. Then from a distance we waited to watch a flock settle. When one little bird would fly up, he would get caught and as we approached the others would fly, but several would catch their feet in the tiny nooses. Snowbirds were good boiled or roasted on coals.

The Lakotas and Cheyennes probably ate other kinds of small land birds as well, but there is little information on this in the ethnographic sources we reviewed.

The Lakotas and Cheyennes ate none of the amphibians, and only one group of reptiles: turtles. Turtles were considered a delicacy by both tribes (Bordeaux 1929:129; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90; Hassrick 1964:173; Grinnell 1972:1:256). When turtles were killed by the Cheyennes, their entrails were removed. Standing on the edges of their shells, they were placed around a fire and roasted. Sometimes, they were boiled in their shells (Grinnell 1972:1:308). The Lakotas usually boiled their turtle meat in soups (Hassrick 1964:173; Standing Bear 1978:64; Walking Bull 1980:11-12). The Cheyennes and Lakotas also consumed several varieties of fish, including suckers, catfish, and redfins. Both tribes collected crayfish and mollusks from local waters too (Bordeaux 1929:131; Buechel 1970:334, 501; Grinnell 1972:1:221), but this source of food did not rank very high at least among the Cheyennes (Moore, J. 1974a:208). Insects were normally not taken for food, although the Lakotas are reported to have consumed grasshoppers in times of starvation (Kelly 1933:123-124).
### TABLE 3. List of Animals Historically Located at Wind Cave National Park Taken As Food by the Cheyennes and Lakotas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ungulates</th>
<th>Carnivores</th>
<th>Small Herbivores</th>
<th>Birds</th>
<th>Reptiles, Fish, and Crustaceans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bighorn</td>
<td>Badger</td>
<td>Beaver</td>
<td>Crow</td>
<td>Crayfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bison</td>
<td>Bear</td>
<td>Porcupine</td>
<td>Duck</td>
<td>Mollusks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elk</td>
<td>Mountain Lion</td>
<td>Prairie Dog</td>
<td>Geese</td>
<td>Redfin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mule Deer</td>
<td>Skunk</td>
<td>Rabbit</td>
<td>Grouse</td>
<td>Sucker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronghorn</td>
<td>Wolf</td>
<td>Squirrel</td>
<td>Junco</td>
<td>Sucker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitetail Deer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Turtle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|            |                  |                    |           |                                 |
B. In Medicine and Hygiene

Animals were very important in Lakota and Cheyenne medicinal treatments. Besides the wider spiritual and symbolic roles they played in healing (see Appendix A), their various body parts were used in making medicines and hygienic products. Associated as they were symbolically and practically with nourishment and reproduction, the ungulates provided many different products for medicinal use, but unfortunately, only a few of these have been documented in ethnographic sources on either the Lakotas or the Cheyennes. The internal organs of various ungulates were highly valued as remedies because they were considered to have properties necessary to good health. Deer liver, for example, was considered a good medicine to keep an infant from continuously crying (Beckwith, M. 1930:390). The liver, pancreas and kidneys of bison were especially prized and were eaten to maintain good health (Ewers 1938:16; Freeland 1938:4; Hassrick 1964:190; Grinnell 1972:1:255; Standing Bear 1978:54; Walker 1982:64, 93-94; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55). Undoubtedly, they were used in treatments for specific illnesses and injuries as well. The bones of ungulates were certainly employed for these purposes. Bison horns and hoofs were reported in Lakota remedies for blood diseases (Goose in Densmore 1918:251), and rawhide from this animal went into the manufacture of splints to heal bone fractures (Densmore 1948:178). Also, fragments of elk bones were mixed in medicines for treating fractures (Densmore 1918:252-253; Bordeaux 1929:157).

One organ widely used in the making of bags for keeping medicines and sacred objects was the bladder (Curtis 1907-30:3:72, 73, 86, 87; Densmore 1918:71, 77, 79, 103; Ewers 1938: 60; Grinnell 1972:1: 212-213; Walker 1982:100; Brown 1992:122). In fact, the Lakotas considered the bladder of the bison to be sacred because as Black Elk (in Brown 1971:104) states, it could contain the whole universe. A deer bladder functioned as a nipple to feed broth to Lakota infants (Brown 1992:16), while deer or antelope udders were used for this purpose among the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:106). The skins of various ungulates also went into the making of bags that held medicines and ceremonial objects (Curtis 1905-1930:3:100, 102, 105, 140-141; Densmore 1918:79; Ewers 1938:51, 53; Grinnell 1972:1:134, 2:81; Brown 1992:122). The entire skin of various carnivores were also valued for making bags, coverings, or wrappings for medicines and other sacred objects The Cheyennes and Lakotas commonly put their medicines in pouches made from the skins of skunks and other mustelid species (Densmore 1918:253; Grinnell 1972:2:104; Lewis, T. 1990:110; Brown 1992:17). Bear, wolf, and coyote skins were especially prized for this purpose (Wissler 1912:57-58; Grinnell 1972:2:188, 193, 194, 198-199, 290, 2:74). Some skins were also rubbed on patients when doctoring. One Cheyenne healer doctored with a skunk skin, and badger skins were employed in the same way too (Grinnell 1972:2:134, 146). Even the hair of carnivores might be used in healing as in the Cheyenne practice of treating childbirth complications with hair from a yellow wolf (Moore, J. 1974a:176).

Other bodily parts had important medicinal functions too. The claws of certain birds and carnivores were used to mix medicines. The Cheyennes relied on badger claws for this purpose (Grinnell 1972:2:146), while the Lakotas employed bear claws to clean wounds (Densmore 1918:253, 1948:179; Standing Bear 1978:215). Lakotas used eagle claws in medicinal treatments, and in one application, flakes were scratched from their surface and mixed in a decoction as a remedy for scrofulous sores (Densmore 1918:253). The Cheyennes used turkey beards in making certain unidentified medicines (Grinnell 1972:1:134). The tails of mule deer were employed by Lakotas to apply ointments in healings performed by bear doctors (Powers, W. 1986:187), and the Cheyennes used them in medicine-making as well (Grinnell 1972:1:134, 2:123-124). Turtle hearts went into remedies for infertility and menstrual disorders (Wissler 1904:241-242; Walker 1917: 147). Louise Plenty Holes, a Lakota woman, told Mark St. Pierre
and Tilda Long Soldier (1995:83) how a deer tendon, *takan*, was used to tie off an infant’s umbilical cord. Finally, eagle and kingfisher feathers had a variety of different medicinal applications (Grinnell 1972:2:151; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:240-241; Standing Bear 1988:90; Brown 1992:43). Finally, the Lakotas fashioned pronghorn ears and badger paws into medicine bags (Densmore 1948:178, 179). The well-known Hunkpapa leader Sitting Bull was reported to have owned a medicine bag made from the ears of a pronghorn (Densmore 1918:252).

The bodily secretions of animals had specific medicinal uses as well. The Lakotas made a paste from buffalo fat, red clay, and ash that served as a skin cream and cleanser (Standing Bear 1978:118). Among the Cheyennes, animal tallow was a compound in the making of salves for a variety of medicinal purposes (Grinnell 1972:2:142). The Lakotas used extracts from various parts of an elk’s body to make love potions (Wissler 1912:88; Densmore 1918:178-179; Hassrick 1964:114, 116; Standing Bear 1978:217; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:110; Young Bear and Theisz 1994:25). Skunk musk was smeared on the chest to treat colds and other respiratory complications (Beckwith, M. 1930:420; Standing Bear 1978:34; Grinnell 1972:2:104), and in some applications, it was mixed with elk fat (Bordeaux 1929:109). The Lakotas made medicines out of badger fat to treat baldness and to heal scrofula (Fire and Erdoes 1972:172; Walker 1980:169-170).

Even the excrement of some animals had medicinal or hygienic applications. Because of their absorbent properties, buffalo chips were used in lieu of diapers. As Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:379-380) describes this:

> With diapers, if it is wet, you have to take it off and put on a clean one. But we used buffalo chips [dried dung]. The women packed them—the old [dried] pieces—and used them for diapers. First they powdered them up and put the powder into the skin. Whenever they wanted to change it, they took out the buffalo chips, which had absorbed everything, and the baby was never wet. Of course we greased them, so they were not irritated. Later the women had cloth and would take it and made a little pad and put the powdered buffalo chips in it and use it in that way. Babies were never wet. They used the softest part of a buffalo hide for the diapers.

This practice has also been reported for the Arapahos (Trenholm 1970:60). Standing Bear (1978:118) wrote about a talcum-like powder made from buffalo chips that was applied to skin irritations. Bison dung was part of a Cheyenne remedy to draw out snake venom (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55). The Plains Apaches applied dried rabbit feces on skin lesions (Schweinfurth 2002:141).

Many species of birds, insects, lizards, and amphibians were widely associated with healing and protection, and as result, amulets were commonly made from them and worn by people or attached to their wands, lances, or spears. Lakota *Heyoka* [Contraries] tied the cones of the kingfisher at the ends of their spears (Buechel 1970:186), and Cheyenne warriors put the skins of this bird, bats, butterflies, and dragonflies in their hair when they went to war (Grinnell 1972:2:111-112, 120). They also tied stuffed magpies to the headdresses of warriors (Ibid:124), and they attached prairie falcon, short-eared owl, tanager, and oriole feathers on the lances and bows of Contrary warriors (Powell 2002a:69). The Lakotas tied snakeskins around the bows of their Contrary warriors and sometimes used them as a protection against danger (Blish 1934:183; Powers, W. 1986:160).

Some insect species were crushed and mixed with other substances for medicinal applications. Red ants went into medicines to heal wounds when people were shot (Buechel 1970:483; Grinnell 1972:1:134), and butterfly parts comprised a medicinal remedy used by the
Plains Apaches for heart trouble (Schweinfurth 2002:141). Lizards, newts, and salamanders were occasionally killed by the Cheyennes and rubbed on the legs for treating certain types of pain (Grinnell 1972:2:111; Leman 1987:214; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55).

C. In Manufacturing

The dependence of the Lakotas and Cheyennes on the bison and the nearly exhaustive use of its parts for much of their food and many of their life necessities is widely reported in the literature. Both tribes also relied on other animals for many of the same purposes. Most of the major body parts of mammals, including skins, bones, teeth, hoofs, claws, organs, blood, cartilage, fat, and even dung were used historically by these two tribes for a wide variety of manufacturing purposes. Other animals, including birds, turtles, mollusks, and crustaceans, also had utilitarian functions as well.

1. Skins, Feathers, and Shells

The skin and fur of a wide variety of ungulates and small herbivorous species went into the manufacture of clothing, shelter, containers, ropes, and a host of other utilitarian objects. Similarly, the feathers of game and land birds and the shells of turtles and mollusks were used for practical purposes.

The intensive labor required to prepare and tan skins was the work of women in Plains tribes, and there are a number of good descriptions of this work in the literature on the Cheyennes and Lakotas (Ewers 1938:50-51; Densmore 1948:172-174; Hoebel 1960:62; Hassrick 1964:182-183; Grinnell 1972:1:213-217; Standing Bear 1974:19-21). Women who excelled at this work kept counts of the number of hides they tanned, and among the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, they could become members of guilds dedicated to excellence in the performance of this craft (Hassrick 1964:42-43, 191-194; Grinnell 1972:1:159-169; Schneider 1983). Until the 1820s, most of the labor women performed was for domestic use or for exchanges with neighboring horticultural tribes who traded corn and other agricultural goods in exchange for tanned hides. In later years, when a commercial market developed for bison hide and the skins of other ungulates, much of their work went into supporting this trade. There is considerable disagreement, however, among scholars on how women fared under this trade. Some scholars (Klein 1983), following the observations of people like James Walker (1982:43), claim that men retained control over the hides and were the ones who traded them and benefited from the exchange. Others, however, suggest that the situation was much more complex, not only varying from one tribal nation to another but also within single nations (Foster 1993).

The tanned skin, rawhide, and the detached fur or hair of the bison had the most versatile uses. Many articles of everyday clothing, including dresses, leggings, moccasins, and loin cloths were made from bison skins (Walker 1982:74; Brown 1992:121-122), although the Cheyennes and Lakotas generally favored the hides of other ungulates for these purposes. Among the Cheyennes, some of the clothing of elderly women and men was fabricated out of well-smoked tipi-liners (or dew cloths), typically made from the skin of a bison cow (Curtis 1907-30:6:155; Grinnell 1972:1:217). At the other end of the life cycle, clothing for Lakota infants was commonly made out of skins from unborn calves (Standing Bear 1978:4). Entire skins with the hair left on one side were used in the making of robes worn as blankets (Grinnell 1972:1:221; Walker 1982:74; Brown 1992:121-122). Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:151) reported that every man, woman, and child needed one to three robes each year for their personal use. The soles of
Moccasins were generally cut from a dried bison hide (Wissler 1910; Ewers 1938:22; Grinnell 1972:1:219).

Probably the most well-known and widely reported use of soft-tanned buffalo hide was the manufacture of tipis and tipi-liners (Curtis 1907-30:3:23, 25, 6:156; Bordeaux 1929:183; Ewers 1938:56; Grinnell 1972:1:226-234; Standing Bear 1975:19-21; Walker 1982:74; Brown 1982:121-122). Grinnell (1972:1:226) notes that Cheyenne women preferred to make their tipis from the hides of cows that had just shed their winter coats in mid-spring because these were the easiest to dress. Depending on their use and size, one Cheyenne lodge required anywhere from eleven to twenty-one hides (Hoebel 1960:62; Grinnell 1972:1:226; Moore, J. 1996a:33-40). Robes with the hair left on one side were used in the making of blankets and other bedding for everyday use (Grinnell 1972:1:221; Walker 1982:74; Brown 1992:121-122). This was common practice when warm coverings were needed during the winter months; in the summer months, tanned robes with the hair removed were preferred as blankets and bed covers (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:82; Grinnell 1972:1:87; Walker 1982:74; Brown 1992:121-122). A wide variety of pouches for storing pipes, gambling stakes, sewing equipment, and paints were fabricated from soft-tanned bison skins too (Wissler 1904; Ewers 1938:51, 53; Grinnell 1972:1:134; Brown 1992:121-122).

Rawhide went into the making of parfleches, the large rectangular envelopes in which dried food and other materials were stored. This hide also provided material for the fabrication of eating bowls, cooking containers, knife sheaths, and quiver cases (Curtis 1907-30:6:158; Wissler 1910:79-82; Ewers 1938:51; Grinnell 1972:1:244-245; Standing Bear 1978:53-54). Boats, mortars, and cradleboards were shaped out of dried hides and various kinds of horse gear were constructed out of this material too (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88-89; Ewers 1938:33-35; Grinnell 1972:1:210-211; Standing Bear 1978:3; Walker 1982:80; Brown 1992:121-122). Saddles of wood and elk horn were covered with green hide, which was then dried in place, and various kinds of ropes and lariats were plaited with strips of rawhide (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88-89; Ewers 1938:33-34; Grinnell 1972:1:206-208:2:197; Walker 1982:8). The Lakotas pounded their meat in hollows they dug in the ground and lined with hide from a bison's head (Densmore 1948:174). Finally, both tribes made glue from the shavings scraped off a bison hide when it was thinned (Grinnell 1972:1:175; Brown 1992:121-122).

Once removed from the hide, bison hair was used to stuff pillows (Grinnell 1972:1:189; Walker 1982:74, 103; Brown 1992:122). It also functioned as a stuffing for dolls, war shields, and game balls. It was attached to war bonnets, belts, and horse gear and used to pad saddles and make paintbrushes (Grinnell 1972:1:175, 189; Walker 1982:72 Brown 1992:121-122). The long hairs from a bull's neck were spun and braided to make lariats and ropes (Walker 1992:74; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88-89).

The hides of other ungulate species were the ones most desired for making garments, however. The skins of bighorn sheep were much in demand because of their fineness. Lakotas and Cheyennes used them in making dresses and leggings for women and war shirts for men (Curtis 1907-30:6:155; Bordeaux 1929:182; White Bull in Vestal 1934:162; Grinnell 1972:1:217,221). Elk hides were highly valued for their durability and suppleness (Standing Bear, 1988:59). After the hair was removed, elk skins were soft tanned by the Lakotas and Cheyennes to make moccasins, breechclouts, shirts, belts, leggings, and gowns for everyday wear as well as garments worn on ceremonial occasions (Walker 1982:101, 103, 104; Lyford 1940:33; Grinnell 1972:1:274). Pronghorn skins were typically soft-tanned and used in making women's dresses and leggings, men's breechclouts and war shirts, and the upper parts of moccasins (Grinnell
Finally, deerskins were soft-tanned after the hair was removed, and they were used to fabricate women’s dresses and leggings, moccasins, and men’s ceremonial clothing in both tribes. (Curtis 1907-1930:3:15, 27-29, 87, 94, 137, 5:155-156; Lyford 1940:33; Walker 1982:52, 101). The rawhide of mule deer and elk went into making Lakota drumheads (Brown 1992:16; Young Bear and Thiesz 1995:47).

Deerskins also went into the making of receptacles for holding various objects and belongings, and they were used for saddle skirts and shield covers (Walker 1982:101, 103, 104; Lyford 1940:33; Grinnell 1972:1:58, 189, 217, 221). The Cheyennes covered the shafts of their lances and the handholds of bighorn sheep bows with deer hide, and both tribes used antelope skin to make their shield covers (Grinnell 1972:1:175, 187, 189-190, 223; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101).

Rabbit fur was commonly used as a decorative ornamentation on clothing among the Lakotas (Lyford 1940:3), and so was beaver fur among the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:1:296). Elderly Lakota women tanned squirrel skins, and when they acquired enough, they sewed them together to make robes to sit on (Hassrick 1964:168). Additional uses for the skin and fur of these and other small herbivores may have existed, but these have not been recorded in the ethnographic sources studied for this report.

The skins of carnivores were rarely used in utilitarian ways, except in association with men’s work in warfare and hunting. The Lakotas and Cheyennes, for example, valued the skins of wildcats, coyotes, and otters for making quivers (Curtis 1907-30:3:29, 105, 137; Lyford 1940:33; Hassrick 1964:199; Grinnell 1972:1:184, 196, 222; Standing Bear 1988:23,60).

The most common historical and practical use of bird feathers was for fletching arrows. Vulture and turkey feathers were considered the best for this purpose because they were not damaged by blood (Densmore 1918:438-439; Grinnell 1972:1:181, 187; Brown 1992:18). Standing Bear (1988:19) wrote that the Lakotas considered turkey feathers among the best for making arrows, but since these were hard to acquire, only adult warriors and hunters used them. He also indicated that grouse and crow feathers were good for fletching arrows (Standing Bear 1988:19). While the Lakotas used hawk feathers in their hunting arrows (Densmore 1918:438-439; Standing Bear 1988:19; Brown 1992:18), the Cheyennes put them only on their ceremonial arrows. They were not attached to Cheyenne hunting and war arrows because it was believed they were easily damaged by blood (Grinnell 1972:1:181). The small feathers of eagles were also used in making arrows (Densmore 1918:438-439; Stars in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:346, [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:592-593]), an application also practiced by the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:1:306).

Turtle shells were fashioned into bowls by the Cheyennes and Lakotas and sometimes spoons too (Hoebel 1960:62; Grinnell 1972:1:171; Standing Bear 1975:15). The Lakotas also made paint pots from them (Standing Bear 1975:21). The shells of various freshwater mollusks were used for spoons, paint pots, incense containers, scrapers, and ornamentation (Densmore 1918:399, 1948:172, 195, 200; Grinnell 1972:1:221; Wedel and Frison 2001:52), while the claws of crayfish were used as ornaments on clothing (Buechel 1970:334).

17 In the late nineteenth century, Lakotas often acquired their pronghorn skins from non-Indian hunters, like Matthew Bingham (the brother of the first white men to come across Wind Cave), who lived in town of Hot Springs (Jones 1904; Bingham 1973:3-7; Bingham in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:33).
2. Teeth, Bone, and Quills

Some of the most highly prized animal parts were the elk’s two ivory canines. These symbolized longevity, and as Shooter, a Lakota, told Francis Densmore (1992:176):

In observing the carcass of an elk it is found that the teeth remain after everything else has crumbled to dust. These teeth will last longer than the life of a man, and for that reason the elk tooth has become the emblem of long life. We desire long life for ourselves and our friends. When a child is born its parents desire long life for it, and for this reason an elk tooth is given to a child if its parents can afford the gift.

Elk teeth often decorated the deer or antelope skin bodices of Lakota and Cheyenne women’s dresses (Curtis 1907-30:6:156; Grinnell 1972:1:221, 223; Standing Bear 1978:102, 188; Walker 1982:52). The Cheyenne fringed their leggings with them, and made necklaces out of them. So valuable were elk teeth that the Cheyennes were willing to trade a good horse for one hundred of them. Deer teeth also went into the making of Cheyenne necklaces (Grinnell 1972:1:221, 223, 224).

Needles, awls, and scrapers were fabricated from bison bones (Brown 1992:121). Runners for sleds, toys, and game parts were made from ribs and jawbones (Vestal 1934:7; Grinnell 1972:1:314; Standing Bear 1978:53-54). Knives, arrow straighteners, and arrowpoints were carved from shoulder blades or the dorsal spine (Curtis 1907-30:6:158; Densmore 1918:443; Grinnell 1972:1:185, 213-214). Finally, the Cheyennes fashioned a specialized tool to abrade hides from the proximal end of a bison humerus (Grinnell 1972:1:185, 213-214).

Other animal bones were also employed to make many different tools and objects. Straight pipes were fashioned from the shank bones of deer and antelope (Grinnell 1972:2:208). These were used in calling buffalo, based on a tradition the Cheyennes learned from their culture hero, Sweet Medicine, when he returned from his journey to their Sacred Mountain, Bear Butte (Stands In Timber and Liberty 1967:38). The Lakotas made dice the metatarsal bones of deer, and they used phalangeal bones in their cup and pin game (Densmore 1948: 191; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:325). The Cheyennes embellished the sheepskin shirts of leading men with these bones (Curtis 1907-30:6:156). Finally, the pizzle bone of a badger was made into an awl that was highly valued by the Lakotas (Fire and Erdoes 1972:133).

The Lakotas and the Cheyennes made combs and hairbrushes from the tail of a porcupine (Grinnell 1972:1:211, 2:255, 310; Standing Bear 1978:34, 188; Walker 1982:52), and they used the animal’s hair to make head roaches (Standing Bear 1978:34). The most important part of this animal were its quills. These were used in embellishing a wide range of material objects. Among the Lakotas, they included: moccasins, cradleboard covers, war shirts, armbands, hair ornaments, buffalo robes, moccasins, saddle bags and blankets, navel amulets, pipe bags, pipe stems, bladder cases, knife cases, and gauntlets (Wissler 1904:234-235, 242-245, 250-251, 1910:235, 238,242, 244, 252, 260, 265; Ewers 1938:61; Lyford 1940:14,21, 27, 29, 41-55; Standing Bear 1975:16-17; 1978:3). The Cheyennes ornamented dresses, war shirts, hair wrappings, robes, baby cradles, moccasins, saddles, lodges, backrests, flutes, buckskin bags, and pipe stems with quills (Grinnell 1972:1: 56, 60, 99, 147, 161, 168, 204-205, 207, 224, 243, 245, 346). The preparation of quills for embroidery or wrapping is described in detail in Carrie Lyford’s work (1940:41-55), but there are other good descriptions too (Ewers 1938:59-61; Hassrick 1964:191-193; Grinnell 1972:1:164, 166-167, 218-220).
Cheyenne women formed a quilling society, the *Me e no ist st*, which included only the most prolific and talented quillers. The society was divided into grades, reflecting the quillers’ levels of accomplishment. George Grinnell (1972:1:159-169) describes this society in great detail, and the prestige accorded its members. Women of the Lakota’s *Wipata Okolakiciye* [Quill Society] also derived great prestige for their talents and accomplishments in quilling (Powers, M. 1987:73-74). These women held quilling displays and contests where they exhibited their creations and competed with each other on the skill, productivity, and artistic excellence of their work (Sundstrom, L. 2002:102-111). They kept counts of their accomplishments on robes and on the dew cloth of the Red Council Lodge (Wissler 1910:92-94; Hassrick 1964:42-43, 272; Sundstrom, L. 2002). According to Royal B. Hassrick (1964:191), quilling was probably the highest attainment in the female arts and a primary area of female artistic contribution.

Bird bones were also used for a number of utilitarian purposes, but most of the uses were ceremonial. The Lakotas reportedly made the wing bones of the eagle into awls for sewing the buffalo hides that went into the construction of tipis (Standing Bear 1975:21), and the Cheyennes constructed war whistles out of the wing bones of sandhill cranes (Grinnell 1972:2:109, 110).

3. Horns, Hoofs, and Claws

The horns and hoofs of ungulates were prized for many different purposes. Bison horns were made into dishes, spoons, ladles, scrapers, and a wide variety of other utensils and tools (Curtis 1907-1930:3:138; Hoebel 1960:62; Grinnell 1972:1:64, 211; Standing Bear 1978:53-54; Walker 1982:74; Brown 1992:12). They also went into the manufacture of bows and arrow straighteners (Curtis 1907-30:6:156; Ewers 1938:37; Grinnell 1972:1:173, 179; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:27). Spoons and ladles were also fabricated from the horns of the bighorn (Hoebel 1960:62; Grinnell 1972:1:211; Standing Bear 1975:22).

The Cheyennes and the Lakotas preferred to use elkhorn for making fleshers to scrape hides (Grinnell 1972:1:213; Standing Bear 1975:19). Iron Teeth (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:25), a Cheyenne woman, tells how valuable these were among her people:

This hide-scaper I have is made from the horn of an elk my husband killed just after we were married. He cut off the smaller prongs and polished the main shaft. The Indian men of the old times commonly made this kind of present to their young wives. Besides using them in tanning, the women made marks on them to keep track of the ages of their children. The five rows of notches on this one are the age-records of my five children. Each year I have added a notch to each row, for the living ones. Any time, I can count up the notches and know the age of any of my children. Throughout the seventy-four years it has always been a part of my most precious pack. There were times when I had not much else. I was carrying it in my hands when my husband was killed on the upper Powder River. It was tied to my saddle while we were in flight from Oklahoma. It was in my little pack when we broke out from the Fort Robinson prison. It has never been lost. Different white people have offered me money for it. I am very poor, but such money does not tempt me. When I die, this gift from my husband will be buried with me.

The Cheyennes also used elkhorn to knap flint, and they made fleshers out of the hind legs of elks and bears (Curtis 1907-30:6:158) They sometimes made bows from elkhorn as well (Grinnell 1972:1:173-174; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:27). The Lakotas fashioned the porous portion of an elkhorn into implements for applying their paints (Walker 1982:100).

Among the Lakotas, deer hoofs were worn as ornamentation in armlets and necklaces (Brown 1992:16), and they served as cuplike utensils to hold paint (Walker 1982:100). In both tribes,
bison hoofs were used as hatchets for butchering (Densmore 1918:443), they were boiled to make glue (Standing Bear 1978:53-54), they were employed in arrowmaking (Grinnell 1972:1:183), and they were made into pendants, rattles, and decorative cylinders (Grinnell 1972:1:221; Brown 1992:122).

4. Organs, Fat, Blood, and Cartilage

Various organs from mammals were used for making bags and containers. Among the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, the paunch or stomach of a buffalo was washed, cleaned, and suspended on sticks over a fire to serve as a receptacle for boiling water and cooking meat (Curtis 1907-30:3:138, 6:156; Hassrick 1964:189; Grinnell 1972:1:170, 212; Standing Bear 1975:21; Brown 1992:122; Black Elk in DeMallie 1994:335, 386). The Cheyennes also made temporary cups from the paunch (Grinnell 1972:1:170). Bladder bags held quills, tobacco, and paint (Ewers 1938:60; Grinnell 1972:1:212-213; Walker 1982:100; Brown 1992:122). The heart lining or pericardium served as a water container for Cheyenne children and infants, and it also went into the making of cases to hold porcupine quills (Grinnell 1972:1:213, 219). The Lakotas employed the pericardium for similar purposes (Brown 1992:123) and for storing tallow (Stars in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:347-348, [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:594-595]). The Cheyennes fashioned dried bison aorta into pipes (Curtis 1907-30:6:108). Another organ used by the Cheyenne was the tongue: the rough skin at its tip was once made into a comb (Grinnell 1972:1:211). Finally, the brains and liver of bison and also deer were mixed together and applied to skins and robes as a tanning solution (Hoebel 1960:62; Grinnell 1972:1:216; High Dog in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:332-334, [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:568-571]; Standing Bear 1975:19).

The ligament, fat, and blood of animals had many diverse uses as well. The sinew from a bison’s hind legs was dried and cut into small arrow points, and the sinew from the neck went into the construction and reinforcement of handles for needles, knives, and pipes (Densmore 1918:436; Grinnell 1972:1:208). Sinew from the bison’s dorsal spine was made into sewing thread, bowstrings, rope, and cordage (Curtis 1907-30:6:158; Bordeaux 1929:183-184; Lyford 1940:38; Grinnell 1972:1:218; Walker 1982:74; Brown 1992:122). Deer sinew was used in arrowmaking and for sewing (Densmore 1918:438; Standing Bear 1988:23; Brown 1992:16). Bison fat was the common medium for mixing paint pigments (Walker 1982:100), and the blood of this animal was applied to arrows and mixed with paints. Fat was also employed in sealing pipes and in making glue (Densmore 1918:103, 439; Grinnell 1972:1:19; Brown 1992:123).

5. Dung

Finally, dried bison dung, or buffalo chips, had important practical functions. Buffalo chips, according to Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:91), in their natural chunks make good wood. They were used as a popular and widely accessible form of fuel, and when pulverized, as a form of tinder (Densmore 1918:436; Wooden leg in Marquis 1931:91; Brown 1992:123; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55).
### TABLE 4. Animals Historically Located at Wind Cave National Park Whose Body Parts are Used in Practical Manufacturing Among the Cheyennes and Lakotas

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Animals</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ungulates</strong></td>
<td>Bighorn, Bison</td>
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<td>Mule Deer, Whitetail Deer</td>
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D. Symbolic and Ceremonial Uses

The body parts of many different animals were found in a wide range of Lakota and Cheyenne ceremonies, and they functioned in these contexts in complex, symbolic ways. Animals were also represented on dancers, ceremonial tipis, and other sacred objects, and references to some of this imagery and the ceremonies themselves are discussed in more detail in Appendix A.

1. Skins and Feathers

For most of the tribal nations in the Great Plains, animal skins and furs symbolized shelter, warmth, and protection. In wearing animal skins, Joseph Eppes Brown (1992:17) said: The Oglala preferred to cut the hides as little as possible, as if they wished to retain their integrity, and thus the power, of the whole living animal. In a similar vein, Karl Schlesier (1987:12) wrote:

The Cheyenne dressed as animals because their clothing consisted of skins and furs. They fashioned themselves after animals of their choosing or rather the animals who had chosen them. The person who selected wolves became a wolf without changing physical form. He or she dreamed wolf dreams, possessed wolf skills and power, acted like a wolf, immersed himself or herself in wolf lore, protected wolves, painted himself or herself as a wolf, was taught by wolves, and wore wolf on his or her body and in a bundle. Here the border between the wolf and the human had been cracked in the physical world, but in the spirit world, matasoomhestanov, the two had become the same.

While the skins or feathers of animals were widely worn to emulate the species they came from, there were special restrictions for handling many of them. The skins and furs of carnivores and white buffalo were subject to restrictions. Similarly, the feathers of raptors and other powerful birds were handled with special care and only used in certain contexts. At the outset, a few words need to be said about the special ways some skins and feathers were handled.

a. Restrictions on the Handling of Skins and Feathers

James Howard (1979:31) writes that albino animals were highly regarded and thought of as chiefs of their species. Accordingly, the white buffalo skin, a rarity, highly venerated by the Lakotas tribe and Cheyennes, could not be touched by the hunter but had to be handled ceremoniously by qualified men who had a spiritual partnership with bison (Densmore 1918:446; Grinnell 1972:2:202-204). According to Francis Densmore (1918:446), The skin was not treated like an ordinary buffalo hide. The animal had to be skinned in a special way to prevent the spilling of blood, and only women with certain qualifications were allowed to dress it (Densmore 1918:446). This was also true for the Cheyennes, whose women had to undertake a special ceremony in order to prepare a white buffalo hide (Grinnell 1972:2:202-204). The Lakotas kept the robes of this animal in special rawhide cases (Densmore 1918:446), and they displayed them on certain ceremonial occasions such as the place of honor in a spirit keeping lodge or the altar of an adoption ceremony. Edward S. Curtis (1907-30 3:110) wrote that at the close of a spirit keeping ceremony, the white buffalo skin was carried to the north or west and buried in a cave or hole as an offering to Wakan Tanka. The Cheyennes hung them up as offerings to Ma heo and the Maiyun (Grinnell 1972:1:272, 2:201). In later years, according to Grinnell (Ibid:1:273), these hides were not treated with the same respect, sold to white traders, and tanned by captive women.

The skins of many carnivores were also treated in special ways. The Cheyennes would not allow women to handle wolf hides in earlier times, but in more recent times, women underwent a
special ceremony that enabled them to tan them without getting palsy (Grinnell 1972:1:105, 2:198-200). The Lakotas insisted that only virgins tan wolf hides for ceremonial purposes (Walker 1982:95), and they also prohibited menstruating women from tanning bear hides less they get hairy or acquire scabs and black splotches on their faces and hands. It was only after menopause that women took on this task (Hassrick 1964:249; Tyon in Walker 1980:159). Similarly, Cheyenne women were prohibited from dressing the hide of a bear. It was believed that the soles of a woman’s feet would crack or her face would become hairy should she engage in such activity. This task was done either by men or women from other tribes (Grinnell 1972:1:198, 2:105).

Many restrictions surrounded the handling of some of the mustelid species. Although there is some debate whether or not otters ever existed in the Black Hills, they certainly lived in the larger rivers fed by this mountain range. Regardless, they were highly sacred and important to the Cheyennes and Lakotas. Indeed, otter skins were so powerful that Lakota women who touched them while they were menstruating were said to become ill and even die (Tyon in Walker 1980:168). The Cheyennes had no prohibitions against women preparing otter skins, although they did prevent them from processing the peltries of a rodent species, the beaver (Grinnell 1972:2:104, 198). There appears to have been no prohibitions among the Lakotas on women handling beaver skins, however. By contrast, the skins of ermines, weasels, and other mustelids had to be handled and worn with great care among the Lakotas. Men could not handle them after being with a woman, and women were not allowed to touch them while menstruating; if they did, they would suffer pain or serious illness (Tyon in Walker 1980:168-169).

The feathers of eagles and other sacred birds were handled with great care, and generally, only certain people were allowed to touch or use them. Among the Lakotas, only men who achieved distinction in battle were permitted to wear eagle feathers (Curtis 1907-30:3:23, 30; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:389-390). Individuals with an exceptional record of war deeds wore a warbonnet made with these feathers (Walker 1982:103). Women carried or wore eagle feathers in two sets of circumstances. First, they were allowed to use the feathers of kinsmen who died in war. There was a special society of Lakota women whose male relatives had been lost in battle. In addition to the plume of an eagle, which these women wore upright at the back of their head as a badge of their status, they also wore the feathers their deceased kinsmen would have been entitled to wear (Walker 1982:63, 106). Secondly, women for whom a Pte San Lowanpi ceremony had been conducted were wore eagle plumes in their hair (Standing Bear 1988:88). Among the Cheyennes, according to John Stands in Timber (and Liberty 1967:52-53), eagle feathers were the insignia of chiefs, and they were worn only by leaders and noted warriors. By the mid-twentieth century, he noted that everyone, even women, took to wearing them for dances and parades. His remark suggests that in earlier times restrictions were placed on a woman’s use of these feathers.

b. The Contexts of Their Use

Except for ordinary land birds and insects as well as some of the smallest herbivores, virtually every species of animal was represented in the regalia and equipment the Lakotas and Cheyennes used in their ceremonies.

As in the world of everyday manufacture, the rawhide, tanned skins, and hair of the bison were ubiquitous in Lakota and Cheyenne ceremonialism. George Dorsey (1905:12) wrote that the Cheyennes made a point of fabricating every article that went into the renewal of their Sacred Arrows with material drawn from the bison, including hides, glue, sinew, blood, and so on. In the Cheyenne Sun Dance, the lodge maker priests and the pledgers carried bison robes (Dorsey, G.
Valuable robes donated by warriors covered the roof of their Sun Dance lodge (Hoebel 1960:14). The Cheyennes also used bison hair during the Sun Dance to wrap their pipe bowls, stems, and tampers (Dorsey, G. 1905:74; Grinnell 1972:2:240-241). In their Animal Dance [Mussumut] tufts of bison hair were tied to the sacred wheel and used symbolically in other parts of the ceremony (Grinnell 1972:2:314-315, 318-319).

The Lakotas used bison skin and hair in their Sun Dance performances (Curtis 1907-30:3:95; Densmore 1918:118, 123, 125; Walker 1980:97-98; 179, 186, 188, 189, 190, 192; Brown 1992:121, 123). Bison hair and skins were also handled in various symbolic ways in the Hunka (Curtis 1907-30:3:72, 73, 86; Densmore 1918:77) and in the Pte San Lowanpi (Densmore 1918:97-98; Walker 1980:179-180, 189, 246, 249, 1982:106; Brown 1992:122). Bison hair, which signified the breath of life, was wrapped around the umbilical cords of boys before these were inserted into their protective, lizard-shaped pouches (Standing Bear 1978:154), and it was stuffed into the balls used in the Throwing the Ball Ceremony (Curtis 1907-30:3:138; Brown 1992:122).

Beyond the Sun Dance and other important ceremonies, there were also other formal and ceremonial uses for bison skins. The Lakotas painted their winter-counts and war deeds on soft-tanned skins (Walker 1982:100-101; Brown 1992:121-122). These skins were hung on poles with scalp locks as war banners (Brown 1992:123). After a successful raid, Cheyenne warparties painted battle images on these skins, and displayed them as they made a victorious entry into their villages (Grinnell 1972:2:18-19). The Cheyennes kept their Sacred Hat in a bag made of bison skin (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:75), and their Contraries kept their lances wrapped in bison hides (Grinnell 1972:2:81).

The Lakotas also wore robes with the fur still attached for special occasions, such as the courtship trysts of young couples (Walker 1982:51) or for ceremonial events, such as the Hunka, where female children wore robes made from the skin of a buffalo calf (Curtis 1907-30:3:76, 78, 80; Densmore 1918:77). Many of these robes were embellished with elaborately painted or quilled designs to signify the prestige and honor of the wearer and worn on public occasions (Ewers 1938:22, 58; Hassrick 1964:191-193), something the Cheyenne did as well (Grinnell 1972:1:159-160). Finally, they were used as coverings and wrappings for the deceased (Curtis 1907-30:3:100-102; Brown 1992:121-122).

The soft-tanned skins of cervids appeared in many different ceremonial contexts. Lakota men wore deerskin aprons, nite iyapehe, when they participated in the Sun Dance, and they wore balls of sweetgrass wrapped in a deerskin and tied to end of their braids at marriage (Curtis 1907-1930:3:19, 28-29, 95, 139; Densmore 1918:125; Walker 1982:52, 101). Soft-tanned deerskins were also used in mortuary practice, and they were fashioned into a special wrapping, wi caske, to hold a spirit bundle and into a decorated case, pan, which held the gifts to be given away at a spirit-keeping ceremony (Curtis 1907-30:3:100, 102, 105; Densmore 1918:79). They also provided material for the lodge coverings and regalia of some of the warrior societies (Wissler 1912:46, 72). Cheyenne warriors wore deerskins and tails, enabling them to outrun their enemies (Grinnell 1972:1:124). The skins were also displayed in the Sun Dance because the Cheyennes believed that this animal belonged to the ceremony (Grinnell 1972:2:232, 266-267).

Rabbit skins were widely worn in ceremonial contexts. Strips of jackrabbit fur were tied to the robe of the Cheyenne Sun Dance leader (Grinnell 1972:2:218, 232, 263; Powell 1969:2:859), and they were wrapped around the hoops used in their antelope hunting ceremonies (Grinnell 1972:1:284). In the Lakota Sun Dance, bands of this animal’s fur were tied around the wrists and ankles of the dancers as a symbol of humility (Densmore 1918:125; Black Elk in Brown 1971: 372.

The skins of most carnivores were restricted to use in military and ceremonial settings and most of them could only be handled and worn by men. Elaborately painted canine skins were an important part of the Cheyenne s Massaum or Animal Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:296-309; 323-334; Schlesier 1987:96-103). Canine skins also played an important role in the Cheyenne Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:231, 249, 250, 344). In this ceremony, fox and wolf skins were worn to imitate the roles these animals played in the story of the Great Race (Grinnell 1972:2:300-301, 323-334). Most of the other ceremonial contexts for the use of canine skins by the Cheyennes were associated with the performances and activities of warriors and the military societies to which they belonged (Dorsey, G. 1905:19, 25, 55, 56-57; Grinnell 1972:1:300, 2:24, 72).

In contrast to the Cheyennes, the skins of canines do not appear to have been worn or displayed at most of the Lakotas major religious ceremonies, and this may reflect some of their ambivalent attitudes towards these animals. Canine skins were worn by the Lakotas but primarily in military contexts, especially in the rituals of their soldier societies. Lakota men who dreamed of wolves had the right to carry or wear their skins and act as scouts on war parties (Wissler 1912: 15, 16, 35, 38, 54, 72, 90-91; Walker 1980:268-269, 1982:95; Brown 1992:17). Indeed, among the Lakotas, some skins, such as those of bears and wolves, could only be worn and carried by people who dreamed of these animals (Wissler 1912:90-91; Tyon in Walker 1980:159, Walker 1982:95; Powers, W. 1977:58).

The otter was a sacred animal to the Lakotas (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101), and its pelts adorned many different kinds of sacred implements and regalia. Sun Dancers wore otter skin capes that signified the power of water and land (Tyon in Walker 1980: 177; Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:183), and so did the members of various military societies (Wissler 1912:24, 26, 34-35, 47, 72, 76; Walker 1980:182, 272, 274 277, 280; Brown 1992:17). Among the Cheyennes, otter skins covered some of the vikuts that Cheyenne warriors used for carrying water (Grinnell 1972:2:24), and the hohktsim or wheel lance shaft was decorated with this fur as well (Grinnell 1972:1:187).

Among the Lakotas, weasel skins were worn by spiritual intercessors, such as the walowan or singer, who conducted a Hunka or the Pte San Lowanpi (Walker 1980:223, 246). They also adorned the regalia of the sash bearers of the Miwatani Society (Wissler 1912:46). Outside of religious and formal contexts, ermine, mink, and weasel skins were sometimes cut into strips as decoration for men's shirts, dresses, and headdresses (Lyford 1940:33; Brown 1992:18), but these had to be handled with great care because of the dangers they posed to the wearer and others (Tyon Walker 1980:168). Cheyenne Dog Soldiers wore the skins of another mustelid species, the skunk, with heads intact, and the tails of this animal were tied to horses going into battle (Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Dorsey, G. 1905:21).

Feathers were widely taken by the Cheyennes and Lakotas for ceremonial purposes. For both tribes, there was a complex language of feathers, in which the wearing or use of specific feathers designated war achievements, religious roles, and other positions of distinction. Feathers also adorned many different sacred items, and they were associated with all of the most important tribal ceremonies (Standing Bear 1975:85-88; Moore, J. 1986:188). Eagle feathers and plumes, which symbolized the breath of life for Cheyennes and Lakotas, were clearly the most revered and widely used (Powell 1969:2:796, 806, 833, 834, 834, 344; Brown 1992:43). They were associated symbolically with the valorous accomplishments of their wearers particularly in warfare (Brown

The feathers of owls, turkeys, woodpeckers, crows, magpies, tanagers, and hawks were not only worn by members of various Lakota and Cheyenne military associations, but they adorned their pipes, clubs, shields, lances, vikuts, and other war paraphernalia. Hawk feathers decorated the lances of the Lakota Cante Tinza [Brave Hearts], and they adorned the war regalia of other societies too (Wissler 1912:72). Owl feathers were worn in the headdresses of the Lakota Wic iska, and they served as insignia for the Miwatani (Dorsey, J. 1894:463; Curtis 1907-30:3:139; Wissler 1912:35, 41-42, 58, 71; Walker 1980:273; Standing Bear 1988:72). The Cheyennes attached turkey feathers to lances used in ceremonies or in battle to count coup, they ornamented war clubs with redheaded woodpecker feathers, and they tied the heads and feathers of sandhill cranes to their shields (Grinnell 1972:1:187, 2:195). Crow feathers were the ones most widely used by Lakotas in connection with war and warriors (Wissler 1912:15, 46, 58, 72; Buechel 1970:283; Walker 1980:262, 266; Walker 1982:95), and the same holds true for the Cheyennes, who also used magpie feathers for these purposes (Dorsey, G. 1905:25; Grinnell 1972:2:105; Moore, J. 1986: 183).

Feathers appeared in a wide range of ceremonial contexts. In their antelope hunting ceremony, the Cheyennes used a pole-like implement called an antelope arrow to which crow and magpie feathers were attached, and they also tied these feathers to the seams of the ceremonial rattles that were a part of this ritual too (Grinnell 1972:1:203, 284). Among the Lakotas, eagle feathers and plumes as well as the feathers of woodpeckers and mallard ducks were attached to ceremonial equipment in the Hunka and the Pte San Lowanpi (Curtis 1907-30:3:74, 75, 78, 81, 82, 87, 94, 95; Densmore 1918:70, 71, 72, 74; Walker 1980:187, 190, 191, 202, 213, 217-218, 230-231, 234, 244, 245, 251-252, 1982:106).

The eagle is one of the birds that belongs to the Sun Dance, and so its feathers are widely used in this ceremony, not only to adorn the dancers and intercessors but also the pipe and other sacred objects associated with it (Densmore 1918:104, 125-126; Powell 1969:2:796, 806, 833, 834; Grinnell 1972:2:215, 232, 233, 234, 243-244, 262, 265, 267, 268). Two woodpeckers are also associated with the ceremony. The feathers, skin, and body of the redheaded woodpecker and the northern flicker appear in the performance of the dance in both tribes (Dorsey, G. 1905:95; Grinnell 1972:2:109, 232-233, 265, 268; Brown 1992:45).

2. Skulls, Bones, and Quills

The skulls of animals have considerable spiritual significance and are found widely in ceremonial contexts. The Lakotas and Cheyennes believe that skulls hold the spiritual potency of the animals from which they come. Historically, the Lakotas believed that bison skulls were sacred dwellings for Tatanka, the principle spiritual representative of the buffalo (Walker 1980:216, 224). Takes the Gun told Walker (1980:214) that in the Hunka ceremony:
the spirit of the buffalo comes to its skull. The spirit of Tatanka is pleased to see the skull of a buffalo. The buffalo skull is at the ceremony because Tatanka is pleased.

Indeed, in most Lakota ceremonies for hunting, healing, celebrating a girl’s passage into womanhood, and honoring an adoption, bison skulls were painted and their orifices filled with sage as an act of propitiation and respect for the spirit of the buffalo (Curtis 1907-30:3:75, 78, 82, 84, 86, 87, 94, 95, 98; Densmore 1918:72, 99, 122, 275; Walker 1980:179, 216, 224, 227-228, 238, 245, 247-248, 251, 255, 1982:74, 75-76). Similarly, the Cheyennes held the skull of the buffalo in high regard and filled its orifices with sage, sedge, and other sacred plants at their Sun Dances and Animal Dances (Dorsey, G. 1905:91, 97; Hoebel 1960:13, 16; Grinnell 1972:1:82-83, 2:125, 223, 231, 235, 270, 291, 300-306; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:97; Schlesier 1987:6). John Moore (1996a:67) also mentions that the Cheyennes collected ancient skulls of bison antiquus and bison occidentalis that were found near prehistoric jumps because the horns are more impressive than those of the living bison. Given the importance of bison skulls in historic and modern ceremonial practice, it is not surprising that modern tribal members have requested these from the park (Terry 1999, Personal Communication).

The wing bones from eagles were made into Sun Dance whistles. Commonly believed to symbolize the Thunders, these whistles were also used in war and for certain kinds of healing (Curtis 1907-30:3:54, 91, 95, 97; Dorsey, G. 1905:124; Densmore 1918:161; Blish 1934:185; Walker 1982:95, 98; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:42).

The only information on any special ceremonial use for quills was found on the Lakotas. Sun dancers wore an eagle feather wrapped with red dyed porcupine quills (Walker 1980:179), and invitation wands for their Hunka ceremonies were made of eagle feathers decorated with dyed porcupine quills (Walker 1980:221).

3. Hoofs, Horns, and Claws

Just as the skeletal remains of an animal were believed to hold its spiritual strength and potency, so hoofs, horns, and claws were believed to be the repositories of an animal’s spiritual essence (Walker 1982:103). The Cheyennes had a military society called the Himoweyuhkis, Elk-Scrapers, whose members carried a piece of elk horn carved in the image of a snake (Grinnell 1972:2:57-62). This horn could create a sound capable of being transmitted over long distances, and it was used to attract game to camp when food was needed. The members of this society also carried rattles made of the dewclaws from elk, deer, and antelope (Dorsey, G. 1905:18-19). The Cheyennes attached bear and wolf claws to their war shields (Grinnell 1972:1:188, 193, 194, 198-199, 290, 2:74; Moore, J. 1974a:176), and tied them on the head of the yellow-painted dancer in their Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:280). Finally, the Cheyennes valued fossilized horns, tusks, and teeth from prehistoric animals, which were often kept in their medicine bags and used in ceremonial contexts (Moore, J. 1996a:67).

Among the Lakotas, the horns and hoofs of bison were worn on the headdresses of officiates who conducted the Hunka and Pte San Lowanpi ceremonies (Walker 1980:223, 246). Deer hoofs were made into rattles for Miwatani members (Curtis 1907-30:3:172; Wissler 1912:48), and they served as ornamentation on armbands and necklaces worn for various ritual occasions (Brown 1992:16). The Lakotas used bear claws in association with rituals surrounding warfare and in other ceremonial contexts as well (Densmore 1918:267; Powers, W. 1977:58; Walker 1980:159; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984: 167, 178-179, 230, 278).
4. Fat, Cartilage, Organs, and Blood

The Lakotas place fat from the heart of a buffalo in the hole where their Sun Dance tree is placed, and it is used to seal the pipe smoked in this ceremony (Black Elk in Brown 1971:88; Brown 1992:123). Eagle fat is mixed with paints applied to dancers and sacred objects at the Cheyenne Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:262).

The Cheyennes roll bison sinew and cover it with red cloth in their Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:240-241, 292). They also attach a buffalo windpipe to the headdress of the lodgemaker at this ceremony (Dorsey, G. 1905:95), while the Lakotas make offerings of bison larynges in their spirit keeping rites (Curtis 1905-1930:3:106, 109, 110). The scrotum of a bison bull is dried and made into rattles for various ceremonial performances in both tribes (Curtis 1905-1930:3:78, 79, 86; Grinnell 1972:1:203; Walker 1980:213, 1982:74; Brown 1992:213). Historically, bear guts, which have an iridescent quality, were cut into strips to tie eagle feathers on the lower end of bows owned by members of the Lakota s Sacred Bow Society (Blish 1934:183; Brown 1992:18), and among the Cheyennes, they were tied to the bows carried by the Contraries (Grinnell 1972: 1:81).

5. Dung

Among the Lakotas, buffalo chips were widely used in ceremonial contexts whenever a pipe was being smoked. At ceremonial altars, pipes were customarily placed on a buffalo chip in conjunction with vision seeking, during communal bison hunts, at the final ceremony in a spiritkeeping lodge, in the Hunka Ceremony, and during the Sun Dance (Curtis 1905-1930:3:66; Densmore 1918:72, 79, 83, 441; Walker 1980:36-37, 76, 77, 103, 180; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:145). Dried and pulverized buffalo dung was also mixed with tobacco to help light a pipe, and it was burned ceremoniously as incense (Curtis 1907-30:3:186; Brown 1992:123). Bison dung appears in a wide range of Cheyenne ceremonial contexts. In healing rites, pipes rest on a piece of buffalo chip (Grinnell 1972:2:137). At the Sun Dance, pieces of dried dung are positioned at the points of the sacred root-digger and arrow as well as near the skull that contains the spiritual essence of Grandmother Earth (Grinnell 1972:2:238, 245). During the Massaum, a piece of buffalo dung is wrapped in red flannel and placed on the altar next to the sacred skull. Buffalo chips are used in other parts of this ceremony too (Grinnell 1972:2: 292, 295, 323, 333). Dried buffalo dung played a part in the ritual preparations for driving antelope into pits (Grinnell 1972:1:280). In former times, a mound of buffalo chips was placed outside the ceremonial lodge of the Fox Soldiers who ritually surrounded it each morning (Grinnell 1972:2:57). Finally, war parties burnt buffalo chips to celebrate a victory and to purify enemy scalps taken in battle (Grinnell 1972:2:32, 37). At least among the Cheyennes, bison dung is symbolically significant because it changes color from bright green to white under the rays of the sun, a process that mimics the seasonal transitions (Moore, J. 1974a:171).

This discussion has covered only a sampling of the practical and spiritual uses to which the various body parts of animals were put among the Cheyennes and Lakotas in historic times. Today, while few of the practical applications still stand many of the ceremonial uses continue to be carried on, especially in the context of healing, renewing sacred objects such as the Cheyennes Sacred Arrows and Sacred Hat or the Lakota’s Sacred Buffalo Calf Pipe, and in the context of both tribes Sun Dances, sweat lodges, and fasting observances.
### TABLE 5. List of Animals Historically Located at Wind Cave National Park Whose Body Parts Used In Healing and Religious Observance By The Cheyennes and Lakotas

**Ungulates**
- Bison
- Bighorn and Pronghorn
- Elk
- Mule Deer and Whitetail Deer

**Carnivores**
- Badger and Skunk
- Wolf, Coyote and Fox
- Bear
- Weasel
- Mink, Weasel, and Otter

**Small Herbivores**
- Beaver
- Porcupine
- Prairie Dog
- Rabbit

**Birds and Insects**
- Ant
- Bat
- Butterfly and Dragonfly
- Grasshopper
- Crow and Magpie
- Duck and Geese
- Eagle, Hawk, Falcon, and Vulture
- Owl
- Grouse and Turkey
- Nighthawk and Swallow
- Kingfisher, Flicker, and Woodpecker
- Oriole, Meadowlark, and Tanager
- Lark Sparrow and Yellow Warbler

**Reptiles, and Amphibians**
- Frog and Turtle
- Lizard and Salamander
- Snake
VII. WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK AND THE ANIMALS

The land on which Wind Cave National Park stands occupies a significant place in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions about animal-human origins and relationships. This location has long been known as an important wintering ground for various ungulate species, most notably, the bison. The Buffalo Gap, a canyon ten miles due east of the cave s entrance, is formed by Beaver Creek as it makes its descent to the south fork of the Cheyenne River. It is widely recognized in European American and tribal historical documents as a passageway that ungulates used to enter the protective shelter of the Hills during the winter and a gateway they followed to leave the Hills for their feeding grounds on the open grasslands in the spring. Although pronghorn and deer certainly used it, and probably elk and bighorns too, it is most closely associated with the migratory patterns of the bison before they were extirpated from the area in the late nineteenth century. When ruminants wintered in the Hills, they typically fed on the rich grasses of the geologic depression known as the Red Valley or the Race Track, which encircles the Hills and crosses Wind Cave National Park. Today, this remains a favorite winter grazing location for the animals that were reintroduced to the park in the twentieth century (Turner 1974:16).

Prehistorically, the Race Track and the gateway canyons to the Black Hills contain some of the heaviest concentration of settlement sites. Their milder climate, sheltered recesses, available water and forage, not to mention their abundant supplies of game, made these locations highly desirable for establishing campsites from November to March. The advantages of these areas were well recognized in the historic era too, and there are scores of accounts (see Chapters Five and Seven) of tribes camping at these spots over the winter months. Once again, it needs to be pointed out that the Buffalo Gap was the place that Spotted Tail wanted for his agency in 1874, and the Race Track was the area that Red Cloud did not wish to cede in negotiations over the sale of the Black Hills to the U.S. Government in 1875.

The winter months were the time when the tribal nations of the Plains were the most sedentary and when their constituent bands remained in one location for the longest period of time. During this season, tribes broke up into smaller groupings, called tiospaye in Lakota and manhao in Cheyenne, that were large enough to offer protection but small enough to provide reliable and steady access to water, timber, food, and forage. This was the season for small group hunts that the Lakotas called the tate, and it was typically the time of the year that they relied on elk, mule deer, and whitetail deer as much as bison. At least in historic times, winter was not the season when the wanisapa or communal modes of hunting typically took place. These usually occurred during the late summer at locations some distance from the Black Hills. Before surround techniques on horseback dominated the bison hunting strategies of Plains Indians, however, a wide variety of communal driving techniques using enclosures and jumps were practiced during the late fall and early winter in pre-horse times. Some of them were implemented at locations inside the Hogback and at the canyon gateways into the Hills. Indeed, one site, the Sanson bison jump (CU02), is located on lands just south of the park.

Most of the animals that the Lakotas and Cheyennes depended upon for food, shelter, clothing, and tools and for spiritual protection and guidance frequented the lands that now make up Wind Cave National Park. With a few exceptions, the wolf and grizzly, which were extirpated from the area by the early twentieth century, most of the species these two tribes respected and relied upon for significant utilitarian or spiritual purposes are located on park lands today. In South Dakota at least, some of the most significant animals to tribal peoples, such as the elk, are rarely seen outside the Hills and their protected spaces. Thus, the Hills remain among the limited
number of places where local tribes are able to encounter certain species and the spirits that represent them.

There are many important stories, including some with sacred significance, about the area of Wind Cave National Park in the cultural traditions of the Lakotas and Cheyennes. Although the details of these stories are explored in greater depth in the next section, they all reveal in varying ways and degrees the fundamental dependence of the Lakota and Cheyenne peoples on the bison, not simply as a source of food, health, and protection, but as a source of their identity and as a model for understanding the workings of the universe. As pointed out earlier, even though bison (except for a few stragglers) had largely disappeared from the environs of the park by the 1850s, the area was indelibly inscribed in Lakota and Cheyenne beliefs as a place where the bison remained in a spiritualized state in their subterranean cavern homes, awaiting a propitious time to reappear on the earth's surface. This was *Tatanka makalhpaya*, The Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull, one of the most revered figures in Lakota cosmology. Even after the disappearance of local bison, the Lakotas continued to rely on this area as a winter camping ground because of the abundance of elk, mule deer, and other ungulates, all of which were under the patronage of the chief of all the animals, the bison and its spiritual representative, *Tatanka*.

What distinguishes the area of Wind Cave National Park and its environs, which also includes the Buffalo Gap and the Hot Springs, from other regions of the Hills is its cultural emphasis on the bison as a source of human well-being and regeneration. Some of the other animals of cultural significance to the Lakotas and Cheyennes are more closely identified with other regions of the Hills. Bears, for example, were connected in Lakota culture to Bear Butte, while wolves and other canines tend to be associated with this site in Cheyenne traditions. In the Wind Cave area, animals other than bison were important too, but only because they were connected to the drama of human-bison relationships.

Insofar as every species of mammal and bird found at Wind Cave National Park was represented among the animals that attended the famous race that formed the Red Valley or Race Track, the area continues to be thought of in relation to all animals (see Chapter Fourteen for more details on this story). Indeed, each animal present in the area has a potential symbolic connection to the story. In Cheyenne traditions, the magpie, flicker, crow, coot, and falcon are singled out as birds of special importance because they are the ones who actually ran against the bison and their teammates, winning the race for humans. Other animals mentioned in various versions of Cheyenne and Lakota traditions include the antelope, deer, elk, wolf, coyote, and eagle (Kroeber 1900:161-162; Densmore 1918:319; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24; Powell 1969:472-477; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:30; Grinnell, 1926:252-254; Randolph 1937:189-192; White Bull in Odell 1942:168; Mariott and Rachlin 1968:120-123; LaPointe 1976:18-19; Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1977:94-96; Walking Bull 1980:6-7; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:309-310; Erdoes and Ortiz 1984:390-392; Moore, J. 1984:296-297, 1996:189-190; Black Elk, C. 1986d:200; Schwartz 1988:72; Young Bear and Theisz 1994:29).

In Lakota culture, there is another significant and highly sacred story about the area of Wind Cave National Park, and this is the story of their emergence from the underworld to the earth's surface through the opening at Wind Cave (Walker 1917:181-182; Dooling 2000:119-122). Besides the *Pte Oyate*, the Bison People, from whom humans originate, there are three other representations of animal nations in this highly sacred story: the wolf, the spider, and the snowbird. The wolf is an accomplice of the spider, *Inktomi*, in leading *Tokahe* and his followers out of the cave to the earth's surface. Once on the earth's surface, *Tokahe* receives a vision from a snowbird [*Junco Hyemalus*] that leads him and his followers to another cave with a spring and an ample supply of food stored by chipmunks, woodpeckers, and squirrels. The other humans, how-
ever, follow the deceptive magpie that only leads them to more hunger and misery (Walker 1983: 370-372).

Although not specifically linked to the major sacred stories of this particular area, the golden eagle might be culturally connected to the park area as well because this and the neighboring region of Custer State Park are areas in the Black Hills where this bird is most abundant. Historically, the Black Hills were identified with locations for trapping eagles and a place where visionary encounters with these birds typically took place. A more specific connection to the park area can be made on the grounds that bison and eagles are symbolically interchangeable and can stand for one another in Lakota thought. In addition, the eagle is closely connected to the sun, a companion of the bison, traveling at night to visit with them in their underground cavern home. Other flying nations are typically connected with other locations in the region, including, as one example, Harney Peak with the West Wind, hawks, and swallows.

Nor is there a great deal in Lakota or Cheyenne traditions that specifically connects most of the other carnivores and small herbivores to the area around Wind Cave. One possible exception is the porcupine. Some Cheyenne narratives about the Buffalo Gap and the Great Race (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24; Powell 1969:472-477) are connected to the story of the origin of quillwork and the founding of their Me e no ist st Society, the prestigious quillworkers guild (Grinnell 1972:1:163-164, 2:385-391). Also, one Lakota story in the Tokahe emergence cycle tells how a man named Pahin [Porcupine] received instructions on how to make an altar and use deer skins in a sacred way (Walker 1983:378-379).

In Lakota traditions, there are also more general associations linked to the habits of burrowing animals whose behavior mimics the Lakota s own emergence from the underworld (Powers, W. 1986:113, 162). Soils and stones brought up from under the earth by prairie dogs, voles, ants, and badgers are believed to hold the purifying and life-generating properties of the subterranean world (Powers, W. 1982:13; 1986:113, 162). The location of their burrows, near the very site where the Lakota s own emergence is believed to have taken place, is highly significant, and as a result, the soils and stones brought up by the burrowers around Wind Cave would likely be sacred because they originate at the home not only of humans but also the bison -- the animal who represents the entire cosmos and who holds the mysteries of the universe. Also in Cheyenne traditions there are important symbolic connections between prairie dogs, corn, and bison and their mutual ties to the sun, which might, as argued in Chapter Fourteen and Fifteen, be connected in a special way to the Buffalo Gap (Moore, J. 1974a:164).

In relation to the animals that make up its landscape, the Lakotas and Cheyennes have a strong twofold relationship to the park and its environs. On the one hand their tie is based on a long history of occupation in the area, which was closely related to the habits and movements of the ruminant species they depended upon for their livelihood, especially the bison. On the other hand their connections to this area rest on a sacred understanding of the place as a site of animal/human origin and rebirth and a location where the very nature of human-animal relationships were set down.

The wildlife of the park has also drawn the interest of European Americans but often for vastly different reasons. In the early years of European American settlement local residents hunted the region s game for their own subsistence and for commercial reasons, purposes not very different from those of the area s original tribal occupants. After years of unmonitored killing, European Americans helped to drive many ungulates to the edge of extinction. The decline, especially of elk and mule deer, was not simply the result of over-hunting but also a consequence of competition from the animals European Americans introduced to the area.
Livestock often destroyed the forage on which local game survived. The negative impact of cattle eventually led, as described in Chapter Six, to growing restrictions on the release of grazing permits to ranchers by all federal agencies which managed public lands in the Black Hills and to the establishment of game preserves in the region where pronghorn, elk, and bison were reintroduced and protected from human predators. After restrictions were placed on hunting and livestock grazing, many of the large game species eventually rebounded in the Black Hills.

In contrast to the large ungulates, most of the region's carnivores were considered a menace not only to local livestock but also to the game being restocked and preserved on public lands. Wolves and grizzlies were hunted to extinction and systematically taken by ranchers and professional hunters hired by state and federal agencies, including the National Park Service. These large carnivores were once an essential part of the Hills' ecosystem, but neither has been reintroduced to the area. European American attempts to eradicate other large carnivores, including coyotes, bobcats, lynxes, and mountain lions, also took place with varying results. Over time, feline numbers were reduced, but the populations of the peripatetic coyote remained strong.

Today, the animals that remain on the lands of Wind Cave National Park primarily serve the interests of a spectating public. Although ungulate herds are culled and the meat donated to tribes and educational institutions, their presence no longer serves the interests of tribal or European American hunters. For European Americans, the animals are subjects of curiosity, either of a scientific or voyeuristic nature. They are certainly not an integral part of the religiosity of European Americans as they remain for local tribes, who continue to spiritually respect the animals that inhabit the park. Indeed, the park is a haven for a number of species that are rare or no longer exist on the lands where many of today's tribes live. As a result, the park and adjoining areas of the Black Hills remain an important location for some of these tribes to still encounter animals of considerable significance in their historic and modern cultural traditions.
Chapter Eleven

GOLD, GRASS, AND GYPSUM

California Joe Milner, who traveled with Walter Jenney’s Expedition in 1875, is quoted as saying, in reference to the Black Hills: “There’s gold from the grass roots down, but there’s more gold from the grass roots up” (Newton and Jenney 1880:317). Gold was the metal of greatest interest to European Americans, and indeed, the primary reason for the United States to extinguish American Indian title to the area. Gypsum, however, was probably the most significant mineral to American Indians, particularly the Cheyennes and Lakotas. Next to gypsum and gold, the Hills’ abundant and varied grasses were another important resource for American Indians and European Americans, but for vastly different reasons. For centuries, the abundance and rich variety of grasses in and around the Black Hills sustained many of the wildlife species on which local tribal nations depended for their livelihood, and they also provided good pasturage for their horses. When European Americans arrived in the area, these same grasses fed the growth and development of a way of life built around the raising of livestock. Over the long term, ranching equaled, if not exceeded, mining as a major producer of the region’s wealth.

When European Americans evaluated the area for its monetary worth as a prelude to extinguishing American Indian title, they took into consideration its mineral wealth, the potential of its grasses for grazing, and its abundant timber resources, but they assigned little if any value to the other varieties of plants important to the tribal nations who resided there (Jenney 1875:182; Newton and Jenney 1880:5). Although many other plants would have some importance to early European American settlers as food and medicine, they were largely ignored in government appraisals of the area because they showed little promise for commercial development in the U.S. economy of the late nineteenth century. More important in these evaluations was the value of the region for mineral extraction that had considerable commercial potential, the worth of its soils and grasses for farming and ranching, and the wealth of its timber for logging.

At least in the minds of European Americans, the history of the Black Hills has been most closely linked to its mineral wealth. Indeed, a large part of the romance and enchantment surrounding the Hills harks back to the frontier and gold rush years of the mid-1870s. The well-publicized discoveries of gold in the Hills by the Black Hills Expedition of 1874 led directly to the illegal invasion of the area by miners and entrepreneurs and eventually, to the extinguishment of Native American title to the area. Insofar as lands were prospected and mining claims were staked in the area of Wind Cave National Park, and insofar as the acquisition of park properties evolved out of a controversy surrounding titles to these claims, some of the park’s cultural and historical legacy is tied to the region’s gold boom. But for a wide variety of reasons already described in earlier chapters, this area was never developed for its mineral resources. Although sandstones were mined successfully over the years in canyon quarries in nearby areas of the Hogback, the land on which Wind Cave National Park now sits was not a location for mining. Instead, its development grew out of the “discovery” of a vast cavern structure in the limestone formations underneath some of its surface lands. Just to the south of park properties, development sprang from the mineral rich hot springs. In both cases, the cultural history of the region was tied to the preservation of geological resources supporting the growth of a leisure, recreation, and tourist industry. This contrasted with many of the regions in the central and northern portions of the Hills where the extraction of mineral resources fueled local economic growth.
For the tribal nations who inhabited the Black Hills area, it was an entirely different story. Beyond the animals, the Hills held a wealth of other life forms for them, revered for their properties as food and medicine and in manufacture and ceremony. In the minds of American Indian people, especially the Lakotas and Cheyennes, the Black Hills were historically associated with mineral wealth too. Native peoples are known to have extracted minerals in various parts of this region since prehistoric times for practical and spiritual purposes. The presence of the Black Hills as a massive body of stone evoked considerable awe and reverence, one that was tied to tribal cosmological tenets about how the universe originated and recreated itself. Even more impressive, in terms of sheer numbers and varieties, were the plant species found in the Black Hills, of which hundreds have been associated with culturally significant uses among the tribal nations who occupied the area. The Hills also held special importance because they contained many unique varieties of plants not found in other parts of the region where local tribes lived and traveled. Indeed, the diversity of the Hills’ plants only added to tribal beliefs that this was a special place, which revealed in a multitude of ways the workings of the universe and “the heart of everything that is” (Black Elk, C. 1986a:205).

I. THE PLANT AND MINERAL LIFE OF THE REGION

As revealed in the introduction to this report, the geography of the Black Hills can be represented in terms of a series of rings that surround a central crystalline core. Each of these rings is associated with fairly distinct geological formations that exhibit recurring mineral properties as they encircle the Hills. Much of the diversity in the region’s vegetation also follows these rings, although this variation is modified in significant ways by differences in moisture and temperature from the Hills’ northern sections to their southern borders. Wind Cave National Park is located in an area that crosses all of the Hills’ geological formations, the Hogback, the Red Valley, the Limestone Plateau, and the Central Core, but it is situated in the drier and warmer portions of these zones. As a result, its vegetation is significantly different from locations with moister and colder climates but comparable geological formations farther north.

A. Plants

In relation to its vegetation, Arthur McIntosh (1949:45) reported that over 1300 different flowering plants and ferns are located in the Black Hills. Of these, less than half are documented and described in Gary Larson and James Johnson’s recent book, *Plants of the Black Hills and the Bear Lodge Mountains* (1999). The great numbers and varieties of common as well as rare plant species make the Hills a veritable herbarium. The Lakotas often referred euphemistically to the Hills as their meat pack, but they could have easily called them their “medicine bag” because of the abundance and diversity of plants they could draw from the Hills for medicine, food, manufacturing, and other purposes.

Although many different plants are found throughout the Black Hills, a large number are specific to certain biomes. The moist, high elevation locations in the northern and central Black Hills contain some of the most unique and variable plant communities in the region. Indeed, nearly fifty percent of the plants reported in Larson and Johnson’s book are restricted to this area. Another ten percent are limited to the western sagebrush steppes. In the grasslands, ponderosa stands, and woodland riparian niches that make up the southeastern Hills, including the lands of Wind Cave National Park, there are only a few species unique to this area; most of the rest are located in other parts of the Hills or the neighboring grasslands.
In assembling the vast body of ethnobotanical material available on the tribal nations and European Americans who lived historically in the region of the Black Hills, only a few sources directly tie the Hills to specific kinds of plant gathering. Nonetheless, there is a great deal of circumstantial evidence that suggests what kinds of plants American Indians and European Americans would have gathered when they camped, settled, and traveled in the Black Hills. Indeed, some of the plants they relied upon are only found in the Black Hills and not on the surrounding grasslands.

Larson and Johnson’s work (1999) was the basic source employed to identify the species of plants located in the Black Hills. Not all of the plants they identified, however, are associated with any use either by Americans Indians or European Americans. Of the plants they list, ethnobotanical material was uncovered on about half of them. In addition, a few other plants not listed in Larson and Johnson are covered here. These are reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001e, 2001f, 2001g, 2001h, 2001i, 2001j, 2001k, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c) or in nearby grasslands on the outer edge of the Hogback, and many of them are very important to local tribes.

The plants reported for the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park were matched with material in primary and secondary ethnobotanical and ethnographic sources on populations with known periods of occupancy in the Hills, most notably in the region of Wind Cave National Park. These populations include the Arapahos, Arikaras, Cheyennes, Comanches, Kiowas, Kiowa-Apaches, Lakotas, and Poncas. Some data are also included on the Crows, Hidatsas and Mandans who made periodic use of the Hills but, generally, beyond the range of Wind Cave National Park and its environs. The plant list (Appendix B), which accompanies this report, contains a much more detailed body of information, organized by plant families and species with their names in Native languages and descriptions of their habitats.

1. Woody Plants

At least eighty different varieties of woody plants, trees and shrubs, are reported in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999), and of these, more than seventy-five percent have reported tribal names and uses. At least twenty-seven are listed at Wind Cave National Park, and the vast majority of them are associated with names in Native languages and important cultural uses. Box elder, elm, bur oak, Rocky Mountain juniper, paper birch, cottonwood, ponderosa pine, green ash, northern hawthorn, and quaking aspen are some of the species of trees listed at Wind Cave National Park. There are many other trees reported in the Hills with important cultural uses as well, and these include, among others, hazel nut, Black Hills spruce, and lodgepole pine.

A wide variety of woody shrubs are also found at Wind Cave National Park, including common juniper, rabbitberry (a.k.a. buffaloberry), skunkbush, buckthorn, leadplant, false indigo, currant, elderberry, coralberry, snowberry, raspberry, chokecherry, wild plum, bearberry, stinking elderberry, broom snakeweed, dogwood, willow, sagewort, and woodbine; all of these are associated with native names and uses, and many have been identified as historically important to European Americans as well. There are other shrubs in the Black Hills of significance but not reported at Wind Cave National Park. Among these, Oregon grape, American bittersweet, wild roses, and one woody variety of sage were used by local tribes and European American settlers.

2. Grasses, Rushes, and Sedges

Based on his observations in 1875, Henry Newton (and Jenney 1880:318) wrote: “The grasses in the Black Hills are almost endless in variety, every condition being so extremely
favorable to their growth.” Indeed, more than forty different species of grass, sedge, and rush are found in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park. Nearly half of these appear in the ethnobotanical nomenclatures of the tribal nations who lived in the region, but less than a quarter of the species are associated with any specific use. Some of the grasses located in the park and identified in the ethnobotanical literature include indiangrass, dropseed, grama, foxtail barley, reedgrass, prairie sandreed, switchgrass, ricegrass, prairie cordgrass, porcupine grass, buffalo grass, stinkgrass, and red threeawn. Not reported at Wind Cave National Park or in the Black Hills is sweetgrass, regarded as sacred and important ceremonially to all of the tribes in the region. Softstem bulrush is the only sedge reported in the park; it had important uses among the tribal nations of the region. Nebraska sedge, located at lower elevations in the Black Hills, also had important ceremonial uses for the Cheyennes and probably the Lakotas, while various flatsedges found in regions east of the Hills were important medicinally to other tribes. The only member of the rush family reported at Wind Cave National Park is wiregrass, and there are no reported cultural uses for it.

3. Forbs

There are more than seven hundred different species of flowering forbs in the Black Hills with over one hundred and fifty reported for Wind Cave Park alone. Although approximately forty-five percent of the species reported in the Black Hills are mentioned by name or use in ethnobotanical sources on the region, nearly seventy percent of those found at Wind Cave have identified cultural associations. Some of the more important flowering forbs used for food and medicine are located on park properties, but many of them are not and appear to be restricted to the northern and/or central regions of the Hills. Soapweed, prairie turnip, milkvetch, Indian hemp, western ragweed, pearly everlasting, cowparsnip, groundplum, prairie clover, false gromwell, prickly pear cactus, pinedrops, cattail, beartongue, wild onion, milkweed, red falsemallow, fetid marigold, downy paintbrush, purple coneflower, field mint, dotted gayfeather, sunflower, goldenrod, yarrow, pussytoes, sagewort, curley gumweed, tansy, pepperweed, fleabane, wood lily, and vervain are just a few of the park’s many forbs with known cultural uses. There are several other culturally important plants, which surprisingly are not reported for the park, but likely exist at nearby locations. These includearrowhead, biscuitroot, bush morning glory, wild bergamot, lavender hyssop, and scarlet guara.

4. Nonvascular plants

Many different nonvascular plants, fungi, lichens, and moss, are also found in the Hills. Puffballs, elm cap, and bracket fungi were used for food, medicine, and other purposes by local tribes and early European American settlers as well.

B. Minerals and Soils

The mineral formations that encircle the Hills’ follow a fairly regular pattern and do not substantially differ from the northern to the southern Hills. The high elevation interior of the Hills is composed of a Precambrian core made up of granite and pegmatite surrounded by schist, slate, and quartzite formations overlaid in some areas with sandstone, grit, and conglomerate. Layers of limestone, dolomite, shale, and some sandstone of varying complexion surround the interior. The Minnelusa sandstones and the Minnekahta limestones, both of which find expression at Wind Cave National Park, follow the Pahasapa limestone formations where Wind Cave was born. Along the Red Valley, also in the park, layers of red shale and sandstone interlaced with gypsum
mark the geology of the Spearfish formation. The variegated sandstones and shales of the Sundance and Inyan Kara formations dominate the Hogback's geological complexion. Between the Hogback and the Cheyenne River, various clays, shales, and sandstones support the soil beds of the outer grasslands (Froiland 1978:24; Geological Map of South Dakota #5 in Froiland 1978). The concentric distribution of geological formations in the Black Hills did not go unnoticed in tribal conceptualizations of the area. Indeed, as revealed later, the Lakotas and Cheyennes may have made connections between some of the unique geological characteristics of the gypsum formations in the area of Wind Cave National Park and those in the vicinity of Sundance Mountain.

II. THE SOURCES AND THEIR HISTORY

Most of what we know about the geology and botany of the Black Hills has been written by European Americans based on their dominant philosophical perspective, which rests, as mentioned previously, on scientific empiricism. Much less is known about American Indian knowledge and understandings of the Hills' botanical and geological landscape. There are several good sources on the ethnobotany of tribes who lived in the region, and these can be used to construct a picture of the probable nature of tribal relationships to plants and minerals in the Black Hills.

A. European American Views

The earliest reports of the Hills' mineral and plant resources extend back to the time when the Black Hills were under the domain of the Spanish. Reports of the Hills' vast wealth in gold and other minerals were contained in correspondence between traders and Spanish officials as early as 1804 (Nasatir 1952:738). Most of these reports were based on rumors, of which some early traders, who actually lived in their general vicinity, were highly skeptical. Antoine Pierre Tabeau (in Abel 1939:68), for one, wrote:

I say nothing about the minerals, having seen no sign of them and not having been able upon this subject to draw any information from the Savages to whom all the glittering pebble-work is mineral. Nevertheless, the Chayennes let me see a bit of lead mineral which they had brought from the Black Hills.

He also reported that the local tribes used a kind of pumice stone from the Black Hills (Tabeau in Abel 1939:68). In addition, Tabeau (Ibid:93-98) wrote a great deal about the plant life in the region. Although nothing pertains specifically to the Black Hills, his writing provides valuable information on tribal uses of some of the more common plants widely distributed on the grasslands and in the river valleys west of the Missouri River. Another trader, Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:11-14), provided general information about Lakota plant use and knowledge based on his many years of service as a trader on the upper Missouri River. In the 1840s, Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:270-271) and E. De Giradin (1936:63) were among other early writers to make specific connections between the Black Hills and tribal plant collection.

From the early nineteenth century until the time U.S. government expeditions began to explore the region in the 1850s, European Americans knew little about the geology or botany of the Black Hills. There were numerous unsubstantiated reports of traders receiving gold and other minerals in trade from local tribes, however, and some of these stories were passed down in tribal oral traditions (see Chapter Five). Between 1855 and 1857, military expeditions under the command of General William Harney skirted the northern end of the Hills, reporting on the general features of their topography and also making observations on their general mineral potential
Two years later, in 1859, Capt. William Raynolds toured the northern edges of the Hills and reported on their geology (McLaird and Turchen 1974a:19-62). Accompanying some of these expeditions was the naturalist Ferdinand Hayden, who published extensive notes (1862a, 1862b) on the region’s botany with some information on tribal plant use and knowledge.

The watershed expedition, however, was the one led by General George Armstrong Custer in 1874. Colonel William Ludlow (1875), Chief Engineer of the expedition, and the geologist, N. H. Winchell (1875), described in some detail features of the area’s geology (McLaird and Turchen 1974c:281-319). A.B. Donaldson (in Krause and Olson 1974:41-77) wrote extensively about the area’s botany as did other newspaper correspondents who accompanied the expedition. When the expedition arrived at Reynolds’s Prairie they were astounded by the diverse array of flora located there. A. B. Donaldson (quoted from McLaird and Turchen 1974c:296) described the flowering species as: “the gaudy sunflower and the delicate harebell, the fair lily and the bright blue daisy, the coarse elecampane and the modest violet, the gay larkspur and the fragrant peppermint, roses and pinks, asters and phlox, bellflower and caropsis, geraniums, golden rod, purple coneflower.” Even General Custer (quoted from McLaird and Turchen 1974c:296-297) had this to say: “In no private or public park have I ever seen such a profuse display of flowers. So luxuriant in growth were they that men plucked them without dismounting from their saddle.” In other areas of the Hills as well, early explorers described the abundant plant growth, the rich timbers, and the fine grasses (McLaird and Turchen 1974a:46, 48, 1974b:175, 1974c:295, 297, 303).

The following summer, two geologists, Walter Jenney and Henry Newton, toured the Hills and wrote detailed reports about their geology and the value of their mineral wealth, pursuant to pressuring the Lakotas to relinquish their rights to the area. They provided little information on the region’s botany other than describing the varieties of wild fruit, recommending the grasses for cattle raising and describing the richness of the timber for logging (Jenney 1875; Newton and Jenney 1880:315, 316, 318, 320-323; McLaird and Turchen 1974d:402-438).

The gold boom and the rush of miners into the Hills in 1874 cast a particular history of development for the area, much of which has already been chronicled in Chapter Five. The area where Wind Cave National Park is located stood on the edge of these developments, and it was not systematically explored until Walter Jenney and Henry Newton traveled Beaver (a.k.a. Amphibious) Creek in 1875 and when growing numbers of European Americans began to settle the surrounding areas after 1878 (Tallent 1899:648-651; Clark, B. 1983:17-19). Although mining claims were staked afterwards in portions of the park, most of these remained undeveloped because the area held little potential for economically viable forms of extraction. Other than a lime-kin and small gold processing operation at the southwest end of the park, no other mining appears to have taken place within the park’s present-day boundaries (McAdam 1973). The mineral extraction that occurred locally took place at stone quarries in canyons near the Buffalo Gap, which, as previously reported, provided the masonry material for the construction of many old buildings in local communities (Tallent 1899:415; Stewart 1967-1970:70). Also, a gypsum plant was in operation near Hot Springs for some years (Schell 1961:376).

The only historical role the park appears to have played in the gold rush days was its location along a major trail that took early prospectors and settlers into the mining districts around Custer. As much of the mining in the Custer area was not profitable, except in the mica industry, the trails leading to this once bustling region of the Hills became marginalized. The centers of development were in the north, near Deadwood, Lead, and Rapid City, and the quickest access to these locations followed routes on the outer edge of the Hogback. Much of the nostalgia and romanticism that surrounds the gold rush days in European American histories of the area reside outside
the region where Wind Cave National Park is located. The history of the southeastern Hills, as described in Chapter Six, rests more on the early cattle business and on the development of a resort industry in the late nineteenth century around the thermal waters at Hot Springs. The European American discovery of Wind Cave, its original development as a commercial enterprise, and its later operation as a government run attraction, is also connected to the history of leisure travel in the area, much of which has already been discussed in Chapter Six as well.

In the early years of European American settlement, little was written about the area’s botany, although in later years the first-generation descendants of pioneer settlers would recall the use of native plants by their own families and local Lakotas as well (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:12, 40, 402, 425, 583, 585, 730; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:72, 119, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:227, 365, 379). The first systematic scientific studies of the region’s plant life did not take place until the twentieth century when S.D. Visher (1912, 1913), H.E. Hayward (1928:353-412) and A. C. McIntosh (1926, 1927, 1928, 1929) began to write about the region’s botany. Since the early “discovery” days in the Black Hills, much has been written about the geology and botany of the Hills in general and about the area of Wind Cave National Park from a scientific perspective. There are detailed descriptions (McIntosh 1949; Froiland 1978; Larson and Johnson 1999) of local mineral formations, soil compositions, hydrological features, and plant distributions, none of which need to be covered here.

B. Tribal Perspectives

Much less has been written about American Indian understandings of the region’s botany, although some of it can be deduced from various ethnobotanical sources on the subject. In their 1939 study of Kiowa ethnobotany, Paul Vestal and Richard Schultes (1939:3-4) wrote that little was known about the uses of plants among the tribal nations of the Great Plains. Although additional material has been gathered during the past sixty years, much of their assessment still remains true today. In comparison to other regions of North America, where there are comprehensive and richly detailed studies of tribal ethnobotany, much of the information on the names and uses of plants for tribal nations of the Black Hills region is sketchy. Even though there are a number of general works on the medicinal uses of native plants by European Americans in the plains and intermountain west (Moore, M. 1979; Kindscher 1987, 1992; Tilford 1997), there is hardly anything that refers specifically to the Black Hills. Nonetheless, there is still an enormous amount of material for the general area as evidenced in the large list of plants attached to this report (Appendix B).

The material on the tribal nations who historically occupied the Black Hills is very uneven. Fairly good material can be found on the Kiowas (Vestal and Schultes 1939), Plains Apaches (Jordan 1965), Poncas (Gilmore 1919), and Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972; Hart 1981, 1992), but existing sources on the Comanches (Carlson and Jones 1939), Arikaras (Gilmore 1926, 1987), Hidatsas (Nickel 1974), and Araphoes (Nickerson 1966) are limited. There is also a substantial body of information on the Lakotas, but it is scattered over many different sources. Reverend Eugene Buechel’s dictionary (1970) contains an exhaustive listing of Lakota plant names and some brief notes on their uses. A decade later Dilwyn Rogers (1980) reorganized much of this information in a manner more accessible for ethnobotanical study. Still, most of the richer and more elaborate descriptions on Lakota plant use, their preparation for culinary and medicinal purposes, and their symbolic and ceremonial associations are located in primary ethnographic sources (Densmore 1918; Gilmore 1919; Hassrick 1964; Walker 1980; DeMallie 1984). Red Cloud High School (2001) now has an excellent website for its course on Lakota Ethnobotany that contains information not found in other sources.
The overall lack of attention to plants in the literature on the tribal nations of the Black Hills reflects a bias about the nature of their local subsistence practices. Throughout much of the ethnographic literature, there is a pervasive idea that local tribes focused most of their subsistence efforts on hunting and spent little time on plant procurement. Since no ethnographers were in a position to actually witness historic procural practices, there is little to substantiate their claims that meat dominated tribal diets. This remains one of many unproven assumptions about the subsistence economies of the tribal nations who historically occupied the Black Hills. In 1851, the fur-trader Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:12), on the basis of his firsthand knowledge of the matter, wrote:

Few can have any idea, without actual observation, of the immense quantities of cherries and berries eaten by them in season. The former are masticated stones and all, making a noise with their incomparable grinders not unlike and fully as loud as horses eating corn. These fruits and roots together with some others of minor note are a great resource to a people who depend entirely upon the chase for subsistence. They can be easily cured, packed, and carried, and are of much service, particularly to their children, when meat is not to be had.

More recently, Julia Ann Jordan’s study (1965) of Plains Apache ethnobotany confirms Denig’s observations and provides substantial evidence that plants were a much more important part of tribal subsistence economies than is commonly supposed.

In the twentieth century, much of the research on ethnobotany was severely constrained because tribal populations were living in environments considerably different from the ones they had occupied before their settlement on reservations. This was true because many groups were settled at locations far removed from their aboriginal territories, where they were unfamiliar with many of the plants in their new homes. But even when tribes were not relocated, many of the plants they once knew and relied upon had disappeared as a result of being overgrazed by cattle or plowed under by farmers (Jordan 1965:57).

In comparison to the information available on Native faunal and floral knowledge, the material written on their geological understandings of the area is slim, consisting mostly of brief and ad hoc references written in other contexts. Nonetheless, some information can still be gleaned from some of the classic ethnographic works on the Cheyennes and Lakotas (Densmore 1918; Hassrick 1964; Grinnell 1972; Walker 1980; Moore 1996).

III. HUMAN AND PLANT/MINERAL RELATIONSHIPS

In the Cheyenne and Lakota scheme of things, plants are living beings, and like animals and humans, they have physical and spiritual properties (Schlesier 1987:6, 11). As Karl Schlesier (Ibid:11) wrote in reference to the Cheyennes:

Edible plants were regarded as powerful beings because they allowed animal and human life. Without the use of plant physical forms in artifacts and a wide range of cultural activities, human life would not have been possible. Plants could not be abused, and plants physically killed had to be propitiated.

Through the ingestion of plant food, animals and humans were made part of the plant community. Plants sought by Tsistsistas shamans and herbalists could not be used without the consent of their hematasoomao. Often plants revealed themselves to a specific person and disclosed their healing properties. The Tsistsistas tradition retains examples where the
hematasoomao of shamans identified with specific plant species. In their plant manifestations, some are celebrated in Tsistsistas ceremonies to the present. Because of their solidarity with plants, Tsistsistas shamans used their spiritual power to heal plant diseases or to change weather conditions harmful to vegetation growth. Because game animals sustain themselves with the original, powerful potency of plants, the Tsistsistas regard their flesh as sacred. The ingestion of animal flesh made the human a part of the animal community also.

Schlesier (1987:6) also points out that in Cheyenne cosmology plants are divided according to their locations in the seven levels of the universe. Domesticated plants, such as corn, and wild berries whose edible parts grow above ground are known as zehoneo (Moore 1996:211). Below the earth, at the level of the eseohonozoom, where animals have their dens, is the place where plants valued for their roots and collectively called eseohonoz are found (Schlesier 1987:6). The noavoom, which is above the surface of the earth, is linked to sedges, short grasses, and other plants that grow close to the ground, whereas the nostostovoom is the level of bushes and tall grasses. The matavoom is the region of forests and trees. Since trees straddle many different tiers, penetrating into the deepest level of the universe, the nstoaman, they are considered very powerful (Schlesier 1987:6; Moore 1996:211). These and other plants with deep root systems are known as maheonezehoneo (Moore 1996:211). Plants from each of these levels were represented physically or symbolically in major Cheyenne ceremonies including the Massaum (Schlesier 1987:6).

Although there appears to be no parallel organization for plants among the Lakotas, except perhaps for the use of plant material in Yuwipi ceremonies (Kemnitzer 1970:41-43), we can infer from other contexts that one of the reasons they were revered is because they transversed more than one plane of the cosmos, existing both below and above ground. Large trees, such as cottonwoods, were held in special regard because their roots traveled underground, their trunks occupied the earth’s surface, and their branches reached towards the sky. As William Powers (1982:13, 1986:113, 162) argues, any living entity that transverses multiple planes of existence is understood to have special properties. Like badgers and ants, which lead a subterranean life, the roots of plants are connected to the purifying properties of the underground. And as with eagles and hawks, which soar above the earth, trees that grow to great heights are able to reach the cleansing properties of the sky, clouds, and thunders. But as pointed out in Chapter Nine, the principal structural theme in Lakota organization is based primarily on direction rather than stratification.

Different from the Cheyennes, who order their world mostly by hierarchy, the Lakotas emphasize directionality in theirs and connect animals, and thereby plants to the Four Directions or Winds. Bearberry is linked to the North Wind, while sage is associated with the South Wind, cedar the West Wind, and sweetgrass the East Wind. In one of his visions, Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:128-129, 240-244) describes the integral connections between the North Wind, Waziyata, the buffalo, humans, and herbs. As already mentioned in the last chapter, all of the major animals in Lakota cosmology are linked in one way or another to each of the Four Winds. Each of these animals, in turn, is associated with specific medicines, some of which are named the tawote [food] or pejuta [medicine] of a particular species. Pte tawote [buffalo food] applies to a species of milkweed (Buechel 1970:440), pispiza tawote [prairie dog food] is the name of the fetid marigold (Ibid:444), and hehaka tawote [elk food] is known in English as wild bergamot (Ibid:172). The white prairie clover is called as tapejuta hu bloka [male kit-fox medicine stem], while the purple clover is identified as tokala tapejuta hu winyela [female kit-fox medicine stem] (Ibid:495). Not all plant names are linked to specific animals, but there is a general sense, as in some of Black Elk’s visions (in DeMallie 1984:133-134), that the spirits of the animal species who “help” humans are the ones who “own” or steward certain plants. Bearberry [Arctostaphylos
uvea-ursi], also called “kinnikinick,” for example, was the gift of a spirit wolf according to Luther Standing Bear (1988:103).

The metamorphosis of animals into plants is a common occurrence in Lakota visionary narratives (Brown 1992:57). Stephen Feraca (1998:77) described what he learned from a Lakota female herbalist in the 1960s:

According to Mrs. Fast Horse, practically every flowering plant and bush in the area has a medicinal use or property. This does not mean, of course, that anyone may gather and make use of them. She pointed out various plants as buffalo, elk, and bear medicine, but she never gathered them.

Generally, people must gain the permission of the animal that oversees a particular plant in order to use it, and they must also gain further instruction in its proper application from knowledgeable and accomplished healers. This permission and its accompanying knowledge are gifted by the animals and come ultimately through encounters in visions and dreams (Ibid:72).

Despite their differences, the Lakotas share with the Cheyennes a basic belief in the transubstantiation of spiritual essences across living forms such that humans are able to partake of the healing properties of plants either directly or indirectly through the consumption of the flesh of animals, who depended on various floral species for their own life and well-being. In this regard, the meat of bison and deer are considered especially healthy because of the kinds of plants they feed on (Brown 1992:16, 30; Young Bear and Theisz 1994:128). As Wallace Black Elk (1990:40) wrote:

Take, for example, the buffalo. He gave his life so we could wear his robe. We wear buckskins and moccasins. We use his sinews for thread and his bones for needles. He is a vegetarian and eats grass. But the same elements that are in that grass are also in our body. So the buffalo eats the grass and turns it into flesh and blood. We digest his flesh and blood. In turn, we get strength from this four-legged.

Comparable schemata for rocks, minerals, and soils are not developed in the literature on the Cheyennes or the Lakotas, although John Moore (1974:156-157, 171, 174, 175) writes a little about the colors of stones and soils and their connection to the four directions. Both tribes, however, believed that these natural phenomena had animate qualities.

IV. THE BLACK HILLS IN PLANT AND MINERAL COLLECTION

One of the major limitations of ethnobotanical studies is their failure to identify the specific geographic locations where tribal members traditionally procured their various plant and mineral resources. This is especially true for the tribal nations who once occupied the Black Hills. Indeed, most of the references to Native plant and mineral collection in the Black Hills are general to the area as a whole and rarely identify site-specific locations for this activity. References connecting the Black Hills to lodgepole procurement are widespread, however, and there are several citations that mention the Hills as a preferred location for the collection of medicinal plants and certain stones. Some even specify particular locations, such as Bear Butte, Harney Peak, Hot Springs, the Needles area, and Inyan Kara Mountain for the collection of plants and/or stones. Wind Cave National Park, however, has not been singled out in any of the sources examined for this study, except for Rufus Pilcher’s recollections (1964) of Lakotas requesting stones from the cave in the early twentieth century. Nonetheless, it is a location where many culturally important plants grow, and several tribal cultural preservation officers specifically identified the plants of this area.
as important. Given the sacred significance of the area and its association with bison, which are widely connected to herbs and herbal medicine, it would not be surprising, for reasons discussed below, to know that park properties, or the general area in which they are situated, are associated with certain kinds of plant and mineral collection.

Of the many tribal nations who were known historically to occupy the Black Hills, only the Lakotas and Cheyennes are described as using the Hills for plant and mineral procurement. Other groups certainly used it for this purpose too, but their occupation of the area took place long before ethnographers and ethnomedicalists conducted research on the subject. One of the consistent themes in the literature is the Cheyennes' and Lakotas' high regard for the Black Hills as a location for securing plants and minerals, especially those used in healing and ceremonies.

The Black Hills achieved this stature for many reasons. One of the most important of these is that a number of plant species do not grow in the surrounding grasslands and sagebrush steppes. They are found only in the higher elevation environments of the Black Hills. Although some of them grow in the neighboring Laramie Range and the Big Horn Mountains, these areas were outside much of the Cheyennes' and Lakotas' customary territorial range until fairly late in the historic era. Cowparsnip (Heracleum maximum), bearberry (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi), snakeroot (Polygala senega), lodgepole pine (Pinus contorta), and the wood lily (Lilium philadelphicum) are just a few of the culturally important plants whose distributions are restricted to habitats in the Black Hills. In some cases, these plants grow in moister areas east of the Missouri River, and the Hills represent an outlier environment for their growth. Clearly, the metaphor of the Black Hills as an island is very appropriate here.

As early as 1846, Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:270-271) specifically commented about the importance of the Black Hills for securing lodgepoles, and three years later, in 1849, E. De Giradin (1936:63) wrote about local tribes procuring kinnikinick (bearberry) from the Hills for their tobacco mixtures. According to Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:200), these tribes used the bark of the redosoir dogwood in their tobacco mixes only when bearberry was unavailable. Other historic observations (Hayden 1862b:199-200; Hinman 1874b:95; Jenney 1875:182; Newton and Jenney 1880:323; Bushnell 1922:70; Chittenden 1935:728; Denig in Ewers 1961:6; Dodge 1965:137, Dodge in Kime 1998:105; Power in Krause and Olson 1974:88-89; Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:250) also remark on the use of the Hills for collecting lodgepoles, and William Bordeaux (1929:191) reported that green ash trees used in bow making were historically procured along stream banks in the Black Hills.

At the end of the nineteenth century, early agents on the Pine Ridge Reservation routinely gave Lakotas passes to travel to the Black Hills to collect plants for food and medicine (Jones 1904:125-128; Mekeel 1932:278). Early settlers recall Lakotas coming to the Black Hills well into the twentieth century to acquire their lodgepoles, to pick berries, dig for turnips, and collect other plants for food and medicine (Stewart 1967-1970:71; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:12, 730; McAdam 1973:6; Smith 1973:16; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:24, 33, 47, 72, 176, 213, 262, 264; Sundstrom, J. 1977:293, 317, 379, 1994:75). In addition, Cheyennes were known to come to the Hills from as far away as Montana and even Oklahoma after the 1930s to collect plants and gather minerals and clays for ceremonial purposes (Hart 1981:33, 39; Moore 1981:14; Schlesier 1987:6).

There are also many species that grow outside the Black Hills, but the Hills are the preferred site for their procural due to their connection with the sacred character of the area. The elms (Ulmus americanus) and baneberries (Actaea rubra) growing at Bear Butte, for example, have special significance to the Cheyennes (Hart 1981:33, 39). John Moore (1981:14) described how
the historic Cheyennes always returned to the Hills to gather plants for their medicines. Three of the most important and sacred ceremonies of the Cheyennes, the Massaum (Animal Dance), the Oxheheom (Sun Dance), and the Maxhoetonstov (Sacred Arrows Ceremony), were conducted historically in the Black Hills and required the collection of native plants for their performances (Schlesier 1987:6, 88-104; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:68-70). The sacred food prepared at the Massaum, for instance, represents plants from three of the four growth regions that make up the middle level of the universe, the votostoom. This food symbolized all edible food and plants in general (Schlesier 1987:6). As Karl Schlesier (1987:81) points out, just as all of the animals that made up the universe were represented symbolically at the Massaum, so all of the plant species that comprised this world were part of the ceremony’s complex material base. Although all plants are respected and implicated in the drama of the cosmos, those appearing in the Black Hills are especially revered because they come from the place where the spirits reside that created the universe and made life possible for the Cheyennes today.

The strong spiritual association of the Black Hills with plants also holds true for the Lakotas (Catches in Parlow 1983:2). In reference to Bear Butte, for example, Kari Forbes-Boyte (1996:104) wrote:

Sacred plants grow at Bear Butte, and a number of Lakota mentioned the healing properties of these plants. Although many of these plants can be found at other locales, because of the affiliation between Bear Butte and doctoring, it is believed that plants are more powerful when gathered at this site. In addition, according to the Lakota, some plants are found only at Bear Butte. For example, one Lakota elder said only Bear Butte provides a type of herb traditionally applied to an infant’s umbilical cord to ward off infection.

Fools Crow, a well-known spiritual leader of the Lakotas, had this to say about Bear Butte and its relation to healing and herbs:

To all the different medicine men, or medicine powers, the bear is the most powerful. The bear holds the secret of the roots and herbs that can cure a lot of diseases the medicines [Euro-American pharmaceuticals] cannot. This is why Bear Butte is especially important and sacred for the medicine men who use herbs and roots and other forms of plant life to cure diseases and who have to go to Bear Butte regularly to renew their power to cure diseases and sickness (quoted from Forbes-Boyte 1996:106).

Bear Butte and the Black Hills proper are closely connected to healing because of their historic associations with bears, which are identified very specifically with medicines and root plants by the Lakotas (Dorsey, J. 1894:495; Densmore 1918:195; Lone Bear in Walker 1980:128; Lewis, T. 1990:108; Forbes Boyte 1996:106).

Similar comments have also been made in relation to the plants that grow at Harney Peak (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:230-231), in the Hot Springs area (LaPointe 1976:46; Catches in Parlow 1983a: 2), and for the Black Hills as a whole (Bordeaux 1929:191; Buechel 1970:116-117; Catches in Parlow 1983a:2-3; Loud Hawk in Parlow 1983a:46; Red Shirt in Parlow 1983a:63; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:46, 98, 141, 253, 258-259; Flying By in Ingram 1989:181; Young Bear and Theisz 1994:30). Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:133-134) described one of these plants as follows:

Then this gopher transformed into an herb. This was the most powerful herb of all that I had gotten. It could be used in war and could destroy a nation. (This was used in war and it was very destructive. If you touch this herb it will kill you at once. Nothing grows anywhere near it because it is killed immediately if it does). ‘Behold him. There will be dispute of nations
and you will defend your people with this herb' (I was not old enough when I was supposed
to use this herb or else I could have used it and killed many enemies. It was too terrible to use
and I was glad that I did not get use to it. This herb is in the Black Hills. Every animal that
nears it dies. Although where it grows, there are many skeletons always. This medicine
belongs only to me -- no one else knows what this herb looks like. It looks like a little tree
with crinkly leaves, reddish in color. I call this herb soldier weed).

The story of the origin of kinikinick that Standing Bear (1988:103) tells is also probably
connected to the Black Hills, as is the medicinal use of a herb associated with a story about bison
that took place at the Buffalo Gap (Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:242-245).

Although there is nothing specific in the published literature that connects medicinal plants to
Wind Cave National Park per se, there are explicit associations in the literature between the
healing properties of plants and the thermal waters at Hot Springs (LaPointe 1976:46; Catches in
Parlow 1983a:2) and the Buffalo Gap (Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:242-
245). Several Lakotas and Cheyennes, however, identified the general area of the park as a
location for the procurement of plants used in ceremonial observances, especially sage and kin­
nikinick (Albers and Kittelson Interviews 2002).

Since the lands of Wind Cave National Park occupy an area that has long been considered
Tatanka makalpaya [the Stomping Ground of the Bison Bull] in Lakota (Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron
Shell, and Buechel 1978:242), it is easy to imagine how powerful symbolic connections might be
made between the park’s land, its bison and plants. This is true in two ways. First, as revealed in
Chapter Nine, there is a close association in Lakota cosmology between bison and healing herbs.
Severt Young Bear (and Theisz 1994:128) expressed it this way:

Even the buffalo meat the Oglala ate -- I don’t know how many of the rest of the Lakotas
were the same -- was especially healthy and even sacred because when those buffalo went
into the Black Hills, they ate all the sacred herbs and medicines that are found there. Through
the buffalo the Oglala then ate those same medicines.

Similarly, Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:128-129) revealed the following in one of his visions of
bison:

As I looked down upon the people, there stood on the north side a man painted red all over his
body and he had with him a lance (Indian spear) and he walked into the center of the sacred
nation’s hoop and lay down and rolled himself on the ground and when he got up he was a
buffalo standing right in the center of the nation’s hoop. The buffalo rolled and when he got
up there was an herb there in his place. The herb plant grew up and bloomed so that I could
see what it looked like --what kind of an herb it was from the bloom. After the buffalo’s
arrival the people looked better and then when the buffalo turned into an herb, the people all
got up and seemed to be well. Even the horses got up and stretched themselves and neighed.
Then a little breeze came from the north and I could see that the wind was in the form of a
spirit and as it went over the people all the dead things came to life. All the horses pulled up
their tails and neighed and began to prance around.

The spirit said: ‘Behold you have seen the powers of the north in the form of man, buffalo,
herb and wind. The people shall follow the man’s steps; like him they shall walk and like the
buffalo they shall live and with the herb they shall have knowledge. They shall be like
relatives to the wind.’ [From the man in the illustration they should be healthy, from the
buffalo they shall get meat, from the herb they shall get knowledge of diseases. the north wind
will give them strong endurance.
As discussed in Chapter Fifteen, the symbolic associations Black Elk made in this dream have relevance to Wind Cave, believed by some to be the home of Waziyata [the North Wind and/or his grandfather], a connection he in fact infers in another context (in Brown 1971:19-20).

Additionally, the creation of plants and a number of specific plant species are described in detail in the sacred story of the Four Winds and the Lakota genesis story that are also closely connected to Wind Cave (Walker 1983:220-228, 230-236). As Elaine Jahner (in Walker 1983:196) points out, James Walker’s narrative synthesis of the Lakota genesis story tells how the Wakinyan [Thunders] instruct Wohpe to create seeds and plants by blowing dust on them. In order to create all the plants and foods for the gods to feast on, Wohpe needs help and so the Pte Oyate [the Buffalo People] are made to assist her. The process whereby plants and foods are created reveals “the way power works in bringing things into existence in the process of creation” (Jahner in Walker 1983:196). Even more specifically, it is the connection of Wind Cave with the North Wind, Waziya or Waziyata, and his relation to the buffalo and their rebirth that undoubtedly punctuates the special stature of the plants that grow in this region.

The general sense that one gets from the literature is that the Lakotas believe different varieties of plants are more potent and powerful when they grow in the Black Hills because of their connections to the home of the animals, the winds, and the place of human origin. As the medicine man Pete Catches (Parlow 1983a:2-3) put it,

Another of the sacred spiritual men, brought yet another medicine. In the Black Hills, even of this day, we walk through the many canyons and deep recesses of the Black Hills and we see beautiful, powerful, potent medicine that grows no where else but the Black Hills. The medicine that grows there does not grow where I am talking now. I am talking in the reservation, near Pine Ridge. I know this territory very well. I go in the hills, looking for medicine. Many times I am sitting on top of the hill here looking towards the Black Hills. Oh how I want to go there in search of medicine.

Another Lakota, Stella Loud Hawk, also speaks about the relationship between plants and the Hills sacredness. As she says:

The whites say they never heard the Black Hills is sacred. But way back, it’s been sacred. It’s very sacred. The Medicine men, he mentioned all things, they get from the Black Hills. The roots, the leaves. That’s where they get all their medicine. The roots, the plants they use. And the barks. And these Medicine men travel very far to get their medicine. I have a grandfather that travels very far. He travels to North Dakota to get a certain plant for his medicine collection. And then into Montana and into Wayoming, Wyoming, Big Horn. And they always say that our Medicine men are witch doctors. But they are not. They are using the same roots as our grandfathers used back in those days. And I always say the Creator made those plants to us. So, I can say he was a doctor. He was a doctor for our Indian people. And I can say these Medicies are very strong. And there are certains kinds of Medicine that he gets from the Hills. And that’s why today the Lakota people say, ‘sacred.’ We use that word, ‘sacred’ (in Parlow 1983a:46).

It is well known that plant species exhibit considerable diversity across their varied habitats, and this was certainly recognized by the Lakotas and Cheyennes. Variation is revealed not only in the relative productivity of particular plant patches, but also in terms of other qualitative criteria. Plains Apaches, for example, recognize variations in the aromatic qualities of different patches of wild bergamot, a plant widely used by plains tribes as a medicine and perfume. They jealously protected their knowledge of the best patches of this plant (Jordan 1965:143-147). Similarly, Utes recognize differences in buffaloberry stands by their productivity and the relative quality of their fruit. Again, the whereabouts of the highest yielding and best tasting berries is a closely guarded
family secret (Albers and Lowry 1995). Iron Teeth told Thomas Marquis (and Limbaugh 1973:6) that the Cheyennes always searched for and returned to the best locations to collect berries, and Melvin Gilmore (1919:88) noted that the Lakotas often made special trips to find locations where fruits like chokecherries were abundant. Not uncommonly, chokecherry bushes are plentiful near Lakota rock art sites in the Black Hills and neighboring areas associated with female fasting and dreams of the Double-Woman, Winyan Nunpapika (Sundstrom, L. 2002:112).

There are a host of criteria one may use in selecting sites to collect plants, and their choice depends, in part, on a plant’s use. Thus while taste may be among the primary considerations for food plants, color is more important for selecting plants that work as dyes, and durability for those with structural uses. It is also true that families often gather plants at preferred places whose whereabouts has been passed down over many generations and kept secret. Therefore, even though particular plant species may grow in abundance elsewhere, Lakotas and Cheyennes may still come to the Black Hills to gather them because of their association with a sacred space, because of family traditions of having gathered plants at locations in the Hills, or because of the productivity and special properties (e.g., fragrance, taste) of particular stands in this area.

Finally, one must be mindful of the fact that many of the rich native plant environments on the plains were destroyed because the lands were overgrazed, plowed under, or inundated by large dam projects. Some of the most valuable riparian environments in Lakota country were destroyed after the building of dams along the Missouri River and the South Fork of the Cheyenne. Plant habitats in the Black Hills were also despoiled through grazing, logging, and mining practices, but there are still many local environments where culturally significant plants not only survive but flourish (Larson and Johnson 1999:14). Paramount among these are state and federal lands with a protected status.

There is no question that the Hills were, and still remain, an important area for the procurement of plants, nor is there any doubt that this area also served as a prominent place for the collection of stones and minerals with practical as well as ceremonial uses. There is an abundant body of archaeological evidence for quarrying activity having taken place in the Black Hills during prehistoric and early historic times. Many of the minerals procured in the Hills, including gypsum and certain varieties of quartzite, flint, chalcedony, chert, limestone, and sandstone, are restricted to the Hills. Two of the most famous quarrying sites in the Black Hills are in close proximity to Wind Cave National Park. One is Battle Mountain, about five miles southeast of the park, at the top of which is a large outcropping of variegated colored quartzite found in association with numerous flaked pieces. Local whites have mistakenly interpreted this site as a battleground. While battles certainly took place near this location, as reported in oral histories and winter counts, the debris of worked stone found atop Battle Mountain reveals not a battle site but a quarrying area. Another is Flint Hill, just six miles south of Minnekahta Junction and approximately twenty miles southwest of the park, which also contains rich outcroppings of quartzite material. Tipi rings abound near both of these sites, and the stone material quarried at both was well represented in archeological sites submerged by the Angostura Reservoir on the South Fork of the Cheyenne River. Other stone, including agate, chalcedony, and chert, suitable for making projectile points, and hematite, for making paint, were also found in the general area of the Black Hills (Wedel 1959:272; Sundstrom, L. 1990:59-60; Wedel and Frison 2001:44-45, 49). Evidence for the prehistoric quarrying of chalcedony is found at a number of documented sites at Wind Cave National Park or in its immediate vicinity (CU0869, CU0870, CU0871, CU0872, CU0873, CU0876, CU1235, CU1236, CU1285).

As far back as 1804, traders wrote about local tribes taking and trading gold, lead, and other minerals from the Black Hills (Tabeau in Abel 1939:68). In 1874, Samuel Burrows (in Krause
and Olson 1974:208) reported that atop Inyan Kara Mountain “small pieces of white quartz were found. As they had no geological business to be there, they were no doubt left there by the Indians, who are fond of making offerings to their gods from these lofty altars.” William Ludlow (1875:15), Chief Engineer of the Custer Expedition, reported a site on the northwestern side of the Black Hills where there were enormous quantities of gypsum that had been quarried by local tribes who left offerings there. Gypsum and other crystalline stone, as discussed momentarily, had important practical and spiritual uses for the Cheyennes as well as the Lakotas.

Several ethnographers and local historians described the Black Hills area as a preferred location for the collection of certain stones. According to Francis Densmore (1918:438), the Lakotas on the Standing Rock Reservation procured finely grained sandstones used for finishing off arrow shafts in the Black Hills. Thomas Odell (1942:23-24) reported a formation near Bear Butte where Lakotas collected a certain kind of stone. As he wrote:

Many small concretions of burnish color, divisible into two parts, each of which forms a cup-like receptacle, abound in the vicinity of Bear Butte. The Dakotas, it is said, gathered and polished these stones, on which they engraved pictures of Bear Butte, together with those of the sun and moon. It is reported that some of these stone idols are still in existence.

John Moore (1981:14; 1996a:67-68) writes that Cheyennes continue to collect red hematite, coal, blue earth, and white clay from locations in and around the Hills to use as pigments in their ceremonial paints. He specifically mentions the area of Bear Butte as one location for the procurement of blue clay and gypsum (Moore, J. 1974a:174, 259). Finally, Rufus Pilcher (1964) told a story about Lakotas requesting stone from Wind Cave for healing in the first decade of the twentieth century (see Chapter Thirteen for details).

Even after the United States took over the Hills, Lakotas and Cheyennes continued to gather their plants and minerals here. In fact, it appears to have been a customary practice in the early twentieth century to permit Lakotas to leave their reservations in order to gather plants in the Black Hills for food and medicinal purposes (Jones 1904:125-128; Mekeel 1932:278). In later years, there are many other references to Lakotas and Cheyennes continuing to make use of the Black Hills for collecting plants and minerals (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:12, 730; Buechel 1970:116-117; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:72; LaPointe 1976:46; Hart 1981:33, 39; Moore 1981:14; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:46, 98, 133-134, 141, 253, 258-259; Schlesier 1987:6, 88-104; Schwartz 1988:68-70; Ingram 1989:181; Born 1994:26-27; Forbes-Boyte 1996:104, 106). Over time, however, the Lakotas and Cheyennes’ ability to procure the plants and minerals they needed for their religious observances was restricted in the Hills. As Pete Catches (in Parlow 1983a:3) explains:

And I can't because it is being watched very closely and you cannot get off your car and get into the hills. You are told to get away from there. I done that once. We went to the Black Hills for the sole purpose of getting what is known as tobacco. No one knows that except a few people. I went there teaching a young man to show him what it looks like. And we were ordered away. 'Do not take anything, leave everything as it is,' they told us. So in the Black Hills there is many beautiful medicine that we wish we could have. And we go there and there area signs; we are ordered away from it. Medicine is very, very powerful there, blessed by the Great Spirit and given for the use of Lakota people. For 100 years we are kept from even entering the Black Hills. We go there fearing we will be chased out. We go there to be in the presence of the powerful Medicine sights there. When we walk in the region, we are strong.

Similar sentiments are expressed by Wallace Black Elk (and Lyon 1990:72) as follows:
So it's hard for us to gather the materials we need. They are on the land but that land is federal or state or private land. So you can't walk these private lands. There's a no trespass there. If you go there and try to pick medicine, they will shoot at you. Sometimes they shoot us dead. Then the government comes and says, "Well, a dead Indian is a good one," like that. So it's really hard to go in any land. It used to be our land but it's like they pulled the rug out from under our feet. So we are a people without a land and without a law. The spirit told us, "Not even one law was made for the Indian." So investigate that, because that is what the spirit told us. So every law that was made for Indians was made to go against us. So there never was a law made for Indians. So these things happened to us.

Indeed, one very good reason tribal people have not identified the sites where they gather plants on public lands in the Black Hills is the legitimate fear that the discovery of such use will lead to restrictions and the prevention of future access (Melmer 2003: B1).

V. SEASONAL CYCLES IN TRIBAL PROCUREMENT

Historically, the collection of plants was seasonally specific, and as the case with animals, the Lakotas and Cheyennes came to the Hills at particular times of the year to procure them. The late spring and early summer months were the times most tribal nations would have used the Black Hills for specialized plant collection. This was the time when the bands that wintered at the base of the Hills split into smaller camp groups to carry on various plant gathering activities, and it was also the season when people from more distant locations traveled to and spent time in the area every year, specifically for the purpose of gathering their lodgepoles and medicinal plants. This period was also associated with intense ceremonial activity, much of it conducted at various sites in and around the Hills (Bordeaux 1929:191; Hassrick 1964:154-155; Looking Horse in Parlow 1943a: 42-43; Schlesier 1987:82-83; Black Elk, C. 1992a:49-51; Goodman 1992:8, 13, 16).

The early spring was the time groups tapped sap from the box elder tree (Hassrick 1964:155) or gathered the buds of American licorice (Grinnell 1972:2: 178). Around the time of the vernal equinox bearberry, pasqueflowers, and milkvetch were collected. By the time of the summer solstice, berries were starting to ripen, leaves were becoming mature, and roots were reaching their highest potency in the Black Hills. The wild turnip, for example, was abundant here, and historically, it was commonly gathered in the foothills (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:72). The opportune time for identifying and gathering turnips is limited because the plant's top breaks off and scatters its seeds soon after ripening in June, making it difficult to locate (Kindscher 1987:183-189). The most intense gathering of plants for food, medicinal, ceremonial, and manufacturing purposes occurred during the weeks following the summer solstice (Hassrick 1964:155). This was the time when many tribal groups encamped at higher elevation locations in the Black Hills, where they were able to find an abundance of berries and many medicinal plants, such as cowparsnip, not found on the surrounding prairies (Bordeaux 1929:191).

By the middle of August, people would make their departure from the Hills to gather into larger groups in preparation for their annual communal bison hunts, which historically took place on the grasslands surrounding the Hills or in the gaps and canyon spaces where herds of bison and other animals could be easily isolated, surrounded, and/or driven into bounds (Warren 1875: 15-16; Hassrick 1964:155-156; Schlesier 1987:55-59; Sundstrom, L. 2000). This was the season when wild plums and buffaloberries ripened and when sunflowers, curly gumweed, gayfeathers, and goldenrod bloomed. These plants would have been harvested in and around the Hills only when groups located bison in the immediate area, and this certainly would have happened before the 1840s and even after but with much less frequency.
Another season when groups came to the Hills was in the late fall after their large communal game hunts. Groups who typically overwintered here probably gathered hazelnuts\(^1\) and oak acorns near the sites of their winter camps (Hassrick 1964:153, 156). Even buffaloberries\(^2\) may have been procured at this time of the year because some tribal people believe they taste better after the first frost (Albers 1966-1976, Fieldnotes; Nickel 1974:73). Trips to collect lodgepoles are also reported to have taken place in the fall (Bordeaux 1929:45). Other populations who wintered elsewhere may also have engaged in some plant and mineral collection during this season in conjunction with specialized trips to the area for elk and bighorn sheep hunting or en route to other locales.

VI. PLANTS/MINERALS AND THEIR USES

In the remaining part of this chapter, the plants and minerals reported at Wind Cave National Park or in its vicinity are discussed in terms of their uses in subsistence, healing, hygiene, manufacture, decorative art, animal care, and in symbolism as well as ceremony. In this discussion, particular attention is given to the tribes with known histories of occupancy in areas at or surrounding the park. Again, the large plant list (Appendix B) attached to this report contains much more detailed information on these and other plants along with their uses. A more detailed discussion of the minerals and clays of importance to the Cheyennes and Lakotas is found in Appendix C.

It must be emphasized that the material presented here and in the accompanying appendices is not to be construed as exhaustive or complete. There are probably many plants, minerals, and clays whose use in healing and religious ceremonies is not public knowledge. Spiritually gifted people generally do not reveal or identify the plants and stones they use or the places they procure them. This kind of information is kept secret out of respect for a plant or stone’s spiritual potency, the places it lives, and/or the spirit partners who revealed and gave instructions on its use. Even Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984), who talked about his own spiritual experiences in very detailed and candid ways, did not offer specific information on the identities of the plants he used in healing.

A. Plants Used in Food and Food Preparation

The Black Hills is a veritable produce market when it comes to the quality, variety, and productivity of their fruits and other edible wild plants. In historic times, the berries, nuts, seeds, saps, nectars, resins, stalks, flowers, leaves, barks, roots, bulbs, and tubers of a wide range of plants made up the diets of the tribal nations who lived in the region. Many of the plant staples in tribal diets are located in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park.

1. Berries, Nuts, Seeds, and Pods

Some of the early fur traders in the region, especially Pierre Antoine Tabeau (in Abel 1939:93-94) and Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:11-14), wrote extensive narratives about the importance of fruits in native diets, including the chokecherry, serviceberry, currant, wild plum,

\(^1\) Walter Jenney (in Newton and Jenney 1880:318) reported that two different varieties of hazelnuts were found in extensive patches in the southeastern Black Hills in 1875.

\(^2\) These berries can be found on their bushes into late October and early November.
wild grape, strawberry, buffaloberry, gooseberry, cacti tuna, and rosebuds. Different members of the Black Hills Expedition described all of the fruits important in local tribal diets as growing in profuse quantities at various locations in the Black Hills in 1874. William Ludlow (1875:18), the chief engineer on this expedition, for example, described one such location at the base of Harney Peak: “Wild raspberries, unexcelled in size and flavor, abounded; and in the dark wet bottoms the June-berry bushes grew to a height of 10 or 12 feet, and hung full of fruit.” A. B. Donaldson (in Krause and Olson 1974:64), the expedition’s botanist, described the profusion of fruit there as well. Samuel Barrows (in Krause and Olson 1974:250), one of the journalists, wrote that strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, and serviceberries grew abundantly on the side of Inyan Kara Mountain, and another correspondent (Knappen in Krause and Olson 1974:23) wrote of the rich berry-producing vegetation of Floral and Castle valleys, where “thousands of acres” of raspberries, currants, gooseberries, huckleberries, and strawberries could be found. A year later, members of the Jenney Expedition also reported on the abundance of the Hills’ fruit-bearing plants (Newton and Jenney 1880:316-38). Indeed, Walter Jenney (in Newton and Jenney 1880:316) likened the richness of the Hills’ vegetation to southern Maine and New Hampshire.

Of the numerous varieties of fruits found in the Black Hills, chokecherries \([Prunus virginiana]\) were probably the most important and certainly among the most highly esteemed by local tribes (Hart 1992:42). The Lakotas and other tribal nations in the region made special trips to find locations where this fruit was abundant during the months of July and August (Gilmore 1919:88). Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:11-12) wrote about this fruit and the buffaloberry as follows:

> Choke cherries, *cham pah’* (Sioux), and grain de beouf, *mush tim’ poo tah* (Sioux), grow on low bushes in great quantities along the coulees. These with the plumbs form the principal food for bears and wolves. Both the fruits last named are dried. The former is pounded with the seeds, and cooked in various ways, occasionally made into soup, but more often mixed with dried buffalo meat bruised and marrow grease added. This is what is known among the voyagers as pemmican. It is convenient to carry, nutritious and rather more desirable than most of their dishes. The grain de beouf is a small, red berry with an acid taste. When dried it is made into soup by boiling or enters as a component into pemmican instead of the cherries.

Historically, chokecherries were eaten fresh and prepared for later use. They were commonly ground with special mortars and pestles and made into small cakes and dried in the sun. These cakes, which contain a mixture of dried fruit, meat, and fat, are commonly known as pemmican in English or *wasna* in Lakota (Gilmore 1913b:364-365, 1919:88; Grinnell 1972:2:178; Nickel 1974:71; Standing Bear 1975:22, 1978:6, 59, 1998:111; Brown 1992:12). Many of the corn-producing tribes in the region also combined chokecherries with ground corn meal, a practice followed by the non-horticultural groups as well (Gilmore 1926b:14; Nickel 1974:71). In fact, chokecherries were an important part of the intertribal trade between the Arikaras and Lakotas (Gilmore 1987:90-91). The tribal nations of the region also mixed these berries in a variety of different soups and stews, and today, they are made into a popular pudding among the Cheyennes and the Lakotas (Lewis, L. 1980:252; Hart 1981:36; Hart 1992:35). Chokecherries remain a necessary food and/or offering at most contemporary feasts and religious events among contemporary Lakotas (Albers 1966-1976; Kemnitzer 1970:75; Nurge 1970:67, 82). In modern times, Lakotas continue to gather chokecherries; they prepare them using meat grinders and food processors and preserve them through drying, canning, and freezing techniques (Nurge 1970:82; Lewis, T. 1990:155). Chokecherries were also a popular fruit for early European American settlers, who processed them for jams and jellies (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 402, 425, 583; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom, J. 400
Buffaloberries \textit{[Shepherdia canadensis or S. argentea]} (also known as rabbitberries) ripened in the late summer and early fall. They were probably collected near tribal buffalo hunting grounds outside the Hills, but they may have been gathered along the Hills' margins when groups moved there to set up their winter encampments. The Arapahos, Cheyennes, Lakotas, Poncas, and Arikaras consumed the tart berries fresh but dried most of them for winter use (Gilmore 1919:106, 1987:54; Hassrick 1964:178; Nickerson 1966:49; Buechel 1970:333-334; Grinnell 1972:2:181; Nickel 1974:73; Hart 1981:25). Today, they remain a favorite fruit among local tribes who can and freeze them, prepare them in puddings for ceremonial occasions, or put them up in jams (Nickerson 1966:49; Kemnitzer 1970:75; Nurge 1970:67, 82; Standing Bear 1978:59). Early European American settlers in the region also consumed large quantities of these berries, and settlers garnished their meats with sauces and jellies made from the fruit (Gilmore 1919:106, 1987:54; Hassrick 1964:178; Nickerson 1966:49; Buechel 1970:333-334; Grinnell 1972:2:181; Nickel 1974:73; Hart 1981:25). Today, they remain a favorite fruit among local tribes who can and freeze them, prepare them in puddings for ceremonial occasions, or put them up in jams (Nickerson 1966:49; Kemnitzer 1970:75; Nurge 1970:67, 82; Standing Bear 1978:59). Early European American settlers in the region also consumed large quantities of these berries, and settlers garnished their meats with sauces and jellies made from the fruit (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:227).

Wild plum \textit{[Prunus Americana]}, which also ripens at the end of summer, from August to September, was another important fruit for tribal nations throughout the region. Again, Denig (in Ewers 1961:11) wrote:

\begin{quote}
Red plums, \textit{cauntah} (Sioux) grow on small bushes in many places on the borders of most of the rivers mentioned, but are found in great abundance high up on the White River and L'eau qui Court. They are best eaten ripe, but are dried and laid up by the natives, and when wanted are rendered eatable by boiling. The process of drying, however, extracts most of the fruit taste and leaves nothing but the rind.
\end{quote}

Not only was this an important fruit historically, but it remains a valued one today (Gilmore 1919:87; Carlson and Jones 1939:523; Vestal and Schultes 1939:29; Jordan 1965:41; Grinnell 1972:2:177; Nickel 1974:70; Standing Bear 1978:59; 1988:111; Brown 1992:12). In modern times, wild plums are often made into jams and jellies or preserved by canning for use on ceremonial occasions (Kemnitzer 1970:75; Nurge 1970:67, 82; Lewis, L. 1980:252). This fruit has also been a popular food for European Americans living in the Black Hills (Sundstrom, J. 1994:75).

Another member of the rose family, the serviceberry \textit{[Amelanchiera]}, remains an important food for tribes throughout the region. Like the chokecherry, it was eaten fresh or dried and pounded into bison meat to make pemmican cakes (Gilmore 1919:87, 1987:35; Bordeaux 1929:132; Hassrick 1964:179; Nickerson 1966:48; Grinnell 1972:2:176; Hart 1981:34, 1992:8). It is a popular ingredient in puddings and soups served today on ceremonial occasions (Albers 1966-1976). Historically, this was a popular trade item that tribes exchanged with European Americans (Gilmore 1919:91), and today, it remains a popular wild fruit among European American residents of the Black Hills (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:227, 379).

Many other fruit-bearing woody plants located at Wind Cave National Park were a source of food in earlier times, and they remain important in tribal diets today. Local tribes eat raspberries \textit{[Rubus idaeus or R. occidentalis]} and various species of currant and gooseberry \textit{[Ribes americanum, R. aureum, R. cereum, R. hertellium, R. oxyacanthoides, and R. missouriensis]}, fresh or dried for long-term use (Gilmore 1919:85; Hassrick 1964:179; Grinnell 1972:2:175, 177; Nickel 1974:72; Jordan 1965:49; Standing Bear 1978:59, 1988:11-12; Brown 1992:12; Hart 1981:26-27, 36). The berries of the skunkbush or fragrant sumac \textit{[Rhus aromatica]} are important...
to the Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and various Numic speaking tribes in the area, but other tribes do not appear to have collected them systematically (Vestal and Schultes 1939:39, 40, 72 Jordan 1965:48). In earlier eras, the Plains Apaches and the Lakotas often made hackberries [*Celtis occidentalis*] into candy or a condiment for seasoning meats (Gilmore 1913b:362; Jordan 1965:63). Nannyberries [*Viburnum lentago*] were once eaten too but not in great quantities (Gilmore 1919:115; Nickel 1974:75), and elderberries [*Sambuicus racemosa*] were eaten raw and used in a beverage tea (Gilmore 1919:115; Vestal and Schultes 1939:52). The Lakotas and Poncas dried the fruits of sandcherries [*Prunus pumila*] for later use and also made them into a sauce when fresh (Gilmore 1913b:364). The Lakotas and Cheyennes believed that if a person approached sandcherries from the windward side they would be bitter but coming from the opposite direction, they would be sweet (Gilmore 1919:88; Buechel 1970:97; Grinnell 1972:2:177; Eastman in Graeber 1978:88, 101; Standing Bear 1988:12). Rosebuds [*Rosa* spp.] are eaten too, but more often, along with bearberries [*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*], they are taken as an emergency food (Gilmore 1919:85; Hassrick 1964:156; Kemnitzer 1970:73; Nurje 1970:82; Nickel 1974:73, 74; Hart 1981:31, 36; Wilson 1981:106-107; Kindscher 1987:200-204; Standing Bear 1988:11; Brown 1992:12). Wild strawberries [*Fragaria virginiana*] were taken fresh by all of the tribal nations of the northern Plains when they ripened in June, and they were also desired and sought after by early European American travelers and settlers (Sundstrom, J. 1977:227). River grapes [*Vitis riparia*], which are not reported on park properties, are abundant in the general region, and they are still important sources of food for the region’s tribal peoples (Gilmore 1919:102; Carlson and Jones 1939:523; Vestal and Schultes 1939:42; Jordan 1965:52-54; Hassrick 1964:179,190; Jordan 1965:52-54; Buechel 1970:135; Grinnell 1972:2:180; Nickel 1974:75; Standing Bear 1978:59; Hart 1981:41). Finally, European Americans ground the berries of the common juniper [*Juniperus communis*] to flavor their meats (Larson and Johnson 1999:504).

Many trees in the region provide food as well. One of the most important food staples was the acorn of the bur oak [*Quercus macrocarpa*], which was gathered in late fall (Gilmore 1919:75; Carlson and Jones 1939:524; Grinnell 1972:1:248; Hart 1981:26). The bitterness of the acorns was extracted through a leaching process (Gilmore 1919:75), and then the nuts were ground into a meal for soups and mush (Hassrick 1964:156, 180; Brown 1992:12). Ground acorns were also added to the ingredients that went into the making of pemmican (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:387). Notwithstanding the difficulties in collecting them, hazelnuts, which were reported as very abundant in the southeastern Hills in 1875 (Newton and Jenney 1880:316), were eaten raw or pounded into a meal for thickening soups (Gilmore 1919:74). In times of food scarcity, especially during the winter months, they became an important emergency food (Hassrick 1964:156, 180). The fruits of the northern hawthorn [*Crataegus chrysocarpa/dissona*] were used as food, but these were eaten in moderation and taken mostly in emergency situations (Gilmore 1919:87; Carlson and Jones 1939:521; Jordan 1965:31; Grinnell 1972:2:176; Nickel 1974:61-62). The fruits of the Rocky Mountain juniper [*Juniperus scopulorum*] are also edible, and even though they were widely procured for food by tribes in the Intermountain West, this was not the case for most of the tribes in the Plains who consumed them on an occasional basis (Carlson and Jones 1939:522; Smith, A. 1974:270). Finally, the seeds of the ponderosa [*Pinus ponderosa*] were eaten by the Cheyennes (Hart 1992:57).

Several species of flowering forbs provided fruits, pods, and seeds for consumption. The immature pods of the groundplum [*Astragalus crassicarpus*] were collected in the spring and eaten raw or cooked by Lakotas and Poncas (Gilmore 1913b:365; Gilmore 1919:91; Buechel 1970:440; Kindscher 1987:61). The Lakotas also ate the fruit of the pricklypear cactus [*Opuntia*], which they called *taspu* (Gilmore 1913b:366, 1919:104; Bourdeaux 1929:130; Standing Bear 1978:59; Brown 1992:12). Cacti tuna were eaten raw or stewed, and even the stems were
consumed when other foods were scarce. Royal B. Hassrick (1964:179) quoted a Lakota woman, who said:

From the cactus we gathered the red tops or fruit and often brought them home, worked them around in a deerskin bag to remove all the thorns. Next we crushed them with a pestle and mortar in a rawhide bowl in much the same way we pounded cherries, and placed them in rows to dry. From this, we made mush, sometimes adding a little fat.

The Cheyennes dried the fruits as well, and they used them in meat stews and as a thickening agent for soups (Grinnell 1972:2:180; Hart 1981:16). The Comanches dried the unripe fruit, which they stored and eventually cooked with other foods (Carlson and Jones 1939:523), while the Plains Apaches ate them raw when they picked them in the fall (Jordan 1965:38). Early European American settlers in the West quickly learned the food value of these cacti, too (Kindscher 1987:158). Various Physalis species or groundcherries, also commonly known as tomatillo, Chinese lantern, and popweed, were picked opportunistically and eaten fresh by Lakota children. They were also made into a sauce and dried for the winter when quantities were sufficient (Buechel 1970:467; Red Cloud High School 2001).

The seeds of the sunflower [Helianthus annus], a plant commonly cultivated by the tribes who lived along the Missouri River, were gathered and eaten fresh, prepared by roasting and cooking, or dried and ground into a meal to make breads and thicken soups (Gilmore 1919:130-131; Grinnell 1972:2:189; Hart 1981:21; Kindscher 1987:124; Red Cloud Indian School 2001). Although some of the tribal nations along the Missouri River cultivated sunflowers, they preferred the wild varieties for making oils (Wilson 1917:18-19). Blue flax [Linacea perenne] seeds were used to flavor food as well (Kindscher 1987:244).

Another important food, but one not reported at Wind Cave National Park, was the wild bean or hogpeanut [Amphicarpaea bracteata]. Typically found on the lower elevation banks of rivers in and around the Black Hills, these beans were collected and stored in the dens of field mice or voles whose supplies were pilfered by the women of local tribes (Hayden 1862b:188; Gilmore 1919:95; Ewers 1961:11). Lakota women, however, left gifts of corn or other acceptable foods in exchange; there is a popular moral story in Lakota narrative traditions that tells of a woman who took beans from a mouse’s storehouse without returning a gift and the calamity that befell her community as a result (Gilmore 1919:96). The underground seeds were gathered either in the early spring or in late fall, while the above ground seeds were harvested only during the fall (Kindscher 1987:38-41). The beans were eaten raw or boiled with meat fat to make a soup. According to Ferdinand Hayden (1862a:370), wild beans combined with dried beaver’s tail was considered one of the Lakota’s favorite dishes and often served to “distinguished visitors.” The plant’s smaller lentil sized seeds were cooked as well (Kindscher ibid.).

2. Bulbs, Tubers, and Roots

The prairie turnip, also known as breadroot scurfpea [Psoralea esculenta], was one of the most important foods for the tribal nations of the northern Plains, and it was also one of the most commonly reported in historic sources (Kaye and Moodie 1978:329-336). Pierre Antoine Tabeau (Abel 1939:98), for example, wrote:

...But the prairie turnip is the most common and is not only reserved for these occasions (famines) but is used much even in times of plenty. This root has almost the shape of a turnip. It is covered with a hard and very thick black skin which is easily detached and always removed whether the turnip is eaten raw or boiled. The women cut it in pieces, which they
dry in the sun and afterwards pound and reduce to flour. They make of this flour a rich, nourishing, and palatable soup. All the wandering nations leave regretfully the districts where the prairie turnip grows abundantly and leave it, too, only after having dried great quantities of it. The Caninanbiches, Chayennes and others, who, independently of their chargers, have many horses not laden, are rarely without this flour and during the visit that they paid to the Ricaras, they bartered it for maize at a profit of three or four measures for one.

And Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:11) reported:

The prairie turnip, called by the Sioux teep se nah, or by the French pomme blanche, is found everywhere on the high prairies. It is either eaten raw or boiled and is collected and dried in large quantities by the Indians for winter use. When dried and pulverized a tolerable substitute for flour can be made of it. In any state it will support life for several months without the assistance of animal food. This root is much sought after and devoured by the grizzly bears.

In fact, Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:188) claimed that local tribes subsisted "almost entirely" on this plant during the spring and early summertime. Notwithstanding its importance, the prairie turnip is not an easy plant to harvest because its roots are generally compacted in hard soil. Historically, women used specially carved digging sticks to pry the turnips from the ground, and today, Lakota and Cheyenne women and men often use crowbars to do the job (Albers 1966-1976; Kindscher 1987:185-186). Melvin Gilmore (1919:92-93) noted that Lakota mothers told their children to take note of the directions of the plants and follow these to find the whereabouts of other plants because it is said that the plants 'point to each other.'


The Arikaras, Mandans, and Hidatsas frequently acquired their supplies of prairie turnip in trade with the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribal nations who lived on the plains west of their villages. In fact, there are vivid descriptions in traders' accounts of Cheyenne and Arapaho horses laden with long strings of prairie turnip when they came to trade at the villages (Gilmore 1926:14; Tabeau in Abel 1939:98; Jordan 1965:47; Nickel 1974:72).

Gunnison's mariposa lily [Calochortus gunnisonii] and the closely related sego lily [C. nuttallii] were also sources of food for tribal nations in the northern Plains and adjoining regions of the Intermountain West. Among the Cheyennes, for example, the flower buds were eaten, and the bulbs were dried, pounded and stored for winter use to make a sweet mush (Grinnell 1972:2:172; Hart 1981:12).

Wild onions [Allium], which contain micronutrients such as vitamins C and A, were an important nutritional supplement to the buffalo meat diet of the tribal nations who lived in the central and northern Plains (Kindscher 1987:16, 1992:222-23). They were a popular food, eaten alone or as a condiment to enhance the flavor of meats and soups among all tribes in the region (Gilmore 1919:71; Carlson and Jones 1939:520; Jordan 1965:27; Nickerson 1966:46-47; Buechel 1970:447; Grinnell 1972:2:171; Standing Bear 1978:58; Hart 1981:12). Royal Hassrick (1964:179), quoting a Lakota woman, writes: "Wild onions were larger and sweeter than turnips.
It was time to pick them when the prairie grass was thickest. Mixed with meat, either fresh or jerked, onions were extremely good.

Although not listed for the Black Hills, the Jerusalem artichoke [Helianthus tuberosus] was also a major food staple, particularly for the tribal nations living on the eastern side of the Hills (Gilmore 1913b:369; Gilmore 1919:130-131; Buechel 1970:38; Standing Bear 1978:57; Walker 1982:128). According to the trader Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:11), “Pangi grow in abundance along marshy spots of the river banks. They are eaten raw, roasted or boiled, but are not dried and preserved.” Also found in locations farther east is the wild potato or groundnut [Apios americana], another important food in local tribal diets (Buechel 1970:111; Hart 1981:28).

The arrowhead plant [Sagittaria cuneata], widely found in the Black Hills, but not reported at Wind Cave National Park, was another significant source of food (Gilmore 1913:358, 1919:65; Nickerson 1966:46; Grinnell 1972:2:170; Standing Bear 1978:58; Hart 1981:7). Christina Little Horse (in Lewis, L. 1980:251), a Lakota woman, recollected her grandmother gathering these. As she described it:

When she would go out to pick the berries and wild food she had been used to eating, she would take me along. Usually the first place we’d go would be the creek. There was a plant growing there she called “spetola.” That word meant beads. She’d take the plant out of the muddy, slushy water where the leaves would be floating on top of the water. She’d reach into the water with her hands and dig around and she would come up with a white, cordlike root with little bumps on it from about the size of a walnut down to the size of small beans. The root and the bumps together looked just like a string of beads. She would take all those beadlike things off the cordlike root and wash them in water. Then she’d boil them and they tasted just like mashed potatoes. She said they were Indian beans.

There were many other roots of importance in the diets of the tribal nations who lived around the Black Hills. The Lakotas, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches ate the bulb-like root of the dotted blazingstar, which is reported to have a carrot-like flavor (Vestal and Schultes 1939:61; Jordan 1965:34; Red Cloud High School 2001). The Plains Apaches also consumed the rootstalks of the cattail [Typha latifolia] (Jordan 1965:50). The roots of the American Licorice [Glycyrrhiza lepidota] were peeled and dried in large quantities for winter use by the Lakotas (Gilmore 1919:92), while the young shoots of the licorice plant were eaten raw by the Cheyennes when they budded in the early spring (Grinnell 1972:2:178). Various species of biscuitroot or wild parsley [Lomatium spp.] are reported in the Black Hills but not at Wind Cave National Park; these plants were gathered for food in the spring (Hassrick 1964:179-180; Buechel 1970:460; Grinnell 1972:2:182; Hart 1980:40; Kindscher 1987:147-148). Finally, the Poncas, Lakotas, and Comanches, chewed the roots of both the white and pink varieties of wild prairie clover [Dalea spp.] (Gilmore 1919:94; Carlson and Jones 1939:523; Buechel 1970:495; Kindscher 1987: 111).

3. Leaves, Stalks, Barks, Buds, and Flowers

Field Mint [Mentha arvensis] was widely used by European Americans and the tribal nations of the region for culinary purposes (Kindscher 1992:152-155). The Cheyennes, Lakotas, and Poncas boiled the dried leaves as a beverage tea (Bordeaux 1929:131; Grinnell 1972:2:186; Standing Bear 1978:58; Hart 1981:27). This tea is still served today at Lakota feasts (Albers 1966-76; Nurge 1970:67, 82). The Lakotas flavored their cooked meat with mint and packed the plant with their dried meat as well (Gilmore 1913b:363).
TABLE 6. List of Food Plants at Wind Cave National Park Used by Lakotas, Cheyennes, and/or Arapahos

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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Quercus macro</td>
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<td>Sheperdia Canadensis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadplant</td>
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Grasses and Sedges

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Flowering Forbes

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Many other plants were also used to make culinary beverages. The Lakotas used raspberry, buckthorn, and leadplant leaves, white clover roots, and chokecherry bark in beverage teas (Gilmore 1919:85, 89, 93, 94; Buechel 1970:507), while the Poncas steeped the leaves of blue vervain [Verbena stricta] for the same purpose (Gilmore 1919:111). Cheyenne beverage teas were also brewed from the barks of the cottonwood, aspen, and elm tree (Hart 1981:36, 37, 39).

Pigweeds [Chenopodium spp.] were an ancient food plant on the plains (Kindscher 1987:79-83). The Lakotas boiled the immature plant greens for food or prepared them as a mush, and the Kiowas also consumed them, even though they believed that the plant was put on the earth “to bother Indians or drive them away from dangerous places” (Vestal and Schultes 1939:25; Buechel 1970:117, 574). They were also a popular source of greens for European American travelers and immigrants in the nineteenth century (Kindscher 1987:82). Other species of plants called pigweeds that come from the amaranth family, including the prostrate variety [Amaranthus graecizians], were also used as a source of greens by the Kiowas, who often cooked them in soups (Vestal and Schultes 1939:26).

Various parts of local milkweed species, Asclepiadaceae, were used as food too. The Lakotas and Cheyennes used the flowers of A. speciosa to thicken soups (Gilmore 1913b:363; Buechel 1970:519). The Cheyennes ate the inner layer of the stalks when the fruit was still green, and they used the dry milk as a chewing gum (Grinnell 1972:2:183; Hart 1981:14). They also consumed the inner stem of thistles [Cirsium edule] raw and considered this a prized food (Hart 1981:20), while the Comanches consumed C. undulatum (Carlson and Jones 1939:521) and the Kiowas, C. ochrocentrum (Vestal and Schultes 1939:85). The Kiowas and Plains Apaches ate the flower stalks of the soapweed [Yucca glauca] plant (Vestal and Schultes 1939:17; Jordan 1965:54). Although the Cheyenne knew them to be eatable, they did not consume them in any measure (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53). The inner bark of young cottonwoods and the buds of willows were a source of food for the Lakotas (Bordeaux 1929:131). The inner stems of the softstem bulrush [Scripus validus] were common foods for both the Cheyennes and the Lakotas (Gilmore 1913b:359; Hart 1981:8; Red Cloud High School 2001). Standing Bear (1978:58) wrote about the bulrush as follows:

A food that had an interesting history for us was the tall plant that grew in the swamps, commonly called bulrush. The duck, who brought many good plants and roots to the tribe, told the Duck Dreamer medicine-man about it and named it psa. In the early spring and summer we welcomed this plant which was pulled up by the roots, and the white part eaten like celery.

4. Saps, Nectars, and Resins

The box elder was a primary source of sugar for tribal nations in the Black Hills region. Its sap was used to make beverages and candies (Gilmore 1913b:366; Gilmore 1919:101; Grinnell 1972:1:249; Vestal and Schultes 1939:40; Hassrick 1964:150; Nickel 1974:57; Standing Bear 1988:98-99; Hart 1981:13, 1992:5). Luther Standing Bear (1978:59), a Lakota, said: “We had no
sugar, but notched the boxelder and caught its juice in our horn spoons, drinking it like water.” In early spring, gathering the sap from this tree was a major productive activity for women. Other trees also furnished sweet saps too. The Ponderosa pine, aspen, and cottonwood exuded palatable saps favored by tribes in the Intermountain West, and although the Lakota are reported to have eaten the inner bark of some of these trees (Bordeaux 1929:131), there is no published evidence that they or other tribes in the Black Hills collected the sap.

The Kiowas allowed the sap of Indian Hemp [Apocynum cannabinum] to harden and used it as a chewing gum (Vestal and Schultes 1939:47). The Lakotas chewed the latex from the roots of the Rush skeletonplant [Lygodesmia juncea] (Gilmore 1919:136), and the Cheyennes used the pitch of the ponderosa pine as a gum (Hart 1992:57). Finally, the Lakotas and the Cheyennes gathered the nectar of the downy paintbrush [Castilleja sessilifora] in the spring and consumed it as a food (Buechel 1970: 521; Hart 1981:39).

5. Grasses, Fungi, and Lichen

The tribal nations who lived in the region of the Black Hills did not consume any of the abundant species of grass reported in the area, although tribes in the neighboring Intermountain West region were known to eat the seeds of rye [Elymus] and other grass species. Grasses, however, were critical in maintaining the health of their principal source of meat, the bison, and in providing forage for their horses. The short-grass gramas and buffalograsses are noteworthy, and in some ways, they are inseparable from the species that grazed on them. Bison grazing facilitates their growth by increasing the uptake of nitrogen, and the dung of this animal fertilizes the soils in which they grow (Isenberg 2000:22). These grasses are thickest and most nutritious in late summer. Since they are able to store their nutrients through the winter months, they provide good forage in some of the sheltered areas tribes overwintered, including the Race Track and the lands of Wind Cave National Park (Isenberg 2000:23; Binnema 2001:28-29).

The tribal nations who lived in the Black Hills ate a variety of fungi, but, except for puffballs [Marshallia caespitosa], the identity of many of these non-vascular plants is unknown or not consistent with modern scientific nomenclatures (Gilmore 1919:61-62; Vestal and Schultes 1939:12; Jordan 1965:136; Grinell 1972:2:168-169; Standing Bear 1978:58, 62; Hart 1981:2-4; Little Horse in Lewis, L. 1980:253).

B.Plants/Minerals Used in Medicine and Hygiene

The plants of the Black Hills also constituted a veritable pharmacy for the tribal nations who lived within their reaches, and many were standard ingredients in the medicinal remedies of early European American settlers too. Although other areas of the of the Black Hills, especially the parks and grasslands of the central limestone plateau, hold the greatest variety of plants with medicinal uses, more than fifty different species of plants reported at Wind Cave National Park provided remedies for a wide range of ailments and injuries in American Indian and European American healing traditions.

1. Colds and Respiratory Ailments

The purple coneflower [Echinacea angustifolia] is probably the most well known of the park’s healing plants. The Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Lakotas, Comanches, and the Cheyennes treated colds with teas and decoctions made from its roots and leaves (Densmore 1918:389; Carlson and Jones 1939:521; Vestal and Schultes 1939:58; Jordan 1965:110; Buechel 1970:397;
Early European American settlers in the region quickly learned the medicinal value of the purple coneflower and applied it widely as a folk remedy (Tilford 1997:52-53). Today, it is sold commercially as a popular antidote and remedy for colds, and recent scientific research has documented many of its medically active components (Kindscher 1992:84-93).

**Fetid marigold** [*Dyssodia papposa*] is eaten by prairie dogs and commonly found near their towns: thus, its Lakota name, *Pispiza tawote*, or prairie dog food (Buechel 1970:444). The Lakotas and the Poncas powdered and administered the plant for pulmonary troubles (Gilmore 1919:132), while the Kiowas Apaches used the crumbled flowers as an inhalant for respiratory complications (Jordan 1965:135).

The rush skeletonplant [*Lygodesmia juncea*] was considered to be one of the Cheyenne’s most important medicinal plants, and it was used to treat a whole range of illnesses (Hart 1981:22). John Stands in Timber (and Liberty 1967:110) indicated that it was an essential ingredient in nearly all medicinal mixtures and decoctions. The roots were used primarily in treating colds and tuberculosis.

Other members of the composite or aster family employed in the treatment of colds and respiratory ailments include sunflowers [*Helianthus annus*] (Gilmore 1913b:369; 1919:130; Red Cloud High School 2001) and goldenrod [*Solidago*] (Jordan 1965:131-133; Tilford 1997:66). Different varieties of sagewort, including *Artemesia ludoviciana*, were also popular remedies for sinus problems and pulmonary illnesses (Gilmore 1919:135; Vestal and Schultes 1939:56; Jordan 1965:99-103; Hart 1981:19; 1992:44-45). Of the many different medicinal applications the Lakota had for the wild bergamot [*Monarda fistulosa*], not found at Wind Cave National Park, was a tea brewed from the plant’s blossoms to soothe sore throats and to treat colds and fevers. In another application, the roots were used to doctor whooping cough (Buechel 1970:172).

Many tribal peoples also made teas from the needles and berries of the Rocky Mountain juniper [*Juniperus Scopulorum*] to treat colds and respiratory illnesses (Gilmore 1919:63; Kemnitzer 197:66; Vestal and Schultes 1939:13; Grinnell 1972:2:170; Hart 1981:5; 1992:37; Standing Bear 1988:96, 102). The Cheyennes and Comanches boiled the leaves of the skunkbush [*Rhus aromatica*] in decoctions to treat head colds (Carlson and Jones 1939:524, 534; Hart 1981:14, 40), while the Kiowas relied on them to treat influenza (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40). The broom snakeweed plant [*Gutierrezia sarothrae*] was taken by the Lakotas and the Plains Apaches in teas for coughs and colds (Jordan 1965:65; Buechel 1970:440), while pinedrops [*Pterospora andromedea*], the common juniper [*Juniperus communis*], shepherd’s purse [*Capsella bursa-pastoris*], and ragweed [*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*] were included in various Cheyenne remedies for colds and pulmonary complications (Grinnell 1972:2:169-170, 174, 183, 188; Hart 1981:18, 25). The Cheyennes and the Lakotas utilized common yarrow [*Achillea millefolium*] to stimulate sweating and to alleviate the symptoms of colds and other respiratory ailments (Buechel 1970:192; Grinnell 1972:2:189; Hart 1981:17; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53). Cowparsnip [*Heracleum maximum*] was considered one of the Arapahos’ primary medicines, and it was used widely in their treatments for colds and pulmonary disorders (Nickerson 1966:49). The Poncas depended on the curlycup gumweed [*Grindelia squarosa*] as a medicine for treating tuberculosis (Gilmore 1913b:368, 1919:133), and the Lakotas relied on it for treating respiratory difficulties (Red Cloud Indian School 2001). Finally, the Kiowas prepared various varieties of willow for treating pneumonia (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19).

Rocky Mountain juniper and the common yarrow were widely recognized for their medicinal properties among European Americans, and they were used in teas or infusions to treat coughs
and sore throats (Kindscher 1992:20-21; Tilford 1997:84, 166). European American settlers also collected goldenrod for respiratory treatments and horseweed [*Conyza canadensis*] for bronchitis (Kindscher 1992:237). The common mullein [*Verbascum thapsus*], introduced from Eurasia, and now a ubiquitous roadside plant throughout the Black Hills, was frequently included in European American folk medicine as a remedy for the treatment of asthma and bronchitis (Tilford 1997:102). Finally, curlycup gumweed [*Grindelia squarosa*], wild onions [*Allium*], the scarlet globemallow [*Sphaeralcea coccinea*], and willows [*Salix, spp.*] were widely employed by early European American settlers to treat asthma, bronchitis, colds, and pneumonia (Hart 1992:34, 38; Kindscher 1992:30, 192; Tilford 1997:94, 160, 164).

2. Gastrointestinal, Liver, and Kidney Ailments

To treat illnesses of the liver, kidneys, and gastrointestinal tract, tribal peoples procured an even greater array of plants found at the park. Various composite plants were used for these purposes. Sageworts, including *Artemesia compestris, A. filifolia,* and *A. ludoviciana,* were considered potent remedies for digestive and urinary complaints (Vestal and Schultz 1939:56; Buechel 1970:117, 439, 519; Fire in Erdoes 1978:172). The root of the purple coneflower [*Echinacea angustifolia*] was chewed by Lakotas to treat lower intestinal pain (Densmore 1918:270, 389), and pepperweed [*Lepidium densiflorum*] was brewed in a tea for kidney ailments (Buechel 1970:659). Many tribes relied on the western ragweed [*Ambrosia psilostachya*] to treat intestinal disorders too. The Cheyennes concocted a tea from the stem and leaves to use as a remedy for constipation, bowel cramps, and bloody stools, while the Lakotas took the plant’s top and leaves and made a medicine to relieve vomiting (Gilmore 1913b:369; Grinnell 1972:2:184; Hart 1981:18). The Cheyennes also brewed willow [*Salix amygdaloides*] in a tea for relieving diarrhea and other ailments (Hart 1981:38).

Fruit-bearing plants were also widely applied in treatments for gastrointestinal complaints. The Poncas brewed the roots of ground cherries in a tea for stomach complications (Gilmore 1919:113), and many tribal nations brewed a tea made from chokecherry bark to treat diarrhea and dysentery (Gilmore 1919:89; Hart 1981:36, 1992:43).

Several plant remedies were earmarked for children’s gastrointestinal ailments. The Poncas and Plains Apaches used raspberry roots in treatments for childhood diarrhea and bowel problems (Gilmore 1919:84; Jordan 1965:129). The Lakotas treated intestinal complaints in children with a tea made from the bark of the bur oak (Gilmore 1919:75), while childhood diarrhea and dysentery were doctored with remedies concocted from horseweed [*Conyza canadensis*], the rush skeletonplant [*Lygodesmia juncea*], goosefoot [*Chenopodium album*], thymeleaf spurge [*Euphorbiaceae serpyllifolia*], and various milkweeds [*Asclepiadaceae pumila, A. viridiflora, A. steno­phylla*] (Densmore 1918:266-267; Gilmore 1919:99; Buechel 1970:132, 192, 329, 440, 489, 520, Fire and Erdoes 1978:171-172).

Various species of milkweeds and spurges were employed by the Plains Apaches, Lakotas, and Poncas to treat adult stomach complaints too (Gilmore 1919:109-110; Jordan 1965:104). Many different tribes relied on field mint [*Mentha Arvensis*] for stomachaches and other intestinal ailments (Vestal and Schultes 1939:49; Hart 1981:27; Fire and Erdoes 1978:170). The Lakotas prepared soapweed [*Yucca glauca*], western wallflower [*Erysimum asperum*], and blue vervain [*verbena hastata*] in teas for intestinal distress (Gilmore 1913b:363; Fire and Erdoes 1978:170). Poncas and Lakotas took cowparsnip [*Heracleum maximum*] for stomachaches (Gilmore 1919:107), while the Cheyennes used the dried pulverized root of the cattail [*Typha latifolia*] in a medicine to relieve abdominal cramping (Hart 1981:40). The Cheyennes also took the dried...

The Lakotas brewed teas from wild buckwheat [Eriogonum annum] and the pricklypear cactus [Opuntia] to promote urination (Buechel 1970:227). The pulverized roots of milkvetches [Astragalus canadensis and A. racemosus] were also used for this purpose (Buechel 1970:440), and wild lettuce [Lactuca oblongifolia] was an ingredient in a decoction the Lakotas prepared for kidney ailments (Densmore 1918:262-263).

European Americans relied on many of the same plants for treating their gastrointestinal complaints. Field mint has a long history as a stomach remedy in European American folk medicine, and today, it is one of the most popular herbal teas in the United States (Kindscher 1992:153-154). Milkweeds, fetid marigold, blue vervain, and chokecherry bark were also commonly taken for a wide range of intestinal ailments (Moore, M. 1979:106-107; Kindscher 1992:212, 241; Tilford 1997:34, 97). The common juniper and bearberry were ingredients in remedies to treat diarrhea and inflammations of the digestive and urinary tracts (Kindscher 1992:132-133; Tilford 1997:86), while the evening primrose [Calystogus serrulatus] was administered in diuretic, laxative, and antispasmodic applications (Moore, M. 1979:75; Tilford 1997:56). Finally, the soapweed plant [Yucca glauca] served as an anti-inflammatory agent in treating maladies of the digestive and urinary tracts (Tilford 1997:118).

3. Obstetrical and Gynecological Applications

Several different plants found at Wind Cave National Park were employed in treating gynecological complaints, obstetrical complications, and postpartum distress. Sageworts were widely used for these purposes. Artemesia filifolia is the sage the Lakotas identified as “women’s medicine,” and it served as a remedy to treat irregular menstruation (Gilmore 1913b:369-370; Buechel 1970:587). The Lakotas also made a decoction with A. frigida, which was taken internally to treat menstrual irregularities, as did the Cheyennes (Gilmore 1930:80; Hart 1992:45). A. frigida was utilized by the Lakotas to cleanse women after menstruation (Gilmore 1913b:369-370; Buechel 1970:587), and they brewed a tea from the roots of A. compestris to treat complications in childbirth (Buechel 1970:117; Fire and Erdoes 1978:172). The Arikaras depended on A. ludoviciana to ease delivery (Gilmore 1930:74). Rocky mountain juniper also had multiple gynecological and obstetrical applications for many of the tribal nations in the region (Jordan 1965:118; Grinnell 1972:2:170).

The Lakotas mixed pricklypear cactus with soapweed in obstetrical treatments too. Reverend Eugene Buechel (1970:190) points out, however, that yucca was known to have dangerous side effects when used obstetrically because it could cause a fetus to be aborted. As the medicine man Lame Deer (Fire and Erdoes 1978:172) noted, “This medicine is lila wakan -- very sacred, working two ways.” The Poncas used currant roots to treat uterine disorders (Gilmore 1919:84), while the Arikaras took chokecherry juice to stop postpartum hemorrhaging. The Arikaras also combined the scarlet globemallow [Sphaeralcea coccinea] with resin from the chokecherry tree to relieve postpartum bleeding (Gilmore 1930:74).

A wide variety of plants were known to promote milk production in nursing mothers. The Lakotas drew on milkweed [Asclepiadaceae verticillata], snow-on-the-mountain [Euphorbiaceae

European American settlers administered horseweed [Conyza canadensis] to accelerate contractions in childbirth (Kindscher 1992:237), and they brewed raspberry and sage leaves in teas to treat female reproductive disorders (Tilford 1997:122). As among the tribal nations of the Intermountain West, the common juniper [Juniperus communis] was a popular folk remedy for treating menstrual ailments and for expelling the afterbirth (Kindscher 1992:132-133).

4. Anti-inflammatory and Paralytic Treatments

A variety of plants in Native pharmacopeias had anti-inflammatory applications for reducing various kinds of swelling or for treating rheumatic and arthritic complaints. A number of plants have also been reported in treatments for numbness and paralysis. Many plants with these applications grow at Wind Cave National Park.

The Lakotas used a variety of plants to reduce external swellings, including false boneset [Brickellia eupatorioides], western ragweed [Ambroisina artemisiifolia], pussytoes [Antennaria], snow-on-the-mountain [Euphorbiaceae margenta], soapweed [Yucca glauca], and false gromwell [Onosmodium molle] (Buechel 1970:117, 190, 445, 520; Walker 1980:93). They treated swollen glands with salves made from the roots of the milkweed [Asclepiadaceae incarnata] (Buechel 1970:517). The Cheyennes drew on the purple coneflower [Echinacea angustifolia] in some of their remedies for rheumatism (Hart 1981:20).

Arthritis, neuralgia, and rheumatism were diseases that Plains Apaches doctored with moxa treatments using the leaves of sagewort [Artemisia ludoviciana] (Jordan 1965:99-103). The Poncas drew on the twigs of the leadplant [Amorpha canescens] for this kind of therapy (Gilmore 1919:93). The goldenpea [Thermopsis rhombifolia] was used in a smoke treatment for rheumatism by the Cheyennes, who also relied on the gromwell (Lithospermum ruderale) for this condition (Grinnell 1972:2:185; Hart 1981:16, 30). The Lakotas administered the low fleabane [Erigeron pumilus] in one of their treatments for rheumatism (Densmore 1918:389). The crushed leaves of the pasqueflower [Pulsatilla patens] were applied as a counter irritant in the treatment of rheumatism by the Lakotas, Arapahos, and Poncas (Gilmore 1919:81-82; Nickerson 1966:47). Finally, the Kiowas depended on willow [Salix, spp.] in some of their treatments for rheumatism (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19).

The Cheyennes rubbed the finely ground leaves, roots, and stems of the narrowleaf gromwell [Lithospermum incision] on parts of the body affected by paralysis, and they mixed the pulverized leaves and stems of the false gromwell [Onosmodium molle] with grease to treat numbness (Grinnell 1972:2:185; Hart 1981:15).

European Americans included soapweed [Yucca glauca] and false solomon’s seal [Smilacina racemosa] in their treatments for rheumatism and arthritis (Kindscher 1992:221-222; Tilford 1997:58, 172). They also employed the cottonwood in various anti-inflammatory applications. Surprisingly, this tree has not been reported in medicinal applications for the tribal nations who
lived in the plains, although it is widely used as an anti-inflammatory by tribes in the Inter-

5. Dermatologic Remedies

The Kiowas used ragweed [Ambrosia artemisiifolia] leaves to heal sores (Vestal and Schultes 1939:55), and the Plains Apaches also applied them to lesions but considered them too strong for persistent use (Jordan 1965:97). The Lakotas prepared a salve from the roots of the scarlet globemallow [Sphaeralcea coccinea] to treat skin eruptions (Gilmore 1977:55; Buechel 1970: 174; Lewis, T. 1990:149), while the Arapahos made poultices for sores from the common yarrow [Achillea millefolium] (Nickerson 1966:50). The Cheyennes pulverized the roots of soapweed [Yucca glauca] to make a powder to treat sores, rashes, and other skin ailments (Hart 1981:12), and they made poultices from the ground roots and stems of the wild onion [Allium, spp.] to heal carbuncles (Grinnell 1972:2:171-172). Plains Apache used broomsnake [Gutierrezia sarothrae] in an external remedy for skin rashes and fungi (Jordan 1965:11), while the Kiowas applied sagewort [Artemesia filifolia] in a decoction to treat scalp diseases (Vestal and Schultes 1939:55).

The Cheyennes sprinkled the powdered leaves and stems of the milkvetch [Astragalus adsurgens] on parts of the body afflicted by poison ivy and other plant toxins (Grinnell 1972:2:179). The Kiowas relied on poison ivy [Taxicodendron rybergii ] as a healing remedy to treat boils, skin eruptions, and other sorts of running sores; they rubbed it over the surface of the affected area to trigger a dermatitis that disappeared when the sores were healed (Vestal and Schultes 1939:39). Even though Reverend Eugene Buechel (1970:586) wrote that poison ivy had no medicinal value for the Lakotas, its name, wikoskat tape'juta [root, vagina of a loose woman a.k.a. women's venereal disease], does suggest that the root may have been used by the Lakotas to treat venereal disease in women.

Lakotas healed burns with the roots of the scarlet globemallow [Sphaeralcea coccinea] (Buechel 1970: Gilmore 1977:55), while the Cheyennes used the breadroot scurfpea [Psoralea esculenta] as an ingredient in decoctions for treating burns (Hart 1981:29). The Cheyennes also applied the resin from the ponderosa pine in an ointment for burns, and they mixed skunkbush berries in a decoction to protect the hands from being scalded in hot water (Hart 1981:6, 14). The Hidatsas and the Lakotas made dressings for burns from the fuzz of the cattail (Gilmore 1919:64-65; Nickel 1974:75), and so did European American settlers (Tilford 1997:29). Lakotas ingested purple coneflower [Echinacea angustifolia] during ceremonial sweats to help them endure extreme heat, and they used juices from this plant to bathe burns (Gilmore 1913b:368).

European settlers relied on a wide range of plants in treating dermatologic disorders. The resin of the curlycup gumweed [Grindelia squarosa] was applied to poison ivy rashes to relieve itching (Hart 1981:21), and the mucilaginous juice of the soapweed plant was used as an emollient to soothe dry skin (Tilford 1997:118). The scarlet globemallow was administered to treat skin irritations, and the mucilaginous juice of the spearleaf stonecrop [Sedum lanceolatum] was applied to burns and other skin damage (Tilford 1997:94, 140). Asclepiadaceae speciosa and other milkweed species were used in remedies to eliminate warts and skin parasites (Moore, M. 1979:106-107; Tilford 1997:97). Finally, wild comfrey [Cynoglossum virginianum] and hound’s tongue [C. officinale] were ingredients in salves and poultices for treating burns and skin inflammations (Tilford 1997:78).
6. Wounds, Injuries, and Bites

The Lakotas, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches applied the mucilaginous juice from the stems of the pricklypear cactus \([Opuntia]\) as a dressing in the treatment of wounds (Gilmore 1919:104; Vestal and Schultes 1939:45; Jordan 1965:125). The Plains Apaches made poultices out of strips of soapweed \([Yucca glauca]\) leaves to wrap around injuries (Jordan 1965:54), while the Lakotas applied a poultice out of common yarrow \([Achillea millefolium]\) for treating wounds (Densmore 1918:254; Fire and Erdoes 1978:171-172). The root of the pasqueflower \([Pulsatilla patens]\) was one of the most highly esteemed medicines of the Poncas and their close relatives the Omahas; it was prescribed for wounds and many other ailments, but the right to use it was confined to members of the Te-sinde gens. (Gilmore 1919:82). In their various treatments for wounds, the Lakotas made several other remedies: one combined the roots of ground cherries and meadow anemones (Gilmore 1913b:362; Lewis, T. 1990:135), another drew on the roots of the narrowleaf gromwell \([Lithospermum incision]\) (Buechel 1970:440; Fire and Erdoes 1978:71), and a third relied on a pipe smoke treatment where bearberry \([Arctostaphylos uva-ursi]\) was a central ingredient (Walker 1980:93; Standing Bear 1988:103). The Cheyennes made a salve out of the purple coneflower \([Echinacea angustifolia]\) to treat a wide variety of external injuries and swellings (Hart 1981:20; Schwartz 1988:53), while the Lakotas used it in treatments to heal putrefied wounds (Smith, H. 1928:212; Fire and Erdoes 1978:171). Standing Bear (1978:60) said of this plant: “The long, slender black root of this plant, which grew abundantly on the plains, was chewed and applied to the injured place. Though not pleasant to taste, it eased pain and almost magically cured cuts and bruises.” Finally, the Cheyennes, Lakotas, Poncas, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches moistened the dry spores of puffballs \([Marshallia caespitosa]\) for use as a styptic to treat sores and scratches (Gilmore 1919:63; Vestal and Schultes 1939:12; Jordan 1965:136; Grinnell 1972:2:169; Hart 1981:2-4; Lewis, T. 1990:134).

The Omahas (and Poncas) relied on the roots of the wild plum tree \([Prunus Americana]\) to treat abrasions, and they heated the leaves of the plantain \([Plantaginaca patagonica]\) to draw out thorns and splinters from the foot (Gilmore 1919:87, 115). The Plains Apaches made a decoction from the roots of the blazingstar \([Liatris punctata]\) for healing cuts (Jordan 1965:118), while the Cheyennes gathered the flowering culms of junegrass \([Koeleria]\) to treat abrasions (Hart 1981:10; Schwartz 1988:53).

Snake and insect bites were doctored with a variety of different plants. The Lakotas made a remedy for snake bites from the beardtongue \([Penstemon gracilis]\), the purple coneflower \([Echinacea angustifolia]\) and the ground cherry \([Physalis]\) (Buechel 1970, 659; Fire and Erdoes 1978:171; Red Cloud High School 2001), while the Kiowas used currant roots and the Plains Apaches milkweed species \([A. speciosa]\) as antidotes for snake bites (Vestal and Schultes 1939:29; Jordan 1965:104). The Lakotas applied the wood lily \([Lilium philadephicum]\) as an antidote for the bites of small poisonous brown spiders, and they used the slimflower scurfpea \([Psoralea tenuiflora]\) in a smudge to repel mosquitoes (Gilmore 1919:71; Buechel 1970:487). European Americans employed bruised wild onions \([Allium, spp.]\) in their treatments for bee stings (Kindscher 1992:29).

7. Heart, Back, and Chest Pain

Common yarrow \([Achillea millefolium]\) was brewed by the Cheyennes in a tea for heart trouble and chest pains (Grinnell 1972:2:189; Hart 1981:17-18; Schwartz 1988:53). The Cheyennes also used the berries, stems, and leaves of the bearberry in a treatment for back pain (Grinnell 1972:2:183; Hart 1981:25). The Lakotas dried and powdered the blazingstar \([Liatris\]
punctata] for heart pain (Densmore 1918:389; Fire and Erdoes 1978:170), and they also pulverized the roots of milkvetch [Astragalus canadenis or A. racemosus] and chewed them for heart and back pain (Buechel 1970:440; Lewis, T. 1990:134).

8. Headaches, Dizziness, and Psychogenic Complaints

Only the Cheyennes are known to have named and used the hairy golden aster [Chrysopsis villosa], which they called mis ka tsi [chickadee plant]: they made a drink from the plant’s top and leaves to help a person sleep and also to exorcise evil influences (Grinnell 1972:2:81; Hart 1981:20). The Cheyennes also made a tea from the roots, leaves, and stems of the narrowleaf gromwell [Lithospermum incision] that was rubbed on a patient’s head and face to treat delirium and to prevent a person from excessive sleeping (Grinnell 1972:2:185; Hart 1981:15). Hyperactivity was treated by the Cheyennes with a vapor treatment using Rocky Mountain juniper [Juniperus Scopulorum] (Grinnell 1972:2:170; Hart 1981:4), while bearberry [Arctostaphylos uva-ursi] was used to smudge people who were acting “crazy” (Hart 1981:25). For sinus problems and headaches, the Cheyennes crushed the leaves of sagewort [Artemisia ludoviciana] and administered them as a snuff (Hart 1981:19, 1992:44-45).

The Lakotas had numerous remedies for headaches. They powdered and inhaled the fetid marigold [Dyssodia papposa] (Buechel 1970:444; Fire and Erdoes 1978:171), and they administered the roots of the purple coneflower [Echinacea angustifolia] in a smoke treatment (Densmore 1918: 270, 389; Buechel 1970:200, 397). Headache remedies were also prepared from several other plants, including field mint [Mentha arvensis] (Buechel 1970:131), the slimflower scurfpea [Psoralea tenuiflora] (Ibid:487), the woodbine [Parthenocissus vitacea] (Ibid:119), western virgin’s bower [Clematis ligusticifolia] (Ibid:117), and sagewort [Artemisia frigida] (Densmore 1918:259). Finally, the Lakotas treated dizziness with broom snakeweed [ Gutierrezia sarothrae] (Buechel 1970:440).

The sagewort [Artemisia ludoviciana] was one of the most important plants in the Kiowa Apache pharmacopoeia, and it was believed to be especially potent in curing depression and restoring harmony. It was typically prepared as a moxa in headache treatments (Jordan 1965:99-103). Plains Apache took pollen from the cattail [ Tyhus latifolia] and gave it to children to make them goodnatured (Jordan 1965:35).

9. Treatments for Eye, Ear, Nose, and Mouth

The Cheyenne included milkweed [Asclepiadaceae speciosa] in a remedy to treat various forms of blindness (Hart 1981:15, 1992:66), and they prepared the flowering tops of the curlycup gumweed [Grindelia squarosa] in a treatment for eye inflammations (Hart 1981:21). The Plains Apaches made teas from the rush skeletonplant [ Lygodesmia juncea] to soothe sore eyes (Jordan 1965:262), and so did the Poncas, who also relied on the purple coneflower [Echinacea angustifolia] for this purpose (Gilmore 1919:131, 136). The Lakotas used the leaves of the snowberry [ Symphoricarpus occidentalis] in a solution to ease eye inflammations (Gilmore 1913b:367; Buechel 1970:172). Sideoats grama grass [ Bouteloua] was employed in a Plains Apache procedure to remove cataracts (Jordan 1965:105), and the ashes from burning willow stems were applied in a Comanche eye treatment (Carlson and Jones 1939: 524, 533).

The Cheyennes, Comanches, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Lakotas chewed the roots of the purple coneflower [Echinacea angustifolia] to relieve toothaches and sore gums (Densmore 1918:389; Carlson and Jones 1939:521; Vestal and Schultes 1939:58; Jordan 1965:119; Buechel
### TABLE 7. Medicinal & Hygienic Plants and Minerals at Wind Cave National Park Used by Lakotas, Arapahos, and/or Cheyennes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Taxonomic Name</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Woody Plants</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>American elm</td>
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<td>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</td>
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<td>Broom snakeweeds</td>
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<td><strong>Flowering Forbs</strong></td>
<td>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American licorice</td>
<td>Penstemon, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beardtongue</td>
<td>Liatris punctata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blazingstar</td>
<td>Verbena hastate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue vervain</td>
<td>Psoralea esculenta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breadroot scurfpea</td>
<td>Typha latifolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattail</td>
<td>Galium aparine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleavers or Catchweed bedstraw</td>
<td>Achillea millefolium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common yarrow</td>
<td>Heracleum maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowparsnip</td>
<td>Grindelia squarosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curlycup gumweed</td>
<td>Rumex, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dock</td>
<td>Oenothera biennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening primrose</td>
<td>Brickellia eupatoriodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False boneset</td>
<td>Onosmodium molle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False gromwell</td>
<td>Dyssodia papposa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fetid marigold</td>
<td>Mentha arvensis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field mint</td>
<td>Erigeron, spp.</td>
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<td>Fleabane</td>
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### Table 7, cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>common name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Goldenrod</td>
<td>Solidago, spp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goosefoot</td>
<td>Chenopodium, spp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gromwell</td>
<td>Lithospermum ruderale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groundcherry</td>
<td>Physalis, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairy golden aster</td>
<td>Chrysopsis villosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseweed</td>
<td>Conyza, spp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lanceleaf bluebells</td>
<td>Mertensia lanceolata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locoweed</td>
<td>Oxypotis sericea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariposa lily</td>
<td>Calochortus gunnisonni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milkvetch</td>
<td>Astragalus, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milkweeds</td>
<td>Asclepiadaceae, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milkwort</td>
<td>Polygalaceae spp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrowleaf gromwell</td>
<td>Lithospermum incision</td>
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<td>Pasqueflower</td>
<td>Pulsatilla patens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pepperweed</td>
<td>Lepidium, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinedrops</td>
<td>Pterospora andromedea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prairie golden pea</td>
<td>Thermopsis rhombifolia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pricklypear cactus</td>
<td>Opuntia polyacantha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple coneflower</td>
<td>Echinacea angustifolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pussytoes</td>
<td>Antennaria, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rush skeletonplant</td>
<td>Lygodesmia jpuncea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sagewort</td>
<td>Artemisia, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarlet globemallow</td>
<td>Sphaeralcea coccinea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepherd's purse</td>
<td>Capsella bursa-pastoris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soapweed</td>
<td>Yucca glauca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spurge</td>
<td>Euphorbia, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunflower</td>
<td>Helianthus annus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweetclover</td>
<td>Melilotus, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tansy</td>
<td>Tanacetum vulgar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western ragweed</td>
<td>Ambrosia psilostachya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western wallflower</td>
<td>Erysimum asperum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild buckwheat</td>
<td>Eriogonum spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild lettuce</td>
<td>Lactuca oblongifolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood lily</td>
<td>Lilium philadelphicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fungi, Lichens, and Moss</strong></td>
<td>Marshallia caespitosa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1970:397; Grinnell 1972:2:188; Hart 1981:21; Lewis, T. 1990:35; Schwartz 1988:53). The Cheyennes also chewed the fruits of the skunkbush [*Rhus aromatica*] to treat toothaches (Hart 1981:14, 40), and they mixed crushed wild plums [*Prunus americana*] with salt to treat a sore mouth (Hart 1981:35). The Lakotas relied on American licorice [*Glycyrrhiza lepidota*] as a remedy for toothaches and earaches (Densmore 1918:263; Gilmore 1913b:365). Known for containing “salicin,” a derivative found in aspirin, willow was an ingredient in treatments the Kiowas and other tribes depended on to relieve toothaches (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19; Kindscher 1992:194-198). Finally, the Cheyennes relieved nosebleeds with a braid woven from sagewort [*Artemesia frigida*] that they wore around their heads (Hart 1981:18), and they treated...
illnesses of the teeth and the whites of the eye with the berries from the white juniper (Moore, J. 1974:171).

10. Elixirs, Stimulants, and Compounds

There were also a number of plants found in the area of Wind Cave National Park that were relied upon to improve overall health, to fight off illness, or to use as compounds to make other medicines palatable. The Lakotas pulverized the roots of the dotted blazingstar [*Liatris punctata*], which they claimed were hardened like the intestinal contents of a deer, to treat a loss of appetite (Buechel 1970, 389). They also took sagewort [*Artemisia caroliniana*] to strengthen the appetite (Densmore 1918:257; Gilmore 1913b:365), and they consumed ground cherries [*Physalis*] for the same effect (Buechel 1970:97). They mixed hawthorn berries with other medicines to make them palatable (Buechel 1970:482), they used the roots of the sagewort [*Artemesia compesetris*] to promote sound sleep (Gilmore 1919:118), and they made an infusion from shepherd’s purse [*Capsella bursa-pastoris*] to treat anemia (Sword in Walker 1980:93).

Cheyennes steeped elm bark in a tea as an elixir for children and pregnant women (Hart 1981:39), and they brewed wild mint [*Mentha arvensis*] leaves and stems to stimulate the heart and other vital organs (Grinnell 1972:2:188; Hart 1981:27). They also made a tea from the leaves and flowers of tansy [*Tanacetum vulgare*] to treat fatigue (Grinnell 1972:2:190-191; Hart 1981:23). Finally, they mixed the berries of redosier dogwood [*Cornus Stolonifera*] with chokecherries to treat a wide variety of ailments (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53), and they mixed the leaves of serviceberries with medicines to make them more palatable to children (Hart 1981:34).

11. Hygienic and Cosmetic

Many plants found at Wind Cave National Park also performed various hygienic functions. Different varieties of sagewort were important for these purposes among tribes throughout the northern plains. The Lakotas still use *Artemisia cana* and *A. tridentata* to freshen the air in their dwellings (Kemnitzer 1970:64), and they pulverize the roots of *A. campestris* for a perfume (Buechel 1970:117). They put *A. frigida* in their bathing solutions (Gilmore 1919:134), and they rely on *A. ludoviciana* to brush and purify the body, especially in preparation for ceremonial functions (Gilmore 1919:135). The Kiowas and Plains Apaches also bathed with this sagewort and with *A. filifolia* (Vestal and Schultes 1939:56; Jordan 1965:99). Several tribes used field mint [*Mentha arvensis*] to deodorize the body and to freshen the air in their living quarters (Grinnell 1972:2:186; Hart 1981:27-28, 1992:64; Kindscher 1992:153-154). The Cheyennes even made hair pomade by boiling dog meat with mint (Hart 1981:27-28).

Another plant commonly employed for hygienic purposes was soapweed [*Yucca glauca*]. The Lakotas, Cheyennes, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches extracted a sudsy lather from the roots to make soap for cleaning hair. Some tribes, such as the Cheyennes and the Lakotas, also believed it promoted hair growth. Luther Standing Bear (1978:65), a Lakota, wrote of this plant:

The pride of both Lakota men and women was a splendid head of hair, and especial attention was given to its care as a mark of good breeding. The women were especially proud of long hair and brushed and smoothed their long braids to keep them from breaking. Frequent washings in hupestola kept the hair glossy. Every morning a married woman had her hair brushed and her face painted for the day by her husband. This was a mark of respect that every Lakota brave paid his spouse.

There were many other plants that served hygienic and/or cosmetic needs. The seeds of the evening primrose \textit{Oenothera biennis} were considered by the Lakotas to have aromatic properties (Buechel 1970:116). Cleavers or Catchweed bedstraw \textit{Galium aparine} was a popular fragrance among Lakota men (Buechel 1970:520), and the dried and pulverized flowers and leaves of the pineapple weed \textit{Matricaria matricaridos} were included in a Cheyenne perfume mixture (Hart 1981:23). Although European Americans introduced white and yellow sweetclovers \textit{Melilotus alba} and \textit{M. officinalis} to the plains region, local tribes quickly adopted them because their scent reminded them of sweetgrass. Lakotas hung the plant in their homes as an air freshener (Gilmore 1919:91). Finally, the down from the common cattail \textit{Typha latifolia} was widely used as an absorbent or “diaper” for infants and a menstrual pad for women (Gilmore 1919:64; Buechel 1970:177; Powers, M. 1986:66).

\section*{12. Other Applications}

The Cheyennes and the Lakotas used soils and stones in healing. The clean soil that prairie dogs brought up from underneath the earth was a remedy to heal wounds (Standing Bear 1978:215). William Powers (1982:13) explains that these soils and those raised by badgers, voles, and ants contain the purifying properties of the underworld, and as a result, they are considered especially efficacious for healing and religious activity. The soil that gophers dig up is considered dangerous, however; and the Cheyennes, at least, believe it causes disease (Grinnell 1972:1: 140; Whiteman in Schwartz 1955:55).

Although the spiritual importance of stones has been described elsewhere, they had many specific applications in healing. Stones are often rubbed on patients to treat sickness (Densmore 1918:246-250; Tyon in Walker 1980:153-155; Walker 1980:232). The stones ants bring to the earth’s surface and other crystalline stones are believed to have potent effects in healing (Bushotter in Dorsey, J. 1889: 153-154; Powers, W. 1986:160). Rufus Pilcher (1964), one of the early superintendents of Wind Cave National Park, reported a request from the Lakotas for stones to heal a woman who was lame. The Cheyenne are known to have used stones in healing too (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:54), but little has been written about their applications.

\section*{C. Veterinary Uses of Plants}

After the tribal nations of the northern plains adopted horses, they were faced with two important considerations: one, how to adequately feed their stock, and two, how to keep them in good health, both of which required knowledge of the varieties of plants that could serve either as forage or as medicine. In this regard, one of the most surprising features of ethnobotanical writings on the tribal nations associated with the Black Hills is an almost complete absence of information on the kinds of grasses that were considered good fodder for their horses. Historically, this would have been a major consideration in choosing campsites to occupy for extended stays. Except for the Kiowas and Plains Apaches, who had largely abandoned the region at the dawn of the nineteenth century, we know little about the kinds of grasses local tribes sought out for their horses. Of the grasses located at Wind Cave National Park, the Kiowas and Plains Apaches considered several of them good fodder. Other tribes probably valued them as well.
The little bluestem grasses \( [Schizachyrium scoparium] \) and Indian grass \( [Sorghastrum nutans] \) were considered among the most nutritious for horses (Vestal and Schultes 1939:13, 16; Jordan 1965:62). Sideoats grama \( [Bouteloua curtipendula] \) and hairy grama \( [B. hirsuta] \) as well as sand dropseed \( [Sporobolus cryptandrus] \) (Vestal and Schultes 1939:14, 17) were also believed to make desirable fodder. In contrast to the information on grasses, there are widespread references in the literature to the use of cottonwood or elm boughs as food for horses during the winter months when the ground was covered in deep snows (Gilmore 1913b:360, 1919:72; Grinnell 1972:1:94-95; Hart 1981:37; DeMallie 1984:165, 209; Standing Bear 1988:94-95). The Lakotas told Father Buechel (1970:470) that horses eat and even dig out the roots of the crazyweed \( [Oxytropis lamberti] \), which is why the plant is called \textit{sunkta peju 'ta} [horse root] in their language.

Although there is little information on the varieties of fodder that local tribes selected for their horses, there is much more material on some of the plants they used to keep them strong and well. Among the plants found at Wind Cave National Park, the Lakotas made a decoction of juniper \( [Juniperus scopulorum] \) (Gilmore 1919:63) or fetid marigold \( [Dyssodia papposa] \) (Gilmore 1913b:369, 1919:132) to treat Coughs in their horses, a remedy from the broom snakeweed \( [Gutierrezia sarothrae] \) to cure diarrhea (Gilmore 1913b:368, 1919:133), a treatment for distemper from the purple coneflower \( [Echinecea angustifolia] \) (Buechel 1970:200), a stimulant from the root of the sliver scurfpea \( [Psoralea argophylla] \) (Ibid:487), and a poultice of American licorice \( [Glycyrrhiza lepidota] \) for a horse’s sore back (Gilmore 1919:92). The Lakotas also believed that soapweed \( [Yucca glauca] \) had \textit{wakan}, or sacred qualities, when smoke from its burning roots was used to control horses. As Lame Deer (Fire and Erdoes 1978:172) said: “Let these animals smell its smoke and they slow up, quiet down enough for you to catch them.” The Cheyennes put pearly everlasting \( [Anaphalis margaritacea] \) on the soles of their horses’ hooves to make them endure, and a powder from this plant was blown between their animals’ ears to

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### TABLE 8. Plants at Wind Cave National Park Used in Veterinary Applications By the Arapahos, Cheyennes and/or Lakotas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>common name</th>
<th>Woody Plants</th>
<th>taxonomic name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broom snakeweed</td>
<td>Gutierrezia sarothrae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottonwood</td>
<td>Populus deltoides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocky Mountain juniper</td>
<td>Juniperus Scopulorum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skunkbush</td>
<td>Rhus Aromatica</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Licorice</td>
<td>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dotted gayfeather</td>
<td>Liatris punctata</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False gromwell</td>
<td>Onosmodium molle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fetid marigold</td>
<td>Dyssodia papposa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locoweed</td>
<td>Oxytropis lamberti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariposa lily</td>
<td>Calochortus gunnisoni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milkweed</td>
<td>Astragalus crispicarpus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prairie coneflower</td>
<td>Ratibida columnifera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple coneflower</td>
<td>Echinecea angustifolia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver scurfpea</td>
<td>Psoralea agrophylla</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soapweed</td>
<td>Yucca glauca</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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make them long-winded (Grinnell 1972:2:187; Hart 1981:18). The Cheyennes prepared a decoction from skunkbush [*Rhus aromatica*] to prevent their racehorses from getting tired and also to promote urination. They also used the milkweed [*Astragalus crassicarpus*] in an ointment to relieve urinary tract problems in their horses (Hart 1981:14, 28). Many other plants found at Wind Cave National Park are also reputed to have had positive benefits for horses, including western ragweed [*Ambrosia psilostachya*] (Vestal and Schultes 1939:55, Jordan 1965:97), the dotted gayfeather [*Liatris punctata*] (Densmore 1918:389), the prairie coneflower [*Ratibida columnifera*] (Buechel 1970:92), and the false gromwell [*Onosmodium molle*] (Buechel 1970:445).

**D. Plants and Minerals Used for Art and Manufacturing**

The tribes who occupied the Black Hills in historic times relied on a wide range of plants for producing their dyes and paints, for making utensils, tools, weapons, and bedding, and for fuel and tinder. Among these plants, many were located at Wind Cave National Park.

1. **Lodgepoles and Other Structural Uses**

One of the few areas of consistency among historic documents, ethnographic sources, and tribal oral histories is the importance of the Black Hills as a location to find lodgepoles for tipis and poles to make runners for travois (Hinman 1874:95; Jenney 1875:182; Newton and Jenney 1880:323; Bushnell 1922:70; Chittenden 1935:728; De Girardin 1936:63; Denig in Ewers 1961:6; Dodge 1965:137, Dodge in Kime 1998:105; Bordeaux 1929:43, 191; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:12, 730; Standing Bear 1975:6-17; Moore 1981:14; DeMallie 1984:173; Brown 1992:12). One early eyewitness observer, Francis Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:270-271), described the movements of Lakotas into the mountainous regions to cut lodgepoles in July of 1846 as follows:

> After having ridden in this manner six or eight miles the scene changed, and all the declivities were covered with forests of tall, slender spruce and pine trees. The Indians began to fall off to the right and left, dispersing with their hatchets and knives to cut the poles which they had come to seek. I was soon left almost alone; but in the stillness of those lonely mountains, the stroke of hatchets and the sound of voices might be heard from far and near.

Even writers (Hinman 1874:95; Jenney 1875:182; Newton and Jenney 1880:323; Dodge 1965:137) who otherwise denied the presence of Indian people in the Black Hills reluctantly acknowledged their use of the Hills for this purpose. The lodgepole pine [*Pinus contorta*] has a fairly restricted distribution in the Hills, but other pines, particularly ponderosa [*Pinus ponderosa*], were employed for this purpose as well. Luther Standing Bear (1975:6-17) offers one of the best descriptions of how the Lakotas gathered and processed ponderosa for tipi poles, and Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:157) described this process in the Black Hills above Rapid Creek. The Lakotas, however, used the forked stems of the box elder [*Acer negundo*] for bracing their tipi poles (Standing Bear 1988:98, 99). The Kiowas and Plains Apaches also valued the durability of Rocky Mountain juniper [*Juniperus scopulorum*] for making tipi poles, and they utilized bur oak [*Quercus macrocarpa*] as a supporting frame for their brush arbors, meat drying racks, and cooking tripods (Vestal and Schultes 1939:13; Jordan 1965:113).

Cottonwood [*Populus deltoides*] was another tree taken for structural purposes; it provided the support poles for summer arbors, earthlodges, fish traps, corrals, the runners for travois, and the frames for saddles (Gilmore 1924:120-121, Vestal and Schultes 1939:19, Jordan 1965:75,

The Poncas and other semisedentary tribal nations gathered two of the grasses found at Wind Cave National Park, the big bluestem and prairie cordgrass, for constructing their earth lodges (Gilmore 1919:66, 68). Cordgrass was also used by early European Americans as thatching for the roofs of their sod houses.


### 2. Mats, Containers, and Utensils

Several different plants found at Wind Cave National Park were woven into baskets and mats. Paramount among these was the softbulstem rush [*Scripus validus*], which was used by many tribes in the region to make mats for use as blanket coverings, mattresses, and tent drops (Gilmore 1919:69; Buechel 1970:446; Grinnell 1972:1:170-171). The Hidatsas wove stems of the snowberry [*Symphoricarpos occidentalis*] and willows [*Salix interior*] into mats (Nickel 1974:73, 74), while the Kiowas made bedding material from the straight stalks of the false indigo [*Amorpha fruticosa*] (Vestal and Schultes 1939:31). The Comanches used sagewort [*Artemesia frigida*] to make their mattresses (Carlson and Johnson 1939:520). The Lakotas' buckskin pillows were filled with down from cottonwood pods (Standing Bear 1978:21) or with the fuzz of the common cattail [*Typha latifolia*] (Gilmore 1919:64; Buechel 1970:177, 584), and their tipis were lined with big bluestem grass [*Andropogon gerardii*] for insulation (Red Cloud High School 2001). The Hidastas depended on the seeds of the cattail as an all-purpose padding for packing and pillows (Nickel 1974:75). Among the Plains Apaches, tall bluestem grasses [*Andropogon gerardii*] served as material for stuffing mattresses (Jordan 1965:56), The Lakotas pounded the dried culms and leaves of the little blue stems [*Schizachyrium scoparium*] into soft fibers to line and insulate their moccasins (Buechel 1970:440). The Cheyennes constructed bedding for their Sun Dancers from a species of wild rye grass [*Elymus*] because it was reputed to keep the dancers cool (Hart 1981:8). Finally, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches made backrests and mats out of willow (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19; Jordan 1965:81-83; Hart 1981:37-38).
The leaves of the false indigo [*Amorpha fruticosa*] and various species of milkvetch [*Astragalus spp.*] as well as goldenrod [*Solidago spp.*] were spread on the ground when local tribes butchered their meat to keep it clean (Gilmore 1919:91, 93; Buechel 1970:117, 336, 447, 519). Edward Freeland (1938:4), the Superintendent of Wind Cave National Park described how the Lakotas butchered buffalo meat on a pile of psoralea leaves (probably *Psoralea argophylla*), and how they used the leaves to purify the water before the meat was boiled. The Lakotas and the Cheyennes also wove the plant’s tough green stems into baskets to transport meat (Buechel 1970:487; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53).

The Kiowas made the dried pods of milkweed [*Asclepias speciosa*] into spoons (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 47). The Cheyennes and Lakotas manufactured bowls from the burls of the box elder [*Acer negundo*], and they also used this wood or elm [*Ulmus americanus*] to make mortars and pestles for grinding medicines and perfumes (Gilmore 1919:75; Grinnell 1972:1:249). The stems and shoots of the skunkbush [*Rhus aromatica*] served as materials in Hidatsa basketry (Nickel 1974:48). The Hidatsas and Lakotas made cordage from the stems of Indian hemp [*Apocynum cannabinum*] (Nickel 1974:49; Buenchel 1970:353).

The broom snakeweed [*Gutierrezia sarothrae*] was a popular material for making brooms among the Comanches and Plains Apaches (Carlson and Jones 1939:522; Jordan 1965:65), while the stems of the snowberry [*Symphoricarpos occidentalis*] were commonly used for this purpose among the Hidatsas (Nickel 1974:74). The Lakotas and Hidatsas made brooms from various species of sagewort, including *Artemesia frigida* and *Artemesia dracunculus* (Gilmore 1919:87; Nickel 1974:70). Plains Apaches also fabricated brooms out of big bluestem grass [*Andropogon gerardii*] (Jordan 1965:56).

Porcupine grass [*Stipa spartea*] was bound into a bundle and the pointed grains burned by the Poncas to make a brush for combing their hair (Gilmore 1919:67). The Poncas called the dried inflorescence of the purple coneflower [*Echinacea angustifolia*] *mika-hi* [comb plant], and the Lakotas named it *on’glaekapi* [hair comb] (Gilmore 1919:131; Buechel 1970:397). The Kiowas (Vestal and Schultes 1939:57) also used the plant to brush and comb the hair.

3. Tools and Weapons

By the time ethnographers began to consult with tribes in the Plains region, materials and items of European manufacture had replaced many traditional uses for stone (Ewers 1938:37-38). This change is reflected in what White Hawk, a Lakota, told Francis Densmore (1918:437-438) about arrowpoints. He recalled three different kinds of arrowpoints for hunting bison: the flint arrowpoints his grandfather flaked, the bone ones his father fashioned, and those he had made from steel. What is interesting about his historical commentary is that it shows that within three generations, the materials and knowledge for producing certain tools had changed substantially. As a result, our understanding of the Native uses and meanings of specific lithic material is much more limited than it is for other faunal and floral resources.

Flint was the preferred material for arrowheads among the Cheyennes and the Lakotas before Europeans introduced trade metals (Hayden 1862:312; Grinnell 1972:1:184), although other related quartzites were valued too. The Cheyennes once armed their elkhorn scrapers with a piece of flint, and they made other scrapers from this mineral too (Grinnell 1972:1:213-214). The Lakotas and Cheyennes employed various grades of sandstones to make mauls, hammers, axe­heads, grinding stones, warclubs, and knives (Buechel 1970:336; Grinnell 1972:1:211). The finely grained varieties were used in making knives and for finishing off arrowshafts (Densmore

In making their arrowshafts, the Lakotas and Cheyennes relied on several different plants located at Wind Cave National Park. These include the stems of chokecherry, serviceberry, currant, dogwood, and snowberry (Densmore 1918:438; Hassrick 1964:196; Buechel 1970:108, 399, 577, 589; Grinnell 1972:1:179; Hart 1981:23-24, 35; Standing Bear 1988:18, 20). The Lakotas also utilized the straight stalks of the leadplant [Amorpha canescens] for this purpose (Buechel 1970:658), and the Cheyennes relied on green ash for making arrowshafts (Curtis 1907-30:6:156).

The Lakotas favored the green ash tree for manufacturing their bows (Gilmore 1919:108; Hassrick 1964:198; Standing Bear 1988:20). When ash was unavailable, they made their bows from the wood of the plum or chokecherry tree (Standing Bear 1988:20). Elm bark went into the making of Lakota bowstrings (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:310). The Cheyennes fabricated bows from Rocky Mountain juniper [Juniperus Scopulorum] because of its durability (Hart 1981:5). At one time, they made fiber for bowstrings from the milkweed [Asclepiadus speciosa] (Hart 1981:14). Finally, skunkbush wood was one of the Kiowa’s primary materials for making bows (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40).

The Lakotas made awls from the thorns of the buffaloberry bush [Shepherdia (Lyford 1940:38, 42), and they made needles from the sharp point of the soapweed plant [Yucca glauca] (Gilmore 1919:71). The Plains Apaches did the same (Jordan 1965:90). The Kiowas took the sharp thorns of the prickly pear cactus, [Opuntia polyacantha] to fabricate small arrows for hunting birds and other small animals (Vestal and Schultes 1939:45).

4. Musical, Recreational, and Ceremonial Items

For the Lakotas and most other tribes in the northern plains, green ash was the primary wood for making pipe stems (Gilmore 1919:108; Buechel 1970:446; Gilmore 1987:106; Standing Bear 1988:99). The Lakotas, Cheyennes, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches used the heartwood of the Rocky Mountain juniper or red cedar in making love flutes, and they applied its resin as glue (Vestal and Schultes 1939:13; Jordan 1965:113; Hart 1981:5; Standing Bear 1988:97, 173). Lakotas carved grass dance whistles from box elder and ashwood (Densmore 1948:189-190). The Cheyennes also made courting whistles from the hollow stems of the cowparsnip [Heracleum maximum] (Hart 1981:40), while the Lakotas made whistles for children from this plant (Buechel 1970:622). The false solomon’s seal [Smilacina racemosa] was one of several different plants whose leaves the Lakotas drew on to make musical tones (Buechel 1970:626). Willows were another material that went into the making of whistles (Standing Bear 1988:171-172). The Cheyennes and Lakotas used ponderosa pine gum in manufacturing war and Sun Dance whistles (Grinnell 1972:1:204; Schwartz 1988:53; Standing Buffalo 1988:172).

TABLE 9. Plants and Minerals at Wind Cave National Park Used by Lakotas, Cheyennes, and/or Arapahos in Manufacturing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>common name</th>
<th>taxonomic name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Woody Plants</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American elm</td>
<td>Ulmus americanus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box elder</td>
<td>Acer negunda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffaloberry</td>
<td>Sphepherdia, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bur oak</td>
<td>Quercus macrocarpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chokecherry</td>
<td>Prunus virginiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottonwood</td>
<td>Populus deltoides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currant</td>
<td>Ribes, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False indigo</td>
<td>Amorpha fruticosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackberry (found near Hot Springs)</td>
<td>Celtis Occidentalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadplant</td>
<td>Amorpha canescens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponderosa pine</td>
<td>Pinus ponderosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redosier dogwood</td>
<td>Cornus Stolonifera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocky Mountain juniper</td>
<td>Juniperus scopulorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sagewort</td>
<td>Artemisia frigida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serviceberry</td>
<td>Amelanchiera spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowberry</td>
<td>Symphoricarpus occidentalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smooth Sumac</td>
<td>Rhus glabra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western virgin’s bower</td>
<td>Clematis ligusticifolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild plum</td>
<td>Prunus Americanus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willow</td>
<td>Salix, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbine</td>
<td>Partheocissus vitacea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flowering Forbs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beardtongue</td>
<td>Penstemon angustifolias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattail</td>
<td>Typha latifolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowparsnip</td>
<td>Heracleum maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crested pricklypoppy</td>
<td>Argemone polyanthemos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dock</td>
<td>Rumex spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Solomon’s seal</td>
<td>Smilacina racemosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleabane</td>
<td>Erigeron pumilis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Hemp</td>
<td>Apocynum cannabinum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian paintbrush</td>
<td>Castilleja sessilifora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milkweed</td>
<td>Asclepiadus speciosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern bedstraw</td>
<td>Galium boreale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pricklypear cactus</td>
<td>Opuntia polyacantha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple coneflower</td>
<td>Echinacea angustifolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sagewort</td>
<td>Artemesia spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver scurfpea</td>
<td>Psoralea agrophylla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soapweed</td>
<td>Yucca glauca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiderwort</td>
<td>Tradescantia reflexa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild buckwheat</td>
<td>Eriogonum spp.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Table 9, cont.

**Grasses and Sedges**

| Big bluestem | Andropogon, spp. |
| Bulrush | Schoenoplectus, spp. |
| Gramma | Bouteloua, spp. |
| Junegrass | Koeleria |
| Little bluestem | Schizachyrium scoparium |
| Porcupine grass | Stipa spartea |
| Prairie cordgrass | Spartina pectinata |
| Wild rye | Elymus, spp. |

**Minerals and Soils**

- Flint
- Gypsum
- Hematite
- Limestone
- Quartz
- Red Clay and Earth
- Sandstone
- Slate
- White Clay and Earth

### 5. Dyes, Paints, and Tanning Agents

Among the plants the Lakotas relied upon to color their paints and dye their porcupine quills red was the buffaloberry (Lyford 1940:42). Red colorations were also achieved by combining snowberries \( \text{[Symphoricarpos occidentalis]} \) with the root of the curlydock \( \text{[Rumex crispus]} \) (Lyford 1940:42; Hassrick 1964:191). The Lakotas also mixed the leaves of curlydock with the fruit of the wild grape \( \text{[Vitis riparia]} \) to make a red dye (Standing Bear 1988:100). The Arapahos and Shoshones made a red-tan dye from the Indian paintbrush \( \text{[Castilleja sessiliflora]} \), a red dye from northern bedstraw \( \text{[Galium boreale]} \), and they used the paper birch to make an orange colored dye (Nickerson 1966:47, 50).

Yellow dyes were produced by the Lakotas when the prairie sunflower \( \text{[Ratibida columnaris]} \) or purple coneflower \( \text{[Echinacea augustafolia]} \) was boiled with cattail roots \( \text{[Tyha latifolia]} \) or decayed oak bark (Lyford 1940:42). Yellow dyes were also made from the musk thistle \( \text{[Cardus nutans]} \) (Standing Bear 1988:101), the crested prickly poppy \( \text{[argemone polyanthemos]} \) (Buechel 1970: 494), the roots of the huckleberry (Hassrick 1964:191), and the bark of pine trees, which according to Carrie Lyford (1940:42) were only found in the Black Hills (this was probably the Black Hills Spruce). The root of the curlydock \( \text{[Rumax crispus]} \) also went into the making of yellow dyes among the Lakotas and the Cheyennes (Lyford 1940:42; Grinnell 1972:2:2). Another dock used by the Cheyennes, Hidatsas, and Arapahos for making yellow or red dyes was the veiny dock \( \text{[Rumex venosus]} \) (Grinnell 1972:2:2; Nickerson 1966:47; Nickel 1974:69). The lichen \( \text{[Usnea barbata]} \) and the resin from the ponderosa pine produced yellow dyes that the Lakotas relied on for coloring porcupine quills (Gilmore 1919:63; Buechel 1970:134, 593), while wolf moss \( \text{[Evernia vulpina]} \) went into the making of another yellow dye among the Lakotas and the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:2; Lyford 1940:42).
The Cheyennes are reported to have used the roots of the ponderosa pine in making a blue dye (Hart 1981:6). The flowers of the spiderwort [Tradescantia reflexa] made a blue, jelly-like paint that the Lakotas applied on their moccasins (Buechel 1970:117). The Lakotas also relied on the beardtongue [Penstemon angustifolias] to make a blue dye for moccasin painting (Buechel 1970:167). The Shoshones and Arapahos made a green dye from the leaves of the sages [Artemesia frigida] and also the sunflower [Helianthus annus] (Nickerson 1966:50).

Woodbine [Parthenocissus vitacea], wild grapes [Vitis riparia], and wild rye [Elymus cinereus] were among the plants that went into the making of black dyes (Vestal and Schultes 1939:42; Lyford 1940:43; Hassrick 1964:191; Hart 1981:28). Charcoals from the bur oak [Quercus macrocarpa] were used by the Plains Apaches in producing a black pigment for painting designs on artifacts (Jordan 1965:77), and the Lakotas employed burnt green ashwood for this purpose (Bordeaux 1929:182). Finally, black dyes for dying feathers, arrows, and robes were produced from boiled cottonwood buds (Gilmore 1919:73; Grinnell 1972:2:7, 19; Hart 1981:37, 1992:69).

In addition to the use of plants for dyes, some were added to tanning solutions. The roots of the soapwood [Yucca glauca] were employed in this way (Gilmore 1913b:358; Kindscher 1987:226), and the blossoms of the fleabane [Erigeron pumilus] were combined with brains, gall and spleen to produce a substance that bleached hides in tanning (Buechel 1970:399). The mucilaginous juice of the pricklypear cactus [Opuntia polyacantha] served as a sizing among the Lakotas and the Kiowas to fix colors painted on hides (Gilmore 1919:104; Vestal and Schultes 1939:45).

Besides plants, various stones and clays were used in the tanning process and as pigments for ceremonial paints. Gypsum [Selenite], commonly called “mica” by local tribes, was an important mineral for the Cheyennes and Lakotas. The Cheyennes whitened the backs of their bows with gypsum (Grinnell 1972:1:175) and made glue from it to attach tiny red feathers to the tips of eagle feathers (Ibid:2:222). Women rubbed white gypsum on their hands to prevent robes from being soiled when they were decorating them with quills (Ibid:1:164; Moore, J. 1996:67). The Cheyennes employed gypsum or white clay to draw the patterns for quilling a robe, they applied it to the skins and heads of birds worn as talismans in war, they rubbed it on men’s bodies when war shields were painted and on women when they tanned a white buffalo robe. White clay, makasan in Lakota (Buechel 1970:329), was the substance for painting horses because it purportedly produced a “genuine color” (Densmore 1918:353), and ground limestone went into the production of white paints as well (Bordeaux 1929:182). Blue, red, and yellow clays served as the mediums for paints applied to dancers in various Lakota and Cheyenne ceremonies (Densmore 1918:116; Blish 1934:186; Moore, M. 1979:14). The Cheyennes and Lakotas also made red paints from hematite, and some of their black paints were produced from coal (Moore, J. 1981:14; Buechel 1970:330).

6. Fuel and Tinder

Another important function of plants was fuel and tinder. Indeed, as Royal B. Hassrick (1964:153, 156) noted, one of the major reasons the Lakotas preferred to establish their winter camps along waterways at the base of the Hills was their easy access to abundant supplies of timber for winter fuel. The tribal nations of the plains had a sophisticated knowledge of how the different trees in their environment burned, and they frequently chose specific woods as fuel for designated functions. Tribes differed among themselves in which woods they preferred, how-
ever. The Cheyennes and Hidtasas favored box elder \textit{[Acer negundo]}, which is known to produce hot and long burning coals, for everyday purposes (Nickel 1974:57; Hart 1981:13, 1992:5). The Lakotas, Arikaras, and Plains Apaches reported that green ash was an excellent and long-lasting source of heat (Bordeaux 1929:155; Jordan 1965:155; Nickel 1974:64). Cottonwood \textit{[Populus deltoides]} was the Kiowas and Lakotas' wood of choice for everyday fires, tanning hides, and firing paints, although elm and aspen were popular multipurpose fuels also (Gilmore 1919:75; Vestal and Schultes 1939:40; Walker 1980:244; Standing Bear 1988:94, 122; Hart 1992:5). The Plains Apaches, in contrast, disliked cottonwood, believing that it burnt too fast and popped badly (Jordan 1965:156). They preferred to use bur oak \textit{[Quercus macrocarpa]} as their major fuel source because it burned well and produced good coals (Jordan 1965:155). They also considered elm good firewood (Jordan 1965:156). The various species of pines abundant in the Black Hills were undoubtedly taken to fuel fires as well, but they were probably not considered the most desirable because pine has a tendency to burn rapidly and spark excessively.

Tribes also relied on different kinds of tinder to start their fires. The Plains Apaches used bunches of tall bluestem grass \textit{[Andropogon girardii]} and little bluestem \textit{[Schizachyrium scoparium]} as well as the stalks of the sunflower \textit{[Helianthus annus]} to start their fires (Jordan 1965:66, 156, 157), while the Cheyennes employed the dried leaves of the sagewort \textit{[Artemesia ludoviciana]} as tinder (Hart 1981:19). The Cheyennes made their hearth fire-sticks out of cottonwood, and their upright, or twirling, stick from greasewood \textit{[Acrobats vermiculatus]} (Grinnell 1972:1:53). They also made punks out of dry, rotten agave \textit{[Yucca glauca]} roots to transport fire, and so did the Lakotas (Grinnell 1972:1:53-54; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:311). The Poncas took the knarled roots of buckthorn \textit{[Ceanothus]} to start fires on their buffalo hunts when timber was scarce (Gilmore 1919:10). The Lakotas employed dried, rotten elm roots for this purpose (Mallery 1893:291; Gilmore 1913b:358). Although not reported at Wind Cave National Park, the bush morning glory \textit{[Ipomoea leptophylla]} is a widespread plant in the region and especially prevalent in the dry sandy grasslands at the south end of the Red Valley (Larson and Johnson 1999:192). The Lakotas set a fire in the roots, which were wrapped and hung outside. This fire could be transported and lasted up to seven months (Buechel 1970:440). Lame Deer (in Fire and Erdoes 1978:172) said about this plant, “In the old days, before we had matches, when you lit this herb it would keep smoldering for months. It used to be hung up before the tipi. If you needed a fire you just blew on it until it glowed, then you hung it up again to smolder some more.” Finally, the Lakotas made sticks from the branches of the chokecherry tree \textit{[Prunus virginiana]} for poking coals (Buechel 1970:123).

Flint was used to produce sparks that ignited fires. This is probably the stone that \textit{Itokagata} gave Wohpe in the Lakota creation story because it was described as a stone that could be rubbed to make a fire (Sword in Walker 1983:68).

7. Fumigants

The Lakotas made a fluid out of the powdered and boiled needles of the Rocky Mountain juniper \textit{[Juniperus scopulorum]} to eradicate insects (Buechel 1970:192). Melvin Gilmore (1919:88) reports that Ponca trappers boiled the bark of chokecherry, \textit{[Prunus virginiana]} in a solution to clean their traps and to remove the scent of former captives. Modern Lakota hunters rub sagewort \textit{[Artemesia]} on traps, guns, and themselves to disguise their own scent (Kemnitzer 1970:64).
E. Plants and Minerals in Symbolism and Ceremony

Most tribal nations consider all plants and minerals sacred, but some are especially significant because of their distinctive spiritual meanings and uses. Certain plants occupy a central place in the conduct of important religious observances. Some are used for ritual smoking, smudges, and petitions, while others attract love, fertility, and good fortune to their users, and still more help to protect people from danger or to repel enemies and malevolent influences. Many minerals also have multiple ceremonial uses. Some of the most widely used sacred plants for the Cheyennes and Lakotas are located at Wind Cave National Park, and at least one very important mineral is found here too. Several of the tribal cultural preservation officers we spoke with identified the park as an important location for plants with significant spiritual properties, and one Lakota officer urged that non-Indians be advised not to pick the sage that grows in the park (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

1. Plants/Stones with Ubiquitous Meanings and Uses

Two groups of plants, the sages and junipers, have ubiquitous spiritual uses among the tribal nations of the plains. According to Louis Kemnitzer (1970:65), these plants do not die off in the winter, a fact that is noted by some Lakotas in their discussions of the important ceremonial roles they play. According to Melvin Gilmore (1913b:369), the ton (immaterial essence) of sage was believed by the Lakotas to be repugnant to malevolent forces, and so was the ton of cedar or juniper. Both of these plant groups were considered potent spiritual purifiers and occupied a significant place in the spiritual life of many different tribal nations.

The sage, Artemisia ludoviciana, is especially revered and is still found at most of the Lakota’s major religious ceremonies. It is used extensively in their Sun Dance, not only on the arm and ankle bracelets of the dancers, but also to smudge the dance ground and altar (Dorsey, J. 1894:454; Densmore 1918:93, 122; Buechel 1970:439; Rogers 1980:36; Walker 1980:176-177, 184, 187-188, 190-192). It also appears in the Hunka, an adoption ceremony (Buechel 1970:439; Walker 1980:94, 197, 214, 224), and in the performances of Hehaka Inhanblapi [Elk Dreamers] (Fletcher 1887a:284). It is used as a smudge in sweatlodges, in hunting, and in homes to counteract evil forces (Gilmore 1919:135; Fire and Erdoes 1978:170). It is often identified as man’s sage in contrast to Artemesia frigida, which is known as women’s sage and used in the Pte San Lowampi, a girl’s coming of age ceremony (Fire and Erdoes 1978:172; Walker 1980:244, 247-248, 250-251). The Cheyennes similarly identified sage along gender lines (Moore, J. 1974:174). Artemisia ludoviciana is probably the most important ceremonial plant for the Cheyennes who use it extensively in their Sun Dance and other major ceremonies as a ritual border. Like the Lakotas, they depend on it as incense to ward off malevolent influences (Hart 1981:18-19; 1992:44-55). The Arikaras once placed a wisp of this sagewort in placenta bundles, which were hung on fruit trees as an offering to ward off diseases in their children (Gilmore 1930:75). This variety of sage also holds a significant position in Kiowa and Plains Apache sweat lodges and many other ceremonial contexts (Vestal and Schultes 1939:56; Jordan 1965:99).

Artemisia tridentata, a woody variety of sagewort, is also considered another potent purifier for many ceremonial activities among the Lakotas. It is very important in Yuwipi where, among its many different roles, it covers the floor at the sacred spot where the ceremony is performed. It serves as a plug for the pipe, it is attached to the knots of thongs that tie up the medicine man, and it is placed on the water dish and on the kettle of dog soup (Kemnitzer 1970:64). This variety of sage is also spread on the floor of sweatlodges, and it is used in the Sun Dance to fill the orifices.
of the buffalo skull, to plug the pipes of dancers, and as a medicine to heal the wounds of those who make sacrifices (Kemnitzer 1970:65).

Juniper [Juniperus scapulorum or J. virginiana] is considered highly sacred as well. Its twigs are burnt as a smudge for spiritual purification in many healing and religious ceremonies among all tribes in the northern Plains (Carlson and Schultes 1939:522; Vestal and Schultes 1939:13; Walker 1980:93; Hart 1992:36; Kindscher 1992:132). The Arikaras considered juniper one of their three sacred trees, and like other tribes in the area, they believe it is especially efficacious in warding off evil influences. For the Arikaras, cedar is the great protector, and annually, a ritual was held to show gratitude to the grandmother cedar. In this ritual, pasque-flowers and baby moccasins were hung on a cedar tree to insure the health and long life of their wearers (Gilmore 1987:186-87). The Cheyennes associate green cedar berries with the green colored hailstones of summer thunderstorms, and this may be one of the reasons why this tree is connected in their cosmologies to the thunders (Moore, J. 1974:171).

The Lakotas believe that the Wakinyan, Thunders, find the smell of cedar appealing, and whenever Lakotas wish to petition them, they make a waziyla, or incense, out of cedar (Walker 1980:77). They also place cedar boughs on tipi poles and in their houses as offerings to the Thunders to ward off their dangerous lightning strikes (Gilmore 1919:74; Standing Bear 1988:96-97). The Cheyennes burn cedar incense for the same purpose (Hart 1992:36). In 1926, Oscar Good Shot, a Lakota, told Thomas Marquis (and Limbaugh 1973:63) about this belief, which incidentally is widespread among tribal nations in the western United States. Referring to his grandmother, he said:

She told me a cedar tree is the safest place when lightning is flashing. It never strikes a cedar tree. She always kept some cedar branches in the house, and if lightning began to play she sprinkled the twigs upon the hot stove. The odor was supposed to prevent lightning from entering the house.

Sweetgrass [Hierochloe odorata] is not reported in the Black Hills, but it is mentioned here because of its widespread importance to tribes in the region. For the Lakotas, while sage repelled bad influences, sweetgrass attracted good ones (Gilmore 1919:66). The Lakotas use it whenever the spirits are petitioned for assistance (Buechel 1970:512; Walker 1980:113, 119), and as a result, it appears in many different ceremonial contexts: whenever a pipe is consecrated or used in prayer (Walker 1980: 76-77, 81, 83, 87,89), whenever visions are sought (Walker 1980: 86), and whenever sweatlodges are held (Hassrick 1964:249; Walker 1980:94-95). It plays an important role in the adoption rituals of the Hunka ceremony (Walker 1980:194,197, 202, 209, 210, 214, 228-230, 235), in the Sun Dance (Hassrick 1964:244; Walker 1980:184), in the Omaha Wacipi, Grass Dance (Walker 1980:266), Pte San Lowanpi (Fletcher 1887; Hassrick 1980:266; Walker 1980:244-245, 247-248, 251), in the performances of Elk dreamers (Fletcher 1887b), in Spirit Keeping ceremonies (Densmore 1918:79; Hassrick 1964:262), and in the rituals that surround eagle trapping (Standing Bear 1988:79). It is also singled out in many sacred stories (Hassrick 1964:215). In modern times, sweetgrass continues to be used in a variety of ceremonial contexts including Sun Dances, vision seeking, and Yuwipi (Kemnitzer 1970:66). As James Walker (1980:76) wrote:

In their ceremonies the Lakotas make smoke with the pipe and also of sweetgrass and sage, and of cedar leaves, and of buffalo chips. Making smoke with these things is waziyla (incensing). In all ceremonies that have to do with Wakan Tanka, after smoking the pipe an incense of sweetgrass should be made. This is because that spirit that is in the smoke of sweetgrass is pleasing to the Wakan Tanka and will incline him to hear the ceremony with aver.
In Cheyenne creation stories, sweetgrass is mentioned as the first plant that the Creator laid down when he made this world, and it is also the plant that Sweet Medicine, a Cheyenne culture hero, burned to purify the world (Hart 1981:9). It remains an important ceremonial incense in the Cheyennes’ Sacred Arrow and Sacred Hat ceremonies, in the Sun Dance, in protecting warriors and contraries before they enter battle, in healing rituals, and in warding off evil influences in homes (Hart 1981:9-10).

The cottonwood \([\text{Populus deltoides}]\) was held sacred by several tribal nations in the region as well. The trunk of a young tree served as the center pole for Sun Dances among the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:229-232, 259, 287; Hart 1981:37) and the Lakotas (Standing Bear 1978:222; DeMallie 1984:287; Walker 1982:97). According to Luther Standing Bear (1988:94), “for all ceremonial purposes the cottonwood was favored” by the Lakotas. The Lakotas also made a stick from the cottonwood tree for hanging the buffalo hump that was given as an offering in the Sun Dance (Densmore 1918:118). The posts of the lodges, in which the Lakotas’ *Wanagi gele’pi* [Spirit keeping] ceremonies were held, were made from cottonwood (Densmore 1918:81). Cottonwood was a symbol of fidelity for the Lakotas, and young girls burnt twigs from the tree during the *Pte San Lowanpi* to ward off the scheming of *Anog Itë* [Double Faced Woman], who was believed to foment “infidelity, scandals and strife” (Walker 1982:52). Among the Lakotas, cottonwood was the preferred wood for other ceremonial fires too (Walker 1980:76). Its bark was used during the performances of Elk Dreamers and in the rituals of the Owns White Society (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:242-243, 340). Today, Lakotas use cottonwood saplings to construct their sweatlodges (Lewis, T. 1990:47). It was also featured in Black Elk’s visions as the flowering tree (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:109, 130).

Willow \([\text{Salix}]\) was another important and ubiquitous plant used in Cheyenne and Lakota ceremonies. The Cheyennes drew on willow stems in making hoops for antelope hunting ceremonies, willow wood to make ceremonial drums, and willow charcoal to paint their faces when going into battle. They also employed willow for a variety of ritual purposes in the *Massaum* ceremony and in the Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:1:284, 2:20, 229-32, 328-29; Hart 1981:37-38). More specifically, willow stems were wrapped around the arms, waists, and legs of Cheyenne Sun Dancers because they were believed to help ward off thirst (Grinnell 1972:2:265, 268, 277). The Lakotas mixed willow bark in their ceremonial tobacco mixtures, including those used for the *Hunka* and *Pte San Lowanpi* (Walker 1980:111, 119, 194, 202, 209, 210, 227, 244, 245, 295; DeMallie 1984:372; Standing Bear 1988:107). Today, *can sa’sa*, red willow, remains a basic ingredient in tobacco mixtures used for smoking pipes at *Yuwipi* (Kemnitzer 1970:67). It was also used as a gift at the final feast of spirit keeping ceremonies (Densmore 1918:81). Red willow is also significant to the Cheyennes, who use it in their tobacco mixtures and associate it with male virility (Moore, J. 1974:173).

Another shrub used for ceremonial purposes is the chokecherry \([\text{Prunus virginiana}]\). Chokecherry stems are placed in a bundle and put in the fork of the cottonwood tree at Lakota Sun Dances, probably because of its associations with bison. The Lakotas also give Sun Dancers a tea prepared from the bark of this shrub (Densmore 1918:118; Walker 1980:178-179; Lewis, T. 1990:53). *Wasna*, a mixture of corn, tallow, and chokecherries, is typically served at Lakota naming ceremonies, and *cankpe ijapi*, a boiled pudding thickened with flour, is a popular dish the Lakotas serve at feasts and powwows (Albers 1966-1976; Kemnitzer 1970:73). A staff made of cherry wood was used in the *Pte San Lowanpi* (Fletcher 1887:266-267; Walker 1980:244). The Cheyennes also placed chokecherry branches in the crotch of their cottonwood center pole at the Sun Dance, and they used them in making their Sun Dance altar as well. In addition, chokecherry branches were part of many Cheyenne ceremonies, including the Sacred Arrows Ceremony,
where one branch was placed on the altar for each of the 145 songs sung in this observance (Hart 1981:36). The closely related wild plum \textit{[Prunus americanus]} also had important ritual uses. Among the Lakotas, the stems were made into prayer wands, called \textit{waunyanpi}, for healing the sick (Gilmore 1919:87). The sprouts of the tree were used in making spirit banners for vision questing (Sword in Walker 1980:85), and the branches to construct invitation wands for the \textit{Hunka} ceremony (Walker 1982:65). The Cheyennes also placed this tree’s branches on their Sun Dance altar (Hart 1981:35).

A mineral of widespread ceremonial importance is gypsum, particularly important because it is a distinctive feature of the Red Valley or Race Track. The ceremonial significance of this mineral was first recorded in 1874 by William Ludlow (1875:15), who came across an outcropping in the Redwater Valley where beads and other offerings were left by the tribes who quarried the mineral. Gypsum was used by the Cheyennes to mark the line surrounding the altar of their Animal Dance, and it is still utilized this way in their Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:292, Schlesier 1987:93; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:54). It is also mixed with fat and painted on the small altar sticks that represent the Cheyenne people during the Sun Dance (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:54), and it is used to whiten the feather plumes and buffalo robes worn in the dance (Grinnell 1972:1:163, 192, 2:202, 242, 262). In their Sacred Arrow ceremony, gypsum is ground into a fine powder and melted into a mold to represent the moon. This object is attached to a sacrificial bush outside the arrow tepee, which the Cheyenne call \textit{vozem} or frost (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:54). Gypsum is the mineral known as the “Sun Arrow,” which gave birth to the culture hero, Stone Boy (Grinnell 1926:179). The Lakotas appear to have associated gypsum and other crystalline formations with frost and ice too (Bushotter in Dorsey, J. 1889:153-154). In James Walker’s rendition of the Lakota creation cycle (1983:220-221, 222-223, 227-228), the spirits were said to have been invited to feast on \textit{icage}, “white fruits” that grew under the earth, suggesting the crystalline formations in caves.\footnote{The lodge of the old man, \textit{Wazi} or \textit{Waziya}, which is associated with a cave in many Lakota texts, had icicles for poles and snow as its covering (Walker 1983:334). George Bushotter (in Dorsey, J. 1889:153-154) wrote about a “mysterious stone” that was white and looked like glass or ice.} \textit{Taku Skanskan} made entrails from these fruits and molded a masculine father and feminine mother figure from them, the first \textit{Pte Oyate}, and gave them the fruits as their source of eternal nourishment (Walker 1983:225-226, 249). Like the Cheyennes, the Lakotas sprinkled powdered gypsum on the ground to mark off the altar at their Sun Dance (Densmore 1918:122).

It is also important to reiterate again the importance of the pulverized soils that badgers, prairie dogs, and voles bring up from the earth (Grinnell 1972:1:140; Powers, W. 1982:13, 1986:113, 162; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:135n25, 137, 337, 340; Schwartz 1995:55). Cheyennes and Lakotas consider these soils very sacred and use them in the construction of their ceremonial altars.

\section*{2. Plants and Stones with Distinctive Ceremonial Uses}

There are many other plants that played important ceremonial roles too, but many of these are only reported for one or two tribes. Baneberry \textit{[Actaea rubra]}, which is located in the Black Hills but not at Wind Cave National Park, is one of the most sacred plants for the Cheyennes who believe that their culture hero brought this plant “to help the people save and bring up their children” (Grinnell 1972:2:174). To the present day they keep its roots in their Sacred Arrow, Sacred Hat, and Sun Dance bundles. They also use the root in the ‘throwing it at him’ ceremony, in which a spiritual leader bites tiny fragments of the root and spits it on his hands and those of
others who conduct sacred tasks (Hart 1981:33). The Hidatsas also considered the root sacred and utilized it in their River Ceremony (Nickel 1974:57).

Besides the plants discussed earlier, the Cheyennes used many other species in their Sun Dance and Massaum ceremonies. Aspen logs went into the construction of their Sun Dance lodges (Hart 1992:37), and box elder wood was carved to make the ceremonial root digger for the Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:260). This wood also went into the fabrication of ceremonial bowls (Grinnell 1972:1:249), and in the making spiritual fires for medicines, lighting tobacco pipes, and at the Sun Dance (Hart 1981:13,1992:5). The Cheyennes placed branches of the snowberry [Symphoricarpos occidentalis] at the four directions of their Sun Dance altar (Grinnell 1972:2:259; Hart 1981:17). Buffaloberry [Shepherdia] and woodbine [Parthenocissus vitacea] branches were also laid at this altar (Hart 1981:25, 35). The flowering culms of June grass [Koeleria], which was named naaseto-vo?estse, “sacred plant,” were used in the Cheyenne Sun Dance to give the dancers strength, and they also served as brushes to apply paint on the dancers (Hart 1981:10). During the dance, the dancers chewed the roots of the purple coneflower [Echinacea angustifolia] and American licorice [Glycyrrhiza lepidota] to quench their thirst (Hart 1981:21, 22). A bed of field mint [Mentha arvensis] was laid out to cool the dancers (Hart 1981:27). The Cheyennes also chewed the roots of field mint for their cooling effect during sweatlodges and Sun Dances (Hart 1981:28). Sun dancers were served the wild thistle [Cirsium edule] as food (Hart 1981:20). Bent redosier dogwood [Cornus sericea] sticks formed the rain­bow at the Cheyenne Sun Dance altar because the tree symbolized the moisture needed to bring life to a dry land (Hart 1981:23-24).

The Cheyennes believed that the sedge, Carex nebrascensis, lived in waters that serpents inhabited, and they placed it in the cavities of the buffalo skull during the ceremonies of the Sun Dance and Animal Dance (Hart 1981:7). It was also inserted in the cavity of a yellow-faced wolf during the Massaum [Animal Dance]. Symbolically, it represented a prayer for an abundance of water and the growth of vegetation (Hart 1981:8-9). The sunflower [Helianthus annus] and the wild turnip [Psoralea esculenta] had a place in the Massaum along with a wide variety of other plants that represented four of the near earth planes in the Cheyenne cosmos (Hart 1981:29; Schlesier 1987:81-82).

Two plants of special significance in the Lakotas’ Sun Dances are the sunflower [Helianthus annus] and the wild bergamot [Monarda menthofolia]. Luther Standing Bear (1975:120) reports that the Lakotas used sunflowers in the Sun Dance because “it is the only flower that follows the sun as it moves on its orbit, always facing it." The leaves of wild bergamot were smudged around the dance enclosure and chewed by the singers and dancers (Dorsey, J. 1894:454; Gilmore 1919, 111; Buechel 1970:521). In the Lakotas’ Pte San Lowampi, a girl’s coming of age ceremony, ceremonial plates were manufactured from hackberry wood (Fletcher 1887:266, 267; Walker 1980:244). Green ash wood went into the making of bowls used by Lakota hunting marshals; as James Walker (1982:31) writes:

Once upon a time the people tried all the wood of every kind of tree and they found that the wood of the ash was the most durable and strongest. So they made the ash the emblem of the marshals and the marshals made all their wooden utensils and implements of ash.

Besides cottonwood, other woods were favored for use in ceremonial fires. The Lakotas burned dried box elder wood for the fire at a young woman's coming of age ceremony (Walker 1980:244), and the Kiowas fueled most of their altar fires with it (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40). Hackberry [*Celtis occidentalis*], which is presently found in the neighborhood of Hot Springs, was also valued fuel among the Kiowas and Plains Apaches for ceremonial fires (Vestal and Schultes 1939:22; Jordan 1965:155).

**a. For Warfare and Protection**

Cheyenne and Lakota warriors used a wide variety of plants in protective ways. Baneberry [*Actaea rubra*] was employed in ceremonies to 'blind' the Cheyenne's enemies (Hart 1981:33), the sagewort, *Artemesia ludoviciana*, was gathered by Contrary Warriors to purify themselves, their horses and lances before battle (Hart 1981:18-19; 1992:44-55), and the arrowleaf balsamroot [*Balsamorhiza sagittata*] was tied to the lances of Bowstring Soldiers (Grinnell 1972:2:78). Pearly everlasting [*Anaphalis margaritacea*] was also employed as a war medicine. According to George Bird Grinnell (1972 :2:188):

> In one of his little medicine bundles, each man carries some of the dried and powdered flowers of this plant; and formerly, when going into battle, he chewed a little bit and rubbed it over his arms, legs, and body, for the purpose of imparting strength, energy, and dash, and thus protecting him from danger.

Women were not allowed to touch men who had this medicine on their body because this would nullify its effects.

Broom snakeweed [*Gutierrezia sarothrae*] was one of the major war medicines of Lakota warriors, who rubbed it on their body before battle (Densmore 1918:350), and the prairie sandreed [*Calamovilfa longifolia*] is associated with Crazy Horse, the famous Oglala war leader, who wore the top of this plant on his head as a *wotawe* [war charm] instead of a feather (Buechel 1970:452).

The Lakotas kept small stones for protection because these were widely believed to be capable of holding *sicun*. As William Powers (1982:11) writes:

> Inhering in each stone is a spirit called *sicun*, understood as that aspect of the soul that lasts forever and is capable of being reinvested in another object, human or non human, animate or inanimate, at one’s death. Not all *sicuns* are reinvested, so there is always a surplus, some of which may be called upon in a ritual to perform certain acts dealing mainly with curing or to reveal information necessary for the welfare of the people.

The *sicuns* exert their own force. They are able to move on their own, but they can also function as messengers for spirits (Kemnitzer 1970:63). Each sicun has its own name, special rules for its care, and reveals itself to *Yuwipi*, who, under the proper circumstances, may transfer it to another for their protection and well-being (Kemnitzer 1970:63; Powers 1982:12). People who wish to acquire a stone may undergo a ritual called an *Inktomi Lowanpi* [Spider Sing] (Powers 1982:12).

Small stones were also carried as offerings and left at Bear Butte to memorialize the deceased, and this site was the origin of another stone that Lakotas quarried and kept for protection (Odell 1942:23–24). In 1874, Samuel Burrows (in Krause and Olson 1974:208), a journalist on the Custer expedition, reported small pieces of white quartz atop Inyan Kara
Mountain that had no geological reason to be there. Today, Lakotas still travel to this site to collect stones for use in the inipi (sweatlodge) before the Sun Dance (Black Elk, C. 1992:51). Also spiritually important to the Lakotas and Cheyennes are the crystallized stones that ants bring up from under the earth (Grinnell 1972:1:223; Powers, W. 1982:160, 1986:113). Francis Densmore (1948:200) reported that the Lakotas made necklaces from stones gathered on ant hills. In general, most crystalline stones are considered sacred and good repositories for holding sicun (Bushotter in Dorsey 1889:153-154). Among the Lakotas, stones are ubiquitously present in a wide variety of ceremonial contexts, even though they are most often associated with Yuwipi. The Cheyennes employed stones in ritual ways too, but there is very little detail about their particular functions and meanings (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:54).

b. Romance and Fertility

A variety of different plants are also associated with romantic attraction and fertility. The plant most widely linked to romance was the wild bergamot, especially the variety Monarda menthafoila, which is found in the Black Hills but not at Wind Cave National Park. The Plains Apaches believed this plant had properties that could attract and arouse the opposite sex (Jordan 1965:148-149), and the association of this plant with elk, known for its seductive powers, suggests a similar belief among the Lakotas (Densmore 1918:178). The Cheyennes used the stems and flowers of wild bergamot to make pillows for young girls to insure their health and fertility (Grinnell 1972:2:186), but there is no mention of it serving as a love medicine. Instead, the gum from the spruce tree [Picea glauca] was known to have powers to attract members of the opposite sex (Grinnell 1972:1:134), and field mint [Mentha Arvensis] was believed to have aphrodisiac properties (Hart 1981:27). Young Lakota women searched for four headed spears of grama grass [Bouteloua] to bring them good fortune in love and romance (Hassrick 1964:241).

Fruit-bearing trees, especially wild plums, chokecherries, and hackberries, were commonly associated symbolically with fertility and reproduction, not only in the Sun Dances of the Cheyennes and Lakotas, as already described, but also in many other ritual contexts. All of them occupied important symbolic places in the Lakota’s Pte San Lowanpi, the celebration of a young girl reaching womanhood (Fletcher 1887:266-267; Walker 1980:244). They also appear to have played a role in Lakota women’s rock art shrines connected with the Double-Woman, Winyan Nunpa (Sundstrom 2002:112). The Arikaras chose wild plum and hackberry trees to hang the bundles containing the placentas of their infants (Gilmore 1930:75).

c. Signs

Several plants are reported to have functioned as signs to mark important seasonal activities and movements in the lives of tribal people in the northern plains. Melvin Gilmore (1926:14) noted that when the dotted gayfeather [Liatris punctata] started to bloom, the bison-hunting tribes took this as a sign to travel to the Arikara villages because the corn would be ripe and ready for trade. When the goldenrod [Solidago] bloomed, it was time for the Poncas to return home from the buffalo hunts to tend to their ripening corn fields (Gilmore 1919:133). When the annual sunflower [Helianthus annus] was ripe, the Lakotas believed that bison were fat, and therefore, their meat was good (Gilmore 1919:130). The flowers of the pasqueflower [Pulsatilla patens] blossom on the high plains before the snows completely melt and were a harbinger of spring, renewal and rebirth for several tribal nations in the region. The Arikaras hung pasqueflowers each spring on their sacred cedar tree to mark the return of spring and the renewal of life (Gilmore 1987:188), and the Dakotas (and probably the Lakotas too) had many songs about this flower that they sang to celebrate its appearance in the early spring (Gilmore 1919:81, 1987:205-208).
Stones could also function as signposts. Jenney and Newton (1875:302) noted how stones were set in the forks of trees to mark trails in the interior regions of the Black Hills, and Odell (1942:152) wrote how the Cheyennes stacked stones in a special way to give directions to the locations of their camps.

**d. Gifts and Petitions**

Certain plants were singled out to use as offerings whenever spirits were petitioned. Besides sage, cedar, and sweetgrass, pearly everlasting \( \text{Anaphalis margaritacea} \) was one of the plants commonly used for this purpose by the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:188). Many more plants, however, were dried and combined in tobacco mixtures to create a smoke that carried petitions to the spirit world. Redosier dogwood \( \text{Cornus stolonifera} \), bearberry a.k.a. kinnikinick or larb \( \text{Arctostaphylos uva-ursi} \), and willow bark \( \text{Salix humilis} \) were among the more important plants used for this purpose (Gilmore 1919:108, 1987:106; Buechel 1970:123, 520; Kemnitzer 1970:67; Grinnell 1972:2:183; Finger in Walker 1980:111; Tyson in Walker 1980:119; No Flesh in Walker 1980:194; Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:202; Bad Wound in Walker: 1980:209, 210; Walker 1980 227, 244, 245, 295; Hart 1981:23, 40-41, 1992:20; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:372; Standing Bear 1988:107; Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990:189; Lewis, T. 1990:46-47). Robert Hall (1997:157-158) suggests that their importance is related to the fact that they maintained a distinctive coloration during the winter, a fact that led tribes to connect them with immortality. Dogwood stems turn bright red during the winter months, and it was only during this time of the year that they were taken by the Lakotas for their tobacco mixtures (Goodman 1992:7). The Cheyennes, Lakotas, Arikaras, and Poncas removed the inner bark of the dogwood from its outer bark to make shavings that were placed in tobacco mixtures for pipe-smoking on diplomatic and ceremonial occasions (Gilmore 1919, 1987:106, Grinnell 1972:2:183; Buechel 1970:123; Hart 1981:23, 1992:20; Lewis, T. 1990:46). The Lakotas also used it in their tobacco mixtures for fasting and seeking visions (Sword in Walker 1980:85; Walker 1980:132), in the consecration of their pipes (Sword in Walker 1980:87), and in the \textit{Hunka} Ceremony (Walker 1980:209).

Bearberry was another important plant added to Cheyenne and Lakota tobacco mixtures (Hart 1981:25, 1992:40-41; DeMallie 1984:240, 334, 337, 339-340; Standing Bear 1988:103; Black Elk and Lyon 1990:189; Lewis, T. 1990:46-47), and like cedar and sage, it does not drop its leaves in the wintertime. The Lakotas used this plant as an offering when picking medicinal plants (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:236). Luther Standing Bear (1988:103) explained its origin among the Lakotas, when he wrote:

> Long ago the wolf came to the medicine man and told him how to use the tobacco plant. The things that grow up from the soil, so he told the medicine man that if the tobacco plant was burned in the tipi, it would keep away disease and purify the air. The women threw the leaves of this plant on the fire and the smoke would rise up and fill the tipi. Long before pipes had been invented, the men would draw coals from the fire and sprinkle the dried leaves over the coals. As the smoke arose, they covered their heads with their blankets and bent over the coals so they could breathe in the smoke. A little later, men learned to smoke another way. Lying on the ground they drew the smoke into the mouth through a hollow reed. The next pipe was more convenient, for it was the small leg bone of the deer hollowed out. A piece of charcoal was put in one end of the bone and on this the tobacco. It was carried in the mouth and smoked like a cigar...

Surrounding the Lakotas’ Sun Dance altar, an indented line is traced, where bearberry tobacco or larb is laid down, after which red clay paint is added, and on top of this, gypsum is sprinkled.
TABLE 10. Plants and Minerals at Wind Cave National Park with Special Spiritual and Symbolic Significance to the Cheyennes, Lakotas, and/or Arapahos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>common name</th>
<th>taxonomic name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Woody Plants</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bearberry</td>
<td>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broom snakeweed</td>
<td>Gutierrezia sarothrae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffaloberry</td>
<td>Shepherdia, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chokecherry</td>
<td>Prunus virginiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottonwood</td>
<td>Populus deltoides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackberry (found near Hot Springs)</td>
<td>Celtis Occidentalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadplant</td>
<td>Amorpha canescens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redosier dogwood</td>
<td>Cornus stolonifera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocky Mountain juniper</td>
<td>Juniperus scopulorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sagewort</td>
<td>Artemisia, spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skunkbush</td>
<td>Rhus aromatica</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smooth Sumac</td>
<td>Rhus glabra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowberry</td>
<td>Symphoricarpos occidentalis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wild plum</td>
<td>Prunus americana</td>
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<td>Willow</td>
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<td>Woodbine</td>
<td>Parthenocissus vitace</td>
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<td><strong>Flowering Forbs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>American Licorice</td>
<td>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blazingstar</td>
<td>Liatris punctata</td>
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<td>Breadroot scurfpea</td>
<td>Psoralea esculenta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dotted gayfeather</td>
<td>Liatrus punctata</td>
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<td>Field Mint</td>
<td>Mentha arvensis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pasqueflower</td>
<td>Pulsatilla patens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pearly Everlasting</td>
<td>Anaphalis margaritacea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purple Coneflower</td>
<td>Echinacea angustifolia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sagewort</td>
<td>Artemisia, spp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scarlet Globemallow</td>
<td>Sphaeralcea coccinea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunflower</td>
<td>Helianthus annus</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grasses and Moss</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grama Grass</td>
<td>Bouteloua, ssp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junegrass</td>
<td>Koeleria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juniper moss</td>
<td>Polytrichum juniperinum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prairie Sandreed</td>
<td>Calamovilfa longifolia</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minerals and Soils</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsum and Quartzite</td>
<td>Stones on which lichens grow</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red clay and earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soils unearthed by prairie dogs, badgers, and voles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

437
(Densmore 1918:122). This is reminiscent of the appearance of the Red Valley where gypsum strata are laid down in this red sandstone formation, appearing as ribbon-like lines encircling the Hills where their tobacco (bearberry) was commonly gathered.

Two other plants were associated with ceremonial smoking by the Cheyennes, Comanches, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and the Lakotas. One of these, skunkbush \textit{[Rhus aromatica]}, was widely used and considered an especially important ceremonial plant among the Kiowas (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40; Grinnell 1972:2:180; Jordan 1965:128; Hart 1981:14; Lewis, T. 1990:47). It is another plant that keeps some of its foliage and also its berries over the winter months. Another widely used and closely related shrub was the smooth sumac \textit{[Rhus glabra]}, whose leaves were combined in tobacco mixtures by many different tribal nations (Gilmore 1913b:367, 1919:48; Carlson and Jones 1939:524; Vestal and Schultes 1939:39; Jordan 1965:128; Buechel 1970:127 Grinnell 1972:2:180; Hart 1981:14). Finally, the Lakotas added the leaves from the leadplant \textit{[Amorpha canescens]} to some of their tobacco mixtures too (Gilmore 1919:48).

It should also be mentioned that the descendants of European American settlers in the vicinity of Wind Cave National Park recall their families gathering kinnikinick and evergreens to make wreaths and other decorations for the Christmas holiday season (Sundstrom, J. 1977:379, 412). This is the only ritual and symbolic use of plants that we could find for the region's European American populations.

**VII. WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK: PLANTS AND MINERALS**

The Black Hills remain a renowned place for Lakotas and Cheyennes to seek plants, soil, earth, clay, and water for spiritual and practical uses. Historically, the incredible variety, richness, and abundance of these natural resources must have reinforced Lakota and Cheyenne ideas about the special and sacred nature of this place. This chapter has summarized information mostly on plants located today at Wind Cave National Park.\footnote{Again, a more detailed body of information on plants and minerals for the Black Hills as a whole is found in Appendix B. The material presented in this chapter and the appendix does not represent a complete coverage of the knowledge that Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribal people possess about plants in the Black Hills. What appears here is restricted to material found in published sources.} It reveals a number of things, the most important of which is that the park’s flora represent a substantial proportion of the plants collected by the Lakotas and also the Cheyennes for practical and spiritual purposes.

With only a few exceptions, Wind Cave National Park contains most of the plant staples in the traditional diets of the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. Even more impressive are the number and variety of plants on park properties used for traditional medicinal treatments. The park is a veritable pharmacy when it comes to healing herbs supplying remedies for injuries and ailments. Over fifteen different flora in the park treat colds and respiratory ailments, and more than twenty plants cure gastrointestinal, liver, and kidney problems. A similar number of species have obstetrical and gynecological applications. Many different plants have antiinflammatory uses. A large number of plants treat dermatological conditions, and at least fifteen handle headaches, dizziness, and psychogenic complaints. Wounds, injuries, and bites are doctored with more than twenty-five distinct plants. At least five separate plants attend to heart, back, and chest pains, more than ten heal inflammations of the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, and over five serve as elixirs and stimulants or work as compounds. A wide variety of the plants that grow on park properties are reported as fodder or remedies and stimulants for horses.
Virtually everything a Lakota, Cheyenne, or Arapaho might need to keep their person, dwelling, and articles of clothing clean and fragrant was available in the park's selection of plants, from sageworts and soapweed to bedstraws and cattails. Many of the flora at the park provided necessary materials for constructing lodges, making mats, containers, and utensils, fashioning tools and weapons, constructing musical instruments, toys, and recreational objects, and mixing dyes, paints, and tanning agents. Several grasses and woody plants also served as tinder and fuel, including sagewort, cottonwood, green ash, and box elder.

Some of the most important and sacred plants for religious observances grow in the park from cedar, bearberry, dogwood, and sagewort to the pasqueflower, cottonwood, globemallow, and broom snakeweed. Most of the specific locations where these and other plant resources were procured in historic times is not identified in the literature, but the southeastern area of the Hills, the region of Wind Cave and the Race Track and the neighboring Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs, played some role in this procurement because of their relationship to landforms associated with sacred stories of bison, an animal widely connected with healing herbs and spiritual renewal. The plants in this area no doubt have significance because they grow on Tatanka makalpaya [the Stomping Ground of the Bison Bull] near the cave of the bison's origin. Lakota and Cheyenne cultural resource officers confirm the importance of this area in the collection of plants for medicine and religious observance.

It should also be noted that the plants associated with the North Wind, Waziyata, and his grandfather, Waziya, including dogwood and bearberry, are gathered in this area. Both plants were singled out by the tribal people we interviewed. In fact, most of the plants associated with these two spiritual figures either remain green over the winter months or else they take on a red coloration. As mentioned previously, they symbolize immortality because they do not die over the winter months. The name Waziyata is sometimes translated “towards the pine.” Wazi is the generic word for pine, and it is used specifically in reference to the ponderosa pine. The land of the pines is commonly mentioned in Lakota stories about Waziyata and his grandfather, Waziya, and although many of the references (Afraid of the Bear in Walker 1980: 200-201; Blue Thunder in Walker 1980: 208; Bad Wound in Walker 1980: 210; Walker 1983: 125, 136, 194, 201, 208) may very well apply to locations in the northwoods of Minnesota and neighboring Wisconsin, where most historians argue the Lakotas originated, they can easily apply to the pine-laden Black Hills, which after the late eighteenth century would have been the area that most Lakotas associated with pine.

Lakotas and Cheyennes link specific varieties of plants to particular animals and the landscapes in which they dwell. The plants (i.e., fetid marigold) that grow around prairie dog towns, for example, are important given the cleansing properties of the soils in which they grow. Park properties contain numerous springs, and they stand in proximity to the thermal waters at Hot Springs, which are highly valued for their healing properties. The plants that grow around these water sources are considered especially potent.

Historically, the area of Wind Cave National Park was probably a locale to find knappable stone. There is certainly prehistoric evidence of quarrying not only at nearby Battle Mountain, but also inside the boundaries of the park itself. The procurement of flint for making arrowheads declined after the introduction of European trade metal, but it no doubt remained a prominent activity in tribal life until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the time when French traders began to stay in the area for extended periods. Also, the general spiritual importance of the region, described in greater detail in the next section, recommends it as a location to collect minerals, clays, and soils for ceremonial uses. Although present in other places, the dirt brought up from the deep earth near Wind Cave by prairie dogs, badgers, and voles would have special significance for
constructing ceremonial altars because the soil comes from the earth that is the home to the buffalo and the place of human emergence. The red soils and gypsum formations along the Race Track also have significance in the Sun Dance and other ceremonies linked to the story of the Great Race (see next section for a fuller explication).

Wind Cave National Park and its surrounding environments are resource rich areas for animals, plants, waters, minerals, and soils used in traditional culture contexts, and many of these resources continue to play a role in contemporary religious observances. It is little wonder that the general area of the park remains contested. In the past, it was a place where tribal nations once battled each other to acquire or protect their access to its riches and where, after 1874, the Lakotas and Cheyennes launched attacks on the incoming prospectors and settlers. It is also understandable that the Cheyennes, Lakotas, and Arapahos eventually came to share access to the lands, that it became a popular camping area for the Lakotas for short or extended stays, that Spotted Tail wanted his agency nearby, and that Red Cloud refused to part with this section of the Hills. Nor is it surprising that today it is one of many areas in the Black Hills where Lakotas continue to conduct some of their most sacred religious observances.
Part Four

THE BLACK HILLS AS A SANCTUARY
AND SACRED LANDSCAPE

...The Indian’s reverence for the Black Hills is very much like the feeling many people on this earth have for the Holy Land, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Mount Calvary...The Lakota loved the Black Hills for reasons vastly different [from the whites]. They held the Hills as a shrine, a sanctuary for both beast and man. It was a winter haven for the beast of the land, a traditional place of procreation, under the protective shelter of the pines and the deep canyons, a place for worship, where the spiritual yearnings of bewildered mankind were calmed (LaPointe 1979:15, 141-142).

...the oral history, legends, and religious practices of the Cheyennes clearly imply that the Black Hills was where the Cheyenne people became a nation, and where they have lived and made pilgrimages for many generations. In many ways, the area is to them what Jerusalem is to the Jews or Ireland to Irish-Americans. It is their homeland, the scene of the most significant events in their tribal life, and the wellspring of their religious life (Moore 1981: 16).

The Black Hills has long been written about as a place of great beauty and striking topography. Some of the earliest European Americans (Hughes, R. 1957:13; Dodge 1965:25, 49, 149-150; McLaird and Turchen 1974c:296-297; Knappen in Kraus and Olson 1974:23) who traveled the area and wrote about it were struck by the contrast the Hills environment made to the dryness and barrenness of the surrounding prairies and sagebrush steppes. The virtues of the Hills were even extolled in a spiritually inspiring language, with expressions like “these sacred fastnesses,” (Dodge 1965:150), “earthly paradise” (Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:149), or an “Eden in the clouds” (Burrows in Krause and Olson 1974:208). Although many early writers attributed their beauty and magnificence to some divine intervention, few perceived them as a foundation of their own religiosity.

For most early European Americans, it was not the aesthetics of the Hills that made them most appealing but their potential for economic growth in mining, logging, and ranching (Tallent 1899; Hughes 1957; Dodge 1965:150-151; McLaird and Turchen 1974a:33-35; 1974c:313). In time, however, the Hills’ scenic landscapes would support the accumulation of wealth through the aggressive development of the region’s leisure and travel industry (Clark 1952b; Lee 1987). The area of Wind Cave and the neighboring Hot Springs became significant to European American peoples primarily as geologic curiosities, although again religious metaphors were sometimes used to describe them (Long 1992:18-21). Over the past century, most of the public writings about these places, from travel guides to local histories, share a common focus on the uniqueness of their geophysical properties. In the case of Wind Cave, there are also interesting sidebar
accounts of how early settlers located the cave, and how it became a focus of a major land dispute. Nothing took place here of any momentous cultural significance, however. If anything, early European American accounts of this area give the region its cultural flavor through ersatz stories of its original occupation by American Indians (South Dakota Federal Writers Project 1938; Case 1949; Clark 1952b; Rezatto 1989). This is especially true in early accounts (Tallent 1899:644, 695; Brown and Willards 1924:18) of the thermal waters at neighboring Hot Springs, whose cultural meaning was largely inscribed by European American renditions, and in some instances, complete fabrications, of local tribal stories. European American values certainly define the subtext of cultural representations that describe the Black Hills and specific sites within their reaches such as Wind Cave or the Hot Springs. Nevertheless, there is really no special or unique cultural relationship to the local landscape in the traditions of European Americans who settled in this area after 1877 other than its scientific interest and its particular place in the evolution of the region’s recreational and tourist industries. Thus, while scores of travel books, brochures, and pamphlets have been written with a superlative language of the extraordinary to promote the Hills’ majestic beauty, there is no evidence that later generations of European Americans ever regarded them as a consecrated enclosure or a holy place (Federal Writers Project 1938; Case 1949; Clark 1952b). Indeed, Helen Rezatto (1989: 19) asserts: “The whiteman has no ancient legends about the Black Hills, and most of his modern ones are about gold.”

This stands in marked contrast to the region’s American Indian inhabitants. Historically, as we have already seen, the Black Hills had importance for them economically too. The Hills were valued for the richness and diversity of their natural resources. They provided food, medicine, fuel, and materials for manufacturing. Equally important were the spiritual attachments of local tribes to the Hills as a site for the origin of some of their most sacred traditions and religious observances. For some of the tribal nations known to have lived in this area, most notably the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, the Black Hills were the sacred center of their universe. Thus, the taking of the Hills by European Americans was perceived not simply as an economic tragedy, a loss of resources to sustain tribal livelihoods and survival, but a catastrophe of cosmic proportions where the very foundations of tribal identities and relationships to the universe were at stake (New Holy 1997, 1998).

Today, the spiritual attachment of the Lakotas and other tribal nations to the Black Hills has become the subject of considerable controversy, which hinges on the status of the Hills as a sacred site and on the rights of American Indian people to access them under the provisions of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 and other federal laws regarding traditional cultural properties. Many traditionalists within the ranks of the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho nations maintain their long held position that the Black Hills are sacred and have stood as a spiritual center to their peoples for countless generations. A number of historians and anthropologists have challenged the temporal depth of these assertions, arguing that while the adherents may very well be sincere in their beliefs, their ideas about the sacredness of the Black Hills are recent inventions promulgated for political ends. Other scholars, however, have been more supportive of the traditionalists’ claims, marshaling a wide assortment of evidence to demonstrate that many tribal nations have had a long-standing spiritual attachment to the Black Hills. In order to sort out and evaluate the controversy, in which Wind Cave and its environs occupy such a pivotal place, tribal beliefs about the area of Wind Cave need to be situated in a wider cultural and historical context. This section seeks to provide this context in order to give a better understanding of the nature of the sacred landscape on which Wind Cave National Park now sits.
Chapter Twelve

SACRED SITES AND OBSERVANCES

It is worthwhile, at the outset, to come to some understanding of what American Indian people mean when they refer to a place as sacred or talk about its spirituality. Recognizing that these meanings vary from one culture to another, even among the tribal nations who historically occupied the Black Hills, attention will be focused here on the Lakotas and the Cheyennes since these are the two tribal nations whose people have had the strongest and most lasting attachments to the Black Hills and the area of Wind Cave National Park, at least as reported in published sources. Given their close relations with the Lakotas and Cheyennes, the Arapahos probably have ongoing religious connections to this area as well, but none of these have been recorded in the published sources that we reviewed. Some of what constitutes the sacred in relationship to landscapes and observances has already been mentioned in previous discussions of animals, plants, and minerals. This chapter serves as a bridge, carrying forward certain ideas introduced previously and looking at how they are manifested in relation to particular kinds of sacred landforms and spiritual observances. Even though a certain amount of repetition of previously presented material is necessary in order to make this link, the focus and context of its presentation are new.

I. SACRED LANDFORMS AND LANDSCAPES

Much about what is sacred for American Indian people is integrally related to and manifested in geographic landscapes. Rich Two Dogs (in Parlow 1983a:3), a contemporary Lakota spiritual leader, once said: “The religion is rooted to the land. And you can’t have the religion by itself, without the land.” In many American Indian religious traditions, the sacred is present in landforms, sometimes called owanka wakan [holy places] (Howard 1954:73), places that both embody and stand for significant cosmic or spiritual personages, powers, and processes. As Keith Basso (1996), an ethnographer of western Apache culture, describes it, “wisdom sits in places.” Or as the Lakota intellectual Thomas Tyon told James Walker (1980:119) in the late nineteenth century, spirits belong to “places.” In scores of accounts on the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribal nations, we find examples of how landforms act in mnemonic ways – embodying, preserving, codifying, and immortalizing basic cosmological precepts (Basso 1996:105-150; Schlesier 1987:4-6; Kelly and Francis 1994:41; Irwin 1994:29).

As is the case with animals, plants, and other natural phenomena in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, landforms are alive. They possess a living presence, a consciousness that humans can approach and come to know especially through dreams and visions (Irwin 1994:31). A landform’s spiritual presence manifests itself in myriad ways, which are best understood and expressed through metaphor (New Holy 1997:79-85). Art, poetry, music, performance, and narrative are the primary mediums through which the meanings behind a landscape and its landforms are experienced and communicated in the tribal cultures of the Great Plains (New Holy 1997:185-186). Landscapes and landforms are comprehended in terms of the totality of their being, their implicit unity and relatedness to one another, and to other natural phenomena that surround them (Irwin 1994:27-29). In Lakota cosmology, as one example, Harney Peak, the Thunders, blacktail deer, swallows, horses, butterflies, cedar, and the West Wind form a synergistic set, a synecdoche, in
which each phenomenon stands and speaks for the other as interchangeable representations of a single spiritual essence or force. Notwithstanding their seemingly distinct physical appearances, they share a common underlying origin and purpose in the cosmic scheme of things. This way of comprehending the world does not rest on a materially based, empirically rationalized approach -- the stuff of scientific discourse. Rather, it involves a figurative, analogical perspective where one form easily enfolds into another, readily expresses another, and finally, can be transformed into the other (Jahner 1989:193-202; Irwin 1994:27; New Holy 1997).

In the ethnogeographies of many American Indian nations, individual landforms are rarely isolated, existing unto themselves and separated from other places in the larger landscapes they occupy. Instead, sites of spiritual significance tend to be interrelated, integrated, and connected to each other through the progression of events in a story cycle or as sites visited in a sequence of activities associated with the performance of ritual observances in a ceremonial cycle (Kelly and Francis 1994:44; Sundstrom, L. 1996). Landscapes in a tribal territory chart or identify the particular locales where certain spiritual figures dwell, where mysterious happenings unfold, where specific knowledge is given, and/or where ceremonial observances are performed (Parks and Wedel 1985). These sometimes take the form of a cosmic map, in which subterranean, earthly, and celestial formations are tied together in a unified vision of the universe and its life-giving processes (Goodman 1992; Carmichael 1994; Theodatus and La Pena 1994:22).

A. Types of Land Forms

In their now classic and pioneering work on the historic and sacred geography of the Pawnee, Douglas Parks and Waldo Wedel (1985:167) review some of the sources that report sites of sacred significance to American Indians in the Great Plains. Their review suggests any one of the following landforms as a candidate for a holy place. First, prominent eminences, especially buttes or mountains, are commonly described as sites for ceremonial observances involving fasting and vision seeking. They report that most tribes in the region single out specific mountains or buttes for worship. Sometimes the sacredness of a particular elevated location is unique to a single tribe, but in other cases, the sight has spiritual significance for many tribal nations. Bear Lodge Butte a.k.a. Devil’s Tower, for example, is one of these (Parks and Wedel 1985:169-170). Parks and Wedel (1985:170-171) also note that distinctive bodies of water, certain lakes, river locations, artesian springs and geysers, unusual rock formations, and locations of petroglyphs are considered holy places. To this, caves and other unique underground depressions can be added, as these certainly characterize some of the sites that tribal nations in the region regard as spiritually important. Most of these kinds of landforms are revered by tribal nations from other parts of the United States as well (Carmichael 1994:91-95; Mohs 1994:192-198; Theodatus and La Pena 1994:22-26; Hall 1997).

There are two ways landforms can be discussed. One way is to look at them generically as constituting a topographical class or category, in which all representatives of the type share certain features in common. Another way is to study them concretely as representing specific sites associated with particular cultural representations. Here consideration is given to some of the generic ideas associated with various kinds of landforms; the discussion of particular locales is presented in Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen.

1. Mountains and Buttes

High elevation locations or prominent eminences are commonly recognized as places where the tribal nations of the Great Plains gained their spiritual gifts and knowledge (Donaldson in

Human beings can plug into the system of cosmic energy at any level, and although there is more energy to be gained by plugging in at higher levels, it is more difficult, and more dangerous. To receive energy directly from the source, one can pray directly to Maheo, or fast on a mountaintop or hilltop, closer to the zenith.

Many high places were used by the Cheyennes to fast, pray, and seek visions because these were connected to powerful bird and insect figures who carried messages between humans and the “Above Persons” in the “World Above,” Heamahestanov, or in the Blue Sky, Otatavoom, the home of Ma’heo, the greatest spiritual presence in the Cheyennes’ universe (Curtis 1907-30:6:123; Powell 1969:2:435, 437; Moore, J. 1986:178-179; Schlesier 1987:4-6). Certain eminences, especially Bear Butte, were the sites where the Cheyennes typically fasted, prayed, and sought spiritual revelations (Odell 1942:17-18; Moore, J. 1996:178-179). Bear Butte was also the mountain where the Cheyennes acquired some of their most sacred knowledge and covenants, including the Sacred Arrows (Schlesier 1987:4-6).

Among the Lakotas, mountains and prominent buttes are also associated with transcendent spaces that exist above and beyond the more ordinary life of the world that stands below them (Forbes-Boyte 1999:28). The tops of high mountains and buttes are the locations where Lakotas typically fast, pray, and seek visions (Fire and Erdoes 1978:1 4-16; Sword in Walker 1980:85; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:105; Thunder Bear in Walker 1980:129, 131, 132; Tyon in Walker 1980:151; Feraca 1998:24; Forbes-Boyte 1996:104-106). Eminences in the Black Hills and its surrounding environs, including Bear Butte, Bear Lodge Butte, Harney Peak, and Mount Coolidge, are among many locations reported in the literature where Lakotas received spiritual guidance (Sage in Haflen and Haflen 1956:268-272; Odell 1942:21-30; Fools Crow in Mails 1972:86-87, 95, 102, 109, 149, 151, 169-171, 181-184; LaPointe 1976:80-84; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:46, 98, 133-135, 141, 230, 253, 258-259; Young Bear and Theisz 1994:19; Forbes-Boyte 1999:28). Each of these places is associated with a spiritual presence, and generally, when guidance is sought from a particular spirit, people go to the places with which it is associated. As with the Cheyennes, high places are preferred by the Lakotas because they bring people into closer contact with Tunkan’sila, [Grandfather] or Taku Skanskan, who is associated with the highest sky spaces and the Four Winds and the different birds and insects that serve as their principal messengers (Walker 1983:321, 327).

In reference to the entire Plains, Lee Irwin (1994:106) writes that certain eminences were widely recognized as especially sacred places because they encompassed different strata of the universe. Among all the high places in their territorial ranges, some of the most significant are the ones that also contained openings to the underworld through caves and springs. The Medicine Wheel Mountain in the Big Horns (Liebman 2002:61-72) conforms to this, and Bear Butte in certainly fits this too. Just as the Lakotas believe that animals and plants crossing different planes of the universe are highly sacred, so they place landforms connecting the sky, earth, and underworld in high regard. In relation to Bear Butte, Kari Forbes-Boyte (1996:104, 1999:28) argues that Bear Butte is revered not only because it contains all of the sacred elements (land air, water, rocks, animals, plants, and fire), but also because it forms an axis mundi that connects earth and sky spaces. Karl Schlesier (1987:4-6) presents a nearly identical case for the sacred

1 Mountains and hills were known by many different names in the Cheyenne language. Eseom refers to an extended ridge (Petter 1913-15:547), as opposed to a simple elevation of ground which is called zepomao. A mountain is known as hohona, or eseheoomeno for a range of mountains (Petter 1913-15:722).
importance of Bear Butte to the Cheyennes. Bear Butte and other eminences in and around the Black Hills, are understood not only to be sites of revelation and prophesy but earth centers, places where the forces of the universe coalesce in powerful and energizing ways (Deloria, V. Jr. and Stoffle 1998:12-13).

2. Caves

Throughout Native North America, caves are certainly understood as earth centers, places where the souls of humans and animals undergo a metamorphosis from their immaterial spiritualized selves to their physical forms (Carmichael 1992:92-93; Theodoratus and LaPena 1994:23-24; Hall 1997:99). This is an old idea that is connected, more specifically, with the process in which the soul or spiritual essence of being is attached to a physical form through the creation of “breath” (Hall 1997:99-101).

In the Lakota language, caves are known as *mako hloka* [a hole in the ground] (Buechel 1970:331) or *washun*, which refers to a hole but especially the den of an animal (Ibid:553). Among Lakotas, they are often described as birthing chambers or wombs, the places where the spirit forms of animals live and from which they emerge to populate the earth. In the 1870s, James Bourke described a cave near Bear Lodge Butte (a.k.a. Devil’s Tower) from which the Lakotas believed animals emerged (Sundstrom, L. 1997:192), and a half-century later, in 1937, Dick Stone (1982:20) heard about the same cave from his Lakota advisors. In 1874, N. H. Knappen (in Krause and Olson 1974:19), a correspondent for the Bismark Tribune, described Ludlow Cave as “the home of the great spirit,” where animals of all kinds existed “in a translated state.” Ludlow Cave in the Cave Hills of northwestern South Dakota is particularly interesting because many of the ideas associated with Wind Cave also appear here, including the presence of an old man of gigantic stature and stories of animal emergence (Sioux Ranger District 2003:60-73). At Ludlow Cave, a bison cow with her newborn calf is represented in a large bas-relief carving located on the cliffs above the cave entrance (Sundstrom 2002:110).

The Lakotas associate caves with bison. Bison are understood as a gift to the Lakota from *Inyan* [Stone], whose natural domain is the mountains (Walker 1917:82), and whose home, or *tipi*, is located in the earth (Little Wound in Walker 1980:124). According to some of the spiritually knowledgeable men that Walker (1980:118) interviewed, *Inyan* “knows all things of the earth...He can tell where the herds of buffalo are. They have gone back into the earth.” In an account told by Short Bull to Walker (1980:144):

Buffalo were given by the spirit of the earth to the Indians. The spirit of the earth and the buffalo are the same. The Oglalas should venerate the Spirit of the Buffalo. An Indian went into a hole in the ground and found the buffalo. They were given to him for his food. He drove some of them up on the earth. From these came all the buffalo.

At the end of the nineteenth century, George Bushotter (in Dorsey 1894:476-477) elaborated on the notion that bison come from the subterranean world:

The buffalo originated under the earth. It is said that in the olden times, a man who was journeying came to a hill where there were many holes in the ground. He explored them, and when he had gone within one of them, he found plenty of buffalo chips, and buffalo tracks were on all sides; and here and there he found buffalo hair which had come out when the animals rubbed against the walls. These animals were the real buffalo, who dwelt
underground, and some of them came up to this earth and increased here to many herds. These buffalo had many earth lodges, and there they raised their children...

More recently, a similar account was given to Raymond Bucko (1999:204-205) by one of his Lakota consultants, who said:

The buffalo skull represents all the beings of the earth that are not human, the four-legged. The buffalo skull represents all of life on the earth that passed already. The feather represents all the birds. This is really what the sweat is all about; this is going back to creation, all these animals and birds. A long time ago huká wóglake the ‘old fables’, hukákiya ‘the ancient ancestors’, the people lived in the earth long ago, guided by rock spirits. They had no sight, as it was completely dark. All the animals lived there too. When the people came out of the earth, a scout saw a hole with light coming in. It was too bright for him, but then he got used to the light and around and saw a country, saw the sun and the earth. He wandered the earth for a while and then went back in. It took time to get used to the earth. There were no living things on the earth. The scout told the buffalos and the people about it. The buffalos were greedy, so they went charging out. The scout said to go slow because the light will hurt your eyes. The buffalos came anyway, and that is why the buffalo are blind. When they first came out of the earth, the Great Spirit gave them fire. This was his gift to the people. That’s kind of a creation story.

This represents a modern version of the long-standing belief among the Lakotas that humans and bison share a common origin in the earth, particularly in caves, which are closely connected to the life-giving and regenerative properties of stone and grandmother earth (Melody 1977: 152-164).

Like the Lakotas, the Cheyennes believe that bison originate in the underworld and return to the prairies every spring from their subterranean habitats. In 1883, Lt. Colonel Richard I. Dodge in his book Our Wild Indians, (1959:289) wrote that the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and other Indians held the firm belief “that the buffalo were produced in countless numbers in a country under the ground; that every spring the surplus, swarmed like bees from a hive, out of great cave-like openings to this country.” In Cheyenne traditions, bison and many other mammalian species are believed to originate in subterranean sanctuaries in the depths of the earth (Moore, J. 1974:163, 165; Moore, J. 1984:296, 1996:211). In their cavern homes, mammals exist in a spiritualized form, awaiting their materialization on the earth’s surface (Schlesier 1987:4-5). The Cheyennes believe that animals and humans receive “the immortal gift of breath” from the earth (Schlesier 1987:9). They specifically link the underworld of Bear Butte with the maheonoxsz, the sacred caves and homes of their holiest spirits, the maiyun (Schlesier 1987:4-6). The Maiyun, the messengers of the Ma’heyuno or the Four Directions, have spiritual and material forms (Schlesier 1987:8); they hold positions in the sky, but they also occupy sacred caves on earth where they once imparted their sacred knowledge to the Cheyennes’ two prophets, Sweet Medicine and Stands on the Ground or Erect Horns (Dorsey, G. 1905:48; Grinnell 1926:274). At these locations, they guard and take care of the homes of the animals whose spirits, hematasoomao, dwell in other caverns, known as heszevoxsz, under the earth. Many of these caves are found in the Black Hills (Schlesier 1987:4-7). The Cheyennes also call caves by other names, such as evoxeve [a hole in the ground] (Petter 1913-15:281), or in the modern dialect of the northern

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2 Without identifying its origin, the same story was rephrased and published by Katherine Judson (1913:53) as follows: “In the days of the grandfathers, buffalo lived under the earth. In the olden times, they say, a man who was journeying came to a hill where there were many holes in the ground. He entered one of them. When he had gone inside he found buffalo chips and buffalo tracks on all sides. He found also buffalo hairs where the buffaloes had rubbed against the walls. These were the real buffaloes and they lived under the ground. Afterwards some of them came to the surface of the earth and lived there. Then the herds on the earth increased.”
Cheyenne, tsevé?evótoo?e, which is the word for an ordinary hole or anything that is concave (English-Cheyenne Dictionary 1976:19).

The idea that caves are the origin homes of bison and other game was also shared by other tribal nations in the northern Plains, including the Arapahos, Arikaras, Hidatsas, Mandans, and Poncas (Dorsey, J. 1890; Kroeber 1902; Dorsey and Kroeber 1903; Bowers 1950, 1963; Parks 1996). Indeed, many Lakota and Cheyenne understandings about caves and their connections to animal homes are very similar, and in some instances nearly identical, to Arapaho, Arikara, Hidatsa, Mandan, and Ponca beliefs.

Since caves are located inside the earth, they are generally associated with a female spiritual presence. The Cheyennes believe that the nadir of the world is the home of a female generative principle He?estosiste, the source of the material world (Moore, J. 1996:208-211). Most tribal nations in the Plains feminized the earth and the cavernous underworld homes in which animals originated. The deepest levels of the earth are often addressed as Grandmother Earth, Maka unći in Lakota (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:312), Old Woman Under the Ground, Gadombitsohnhit in Kiowa (Mooney 1979:239), or Our Grandmother, Eseeheman in Cheyenne (Powell 1969:2:437; Schlesier 1987:5, 8, 82). Among the Cheyennes, Grandmother Earth is one of the four most powerful maiyun or spiritual potencies in their universe; from her subterranean abode, she protects the animals and governs their appearance on earth (Grinnell 1910:567; Schlesier 1987:8). In Lakota traditions, she is one of the four most powerful Tobtob, and caves are often the sites where encounters with her or other mysterious old women, such as Wakanka, take place (Sage in Haflen and Haflen 1956:268-272; Erdoes and Ortiz 1984:483-484; Sundstrom, L. 2002:106).

The earth grandmother of the Cheyennes is the progenitor of another female figure, whose home is also a cave under the earth, and her name is Ehuyopstah [Yellow Hair on Top Woman] (Schlesier 1987:78). In the stories of many different tribes in the Plains, she appears as a bison woman who becomes the companion of a human man and brings the bison to his people from her subterranean world. There are a number of different versions of these narratives among the Cheyennes (Kroeber 1900:173-196; Grinnell 1907, 1926:244-251; Schlesier 1987:76-79; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1917:183-190, 212-215, 1983:109-118; Deloria, E. 1987:86-89; LaPointe 1976:109-118). In both tribes, the narratives represent a concatenation of two storytelling traditions, the Buffalo and Corn (or Rush) woman tale and the Buffalo Wife story (Parks 1996: 153-154), variants of which are also found among the Arapahos (Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:388-418), the Arikaras (Curtis 1907-30:5:93-100; Dorsey G. 1904:35-37, 124-25; Parks 1996:153-165), the Crows (Lowie 1918:107-119), the Hidatsas (Beckwith 1937:63-76), the Mandans (Libby 1910:694-707; Beckwith, M. 1937:166-170), and the Poncas (Dorsey, J. 1890:1440-1462; Fletcher & LaFlesche 1972:76-78).

The Lakotas also link caves to a male spiritual presence. The home of Waziya or Wazi, the immortal and gigantic old man, is located at the edge of the earth in a cave, which has icicles for poles and snow as its covering (Walker 1917:91, 1983:334). According to James Walker (1983:220-221, 222-223, 225-228, 249), the Lakotas associate caves with ice and believe that their crystalline formations, “white fruits,” are the materials from which Taku Skanskan molded the first man and woman of the Pte Oyate [Buffalo People]. In 1874, when the Black Hills

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3 Many narratives about caves in Lakota traditions are connected to male figures of gigantic stature. Although less common, other stories associate caves with diminutive beings, such as Little People, or speak about animal spirits existing in miniature form before they are transmogrified into their physical appearance on earth. This occurs in a number of stories connected to Wind Cave (see Chapter Fourteen). They Cheyenne also believe in the existence of a mysterious people, the Hoevotto, who live in cavern homes (Moore, J. 1974:165).
Expedition stopped in the Cave Hills in northeastern South Dakota, they were shown, as correspondent William Curtis (in Krause and Olson 1974:160, 162) puts it, “one of the sacred caves” or “washum” of local tribes. This cave is now known as Ludlow Cave, and according to Curtis (in Krause and Olson 1974:110, 115, 116, 155), the elder Lakota and Arikara scouts held it in great regard, interpreting the pictographs and petroglyphs on the surrounding rock panels as the work of spirits. A.B. Donaldson (in Krause and Olson 1974:53), another correspondent, recounted what he heard about the cave: that an old bearded man dwelled there. Similar accounts tell of a cavern structure underneath the Black Hills that purportedly extended from one side of the Hills’ center to the other and led to a river and springs that bestowed eternal life. Panthers guarded the entrance to this cave, and it was said that an old bearded medicine man of large stature lived there (Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:129, 150). This idea extends back even earlier to 1851 in the writings of the trader Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:6).

Henry Boller (1972:327) also related a story about a giant located in the Black Hills that he recorded in the 1850s:

The Grindstone, an old Onc-pa-pa Sioux, who with his family resided among the Gros Ventres, frequently talked about a white hermit in the pines among the Black Hills. He had a hut on the summit of some towering rocks. No one had seen him, but they knew him to be a very tall man because they (the Sioux) found a deer, which he had killed and hung up in the top of a lofty pine tree. He is the person, they think, who poisoned all of the creeks and streams, causing such distress among the wild animals. There had been no thunder this spring, and it was currently believed that he had killed the thunder-bird.

Waziya is the grandfather of the Four Winds. The eldest, the North Wind, Waziyata, is named after his grandfather whose home he shares. He is widely associated in Lakota traditions with the emergence, movement, and disappearance of bison (Curtis 1907-30:3:77). As represented in a multitude of different oral traditions and sacred liturgical texts, he and his bison associates, including Tatanka, are identified with winter, rebirth, and health (Curtis 1907-30: 3:68, 111-118; 159; Wissler 1912:6, 19-20; Densmore 1918:196-197, 219, 220-223; Kemnitzer 1970:71; Black Elk in Brown 1971:133; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:127; Walker 1980:232; Powers, W. 1986:139; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163). In a prayer for the Pte San Lowanpi ceremony, Black Elk (in Brown 1971:119-120) gives these words:

O you, giant, Waziah, Power of the north, who guard the health of the people with your winds, and who purify the earth by making it white, you are the one who watches that path upon which our people walk. Help us especially today with your purifying influence, for we are about to make sacred a virgin, White Buffalo Cow Woman Appears, from whom will come the generations of our people. There is a place for you in this pipe...

And in a prayer for the Tapa Wanka Yap [Throwing the Ball Ceremony], he says:

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4 In reference to the Black Hills proper, some writers (Rezatto 1989:18-20) interpret this large bearded man to be a white man or a European American. This interpretation has little to support it. Indeed, if anything, it represents an example of how Europeans twisted so-called American Indian legends to serve their own interests and conquests. In the early twentieth century, elderly Cheyennes also had stories of an old white giant called Hoimaha, who brought the snow, frost, and cold in the winter, and who was identified with the wind and cardinal direction of the North, Notamota (Grinnell 1972:2:338-339; Moore, J. 1996:206-207). No stories were uncovered, however, that associate this figure with a cave. The Cheyennes also talked about a people who had lighter skin than Indian people, called Hoevotto in the Cheyennes’ sacred language. These people lived underground where they forged metals that caused the mountains to smoke (Petter 1913-15:281).

5 It is hard to know, however, whether or not Boller (1972:225) is writing about the Black Hills proper, since elsewhere he uses the term “Black Hills” to describe an area along the Knife River.
O You where the Giant lives, who purifies with Your white breath, and You, winged one who guard this straight path, we are placing You in this pipe, and so help us with Your two sacred red and blue days! (in Brown 1971:132).

In this ceremony, Black Elk (in Brown 1971:133) explains that the young woman who throws the ball stands at the center and on the sacred path, which extends from the south, the direction people face when praying, to the north, “where the giant lives.” At this spot she is able to see the sacred tree and the generations to come. The ball she holds in her hand symbolizes the universe, and when she throws it to the people in each of the four directions, she is recreating the cosmic order established by Tate and his sons, a structure also revealed in the movements and lifecycle of the bison (Ibid:134-135).

Lakotas think of the north as the place of ni [breath] and connect it directly to bison. Francis Densmore (1918:67-68) makes the connection between breath or wind-power, winter, and the buffalo in her analysis of a line from the “Song of the White Buffalo Maiden,” which reads, “Niya’ tanin’yan...with visible breath, mawa’niye...I am walking.” According to Densmore (Ibid:68n1), when it is cold during the winter, “the breath of a herd of buffalo, rising in the frosty air, could be plainly seen.” Taking this a step further, William Powers (1977:191-192) writes that the North Wind, Waziya, epitomizes winter, waniyetu, “the time and place of breath.” In other words, this is the season when breath appears. Certain caves reveal clouds of condensation during the winter months, and thus, they are connected to bison whose presence in the wintertime is also made visible by the frosty emanations of their breath. Importantly, in the Lakota scheme of things, there is a powerful synergistic connection between winter, the North Wind, bison, caves, and breath, which is central to understanding the meaning of Wind Cave. As explained by the Lakota spiritual leader, Pete Catches (in Parlow 1983a:2-3; in Gonzalez 1996:67), Wind Cave is the location of one of the seven spiritual forces emerging at the time of creation and associated with ni, the breath of life.

Caves are also seen as symbolic equivalents of cocoons, insofar as both signify enclosed spaces where life is incubated, awaiting rebirth and regeneration through the materialization of breath. Like the whirlwind and its associates, the dragonfly, butterfly, and spider, humans and bison emerge from a cocoon-like formation that gives birth to the life force (Brown 1970:6-11, 1992:49; Red Shirt 2002:204). One story told by Oscar Howe (in St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:49-50) of a man being gifted by a spider while sleeping inside a cave reveals this connection.7 Wind Cave is a quintessential representation of this process because of its capacity to release ni or breath, a manifestation of Tate, the Wind’s movement and a basic force in creation.

Lakotas regard the north-south axis as analogous to the nadir and zenith, and they believe that after death, the wanagi travel along the Milky Way to the south, and when they arrive, they return to the north under the earth to be reborn (Powers, W. 1977:192; Powers, M. 1986:69, 191).8 In some Lakota texts, it is Waziya, the Old Man, who determines whether people go on to the land of the dead or get sent to the underworld (Tyon in Walker 1980:123),9 or he is believed to bring

6 Stanley Vestal (1932:18) also writes about how Lakotas were able to find a herd in the winter by the “cloud of frozen breath floating above them,” and how bulls moved against the wind even in blizzards.
7 This story is also interesting because the gift the man receives is knowledge of a nearby mountain where flint is located. Battle Mountain, the famous flint quarry, is situated near many of the caves in the southeastern reaches of the Black Hills, including those at Wind Cave National Park. Flint is the stone used in making fire, one of the elemental forces in the creation of life.
8 The Cheyennes have similar beliefs (Moore, J. 1974:145).
9 In some accounts, To Win [Blue Woman] plays this role (Goodman 1992:38-39). Curiously, Red Rabbit (in Walker 1980:126) talks about the tipi of Waziya being located in the sky. This confirms, once again, the dual placement of many spiritual figures in sky and earth spaces.
messages from people who have died and gone to the spirit land. Red Rabbit told Walker (1980:127) how Waziya is the one who admits people to the spirit world from his sky position:

The manes of the wanagi pass by his tipi when they travel to the spirit world. He talks with them and they tell him what they know. If they are worthy he permits them to pass on. The trail of the tipi of Woziya is high in the sky, and he keeps it covered with ice so that it is hard to travel. When one dies, his shadow must rest and so people must feed it. Beyond the home of Woziya it is never cold and never hot. There is plenty there.

Holes on the earth are often connected to those in the sky and are understood as places where the forces of the universe converge at a single powerful point, creating the dynamics and energy that brings life within the circle or cycle of creation (Goodman 1992:17-19). In Lakota traditions, as previously described, there is a hole in the sky in the center of the Big Dipper where souls pass through and are given direction for their journey south along the path of the Milky Way (Goodman 1992:38). On earth, white buffalo robes, once displayed at spirit keeping ceremonies, were placed in holes or caves to the north, as a gift anticipating the soul’s entrance into a parallel hole in the sky (Curtis 1907-30:3:110). Again, after traveling to the spirit world in the south, the soul eventually makes its way north to the underworld where it is reborn and emerges in a materialized form through caves on the earth’s surface. The Cheyennes are reported to have buried their dead in caves, crevices in rocks, or holes in the ground which they covered with stone (Curtis 1907-30:6:158; Grinnell 1972:2:163). This was also an older practice among the Lakotas as well (Bordeaux 1929:161-162; Hassrick 1964:296-297). Like wanagi, bison returned to and emerged from the north and the subterranean world in order to be reborn. The sun also travels to the underworld. Throughout North America, when night arrives on the earth’s surface the Sun travels to subterranean locations where he visits with his associates, the bison (Little Wound in Walker 1980:67; Hall 1997:133-134).

Since caves are conceptualized as life-force centers where the soul is released to be materialized through the breath of life, it is not surprising that many tribes believe that the first humans emerged from a cave. The Cheyennes attributed their own origins to a cave located in a distant land to the north where the country was barren and provided little more than rabbits for the people’s survival (Grinnell 1972:1:4-5). They also attribute rebirth and regeneration to caves, as revealed in various Sweet Medicine and Stands on the Ground stories, including one located in the southern Black Hills (Schlesier 1987:9, 79-80). This is true for the Lakotas as well, whose own origin story is linked to Wind Cave.

No matter how caves are understood and described in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, they are generally linked to breath, bison, winter, the North Wind and the related themes of immortality, rebirth, and the continuation of life through death. They are also linked to sites where sacred knowledge is revealed in visionary experiences, although typically the cave where this happens is located inside a mountain or hill (Haflen and Haflen 1956:268-272; Parkman in Feltsgog 1969:156-157; LaPointe 1976:79-80; Grinnell 1972:1:202, 2:136, 285, 340, 368-369; Bucko 1999:172-173, 184-185). Again, sites of this order represent a powerful meeting place and juxtaposition between earth and sky spaces. These are what Vine Deloria, Jr. and Richard Stoffle

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10 Although there are detailed descriptions of Lakota spirit-keeping ceremonies and other funeral practices, there is little about their specific manner of laying the deceased to rest other than scaffold burials (Densmore 1918:77-84; Curtis 1907-30:3:99-110; Hassrick 1964:293-298). William Bordeaux (1929:161-162), however, indicates that in earlier times the Lakotas dug a cave in a cliff or bank to bury their dead. He wrote that this kind of burial was called “Mooy-Oki-Ti, [living in a cave]. Rich Two Dogs (in Parlow 1983a:6) mentions that his grandfather told him that he had a sister who was buried in the vicinity of Wind Cave.

11 In Cheyenne traditions, the semi-cardinal direction, the Southeast, is widely associated with the Sun.
(1998:12) identify as sacred portals, “where it is possible to pass from one universe to another.” According to them, the Lakotas believe that several of these places exist in the Black Hills.

3. Springs, Rivers, and Lakes

Places of water are commonly identified as sacred locales. In the Black Hills, the lake at Bear Butte is one of these (Grinnell 1926:244-247; McAllister 1965). As described in Chapter Nine, large bodies of water, rivers and lakes, are associated in L/Dakota beliefs with a distinct class of spiritual beings, often envisioned as giant snakes or large lizards with horns (Dorsey, J. 1894: 438-440). In Cheyenne traditions, these water spirits and their underwater “people” are also known to guard the buffalo and to control their appearance and disappearance on earth (Grinnell 1972:2:97). The fossilized remains of various prehistoric animals are widely connected to these water figures in Lakota and Cheyenne thought, and the places where they are found are often revered.

Of greater importance to the area around Wind Cave National Park are springs. Springs are highly regarded by the Cheyennes and Lakotas wherever they are located, not only because they are often sources of fresh water, but also because they are passageways between the underworld and the earth’s surface (Moore, J. 1974:164; Standing Bear 1978:150). In some Cheyenne stories, springs, like caves, were locations where bison and other game came to the earth’s surface from their subterranean homes (Grinnell 1972:2:261). The Lakotas called springs wiwila [little life] (Buechel 1970:591; Standing Bear 1978:150) and mni e’api [water trap] or mniowe [a fountain of water] (Buechel 1970 338), while the Cheyennes knew them as hohame or emeanoexz [referring to the jumping like action of the water] (Petter 1913-15:499, 1004).12 Pete Catches (in Parlow 1983a:2; in Gonzalez 1996:67) talked about the Hot Springs area as the embodiment of another sacred presence, the spirit of the water, who came to the Hills at the time of creation.

Springs are often associated with many of the same ideas that surround caves. Like caves, they are understood as a wind, life-force center where the soul is released to be reborn in a material form. Among the Lakotas13 and other tribal nations in the plains region, springs are associated metaphorically with an infant’s fontanel, the spot where it is believed that the soul enters the body just before birth. Just as the fontanel was a center, the point where the lines of the skull connected, so springs and caves were seen as connecting points for important transformative processes (Hall 1997:99-101).

Springs are also linked to diminutive beings that dwell near rocky outcroppings or underneath the ground. Little People are known to harm those who carelessly cross their paths by shooting them with tiny arrows, but they are also known to help people if approached with proper respect (Grinnell 1971:2:126; LaPointe 1976:45-46; Tyon in Walker 1980:170-171). In Lakota beliefs, these diminutive spirits also play a role in the appearance of game animals and in the productivity and potency of plants, and they are commonly associated with the Hot Springs-Wind Cave area (LaPointe 1976:45,84). The connection of Little People to mountains, rocky outcroppings, caves, and springs is also common among other tribes known to have frequented the Black Hills in the early historic period, including the Arapahos (Dorsey and Kroeber 1903: 121-125; Anderson, R. 1956; Anderson, J. 2001:49; the Poncas (Howard 1965a:18), Kiowas (Mooney 1979:239), and the Crows (Grinnell 1922:306; Frey 1987:174; Nabakov and Loendorf 1994:93-95; McCleary 1997: 45-47).

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12 A waterfall was called zeanhoneo map [Falling water] in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:1097) and Mniiwohaha in Lakota (Buechel 1970:339).

13 Pe’wiwila is the word for an infant’s fontanel in Lakota (Buechel 1970:442).
Another spiritual figure associated with springs, caves, and rocky outcroppings in Lakota traditions is the Double-Woman, Winyan Nupapika (Sundstrom, L. 2002:110). One Lakota story associates this figure with the Hot Springs region (Herman in One Feather 1974:149). Figures representing her are also found on the walls of the canyon gateways to the Black Hills. Some are also situated near caves, including Ludlow Cave in the Cave Hills of northwestern South Dakota and Medicine Creek Cave on the northwestern side of the Black Hills (Sundstrom, L. 2002:110-111). These may have been sites where Lakota women fasted and sought visions in early historic times (Sundstrom, L. 2002:100-109).

4. Canyons, Rock Outcroppings, and Rock Art

Other unusual topographic features, including unique bluffs, boulders, rock outcroppings or rocky overhangs, ledges, and canyons, may also be identified as sacred places. These seem to be associated with any of a variety of figures, and there appears to be no specific cast of spiritual beings that are more or less reported at these places. Canyons, bluffs, or rock outcroppings of special significance include those with petroglyphs and pictographs, ones with distinctive shapes, those which mark dramatic transitional zones between different environments, or passageways associated with the transhumance movement of animals (Sundstrom, L. 1990). Canyons, for example, often evoke a sense of liminality because they are betwixt and between spaces, connecting and simultaneously separating one kind of world from another. Generally, their meaning does not stand alone but is derived from the landscapes they border and connect. Often, they are associated with special places that certain animals and plants frequent (Deloria, V. Jr. and Stoffle 1998:14-15). This is true for a number of places in the Black Hills, notably, the Buffalo Gap, Red and Craven canyons, and French Creek (Sundstrom, L. 1990:287-299). The Buffalo Gap is particularly significant because of its V-shape, and the fact that one of its side canyons contains a natural arch. The depression known as the Race Track (or Red Valley) can also be included here because it is widely recognized as an unusual topographic feature in the Black Hills (see stories in Chapter Fourteen), one that forms a circle or hoop, which is widely regarded as sacred in Lakota and Cheyenne beliefs, and one that is mirrored in a star constellation (Goodman 1992:7).

Red, Craven, and Whoop-Up Canyons are highly significant because of their petroglyphs and pictographs, some of which are believed to convey messages about the future, communications that spirits reveal to those who know how to interpret their symbols (Catches in Parlow 1983a:3; Eagle Hunter in Parlow 1983a:13; Red Owl in Parlow 1983a:21; Sundstrom, L. 1990; Deloria, V. Jr. and Stoffle 1998:16; Good Eagle in Little Eagle 2000:212-213). French Creek also has rock art, some of which has clear connections to the Lakotas in historic and possibly even protohistoric times (Sundstrom, L. 2002). Like the Lakotas, the Cheyennes respect any stone with petroglyphs and pictographs (Moore, J. 1974:171, 175). The culture resource officers we interviewed from both tribes indicated that any rock art found in Wind Cave National Park needs protection (Albers and Kittleson 2002).

B. The Black Hills and Their Landforms

Although many different landforms have long held sacred value to America’s tribal nations, little was known or written about them in published sources. Considering the plains region as a whole, Douglas Parks and Waldo Wedel (1985:167) write:

The ethnographic and historical literature of the plains region contains only sporadic, frequently vague, references to geographical sites considered sacred to Indian groups. Whether the lack of specific discussion represents fortuitous omission by recorders of Indian
culture or whether it suggests that for many tribes there simply were few sites that were so perceived is not entirely clear. But the number of references to sacred places scattered throughout the literature is sufficient to attest to their undoubted existence for all tribes and to suggest their fundamental importance as well.

With only a few exceptions, ethnographers paid little attention to the geography of tribal life. This was true not only for places that had religious significance, but also for locations commonly used in the procurement of food and other resources. Even the routes local groups customarily traveled and the sites they typically used to camp were often unmarked. Indeed, a scholarly interest in tribal geography has emerged only within the past few decades, and those who pursue this interest have had to draw on a wide variety of sources from historic documents to contemporary oral traditions to reconstruct and map these landscapes.

In the case of the Black Hills, as noted in previous chapters, historic and ethnographic source materials often lack specificity when it comes to mapping the locations of tribal settlements, sites for subsistence, or routes of travel in and around the Hills. Not surprisingly, and with few exceptions, details are also lacking for places known to have historic and/or contemporary spiritual significance. Nevertheless, a general sense, and in some cases a very specific appreciation, of the area’s importance and the meaning of its various sites can be understood in terms of a generic understanding of the land forms that make up its total landscape.

One can argue that the Black Hills are viewed as spiritually significant to the Lakotas and Cheyennes because they contain land forms that connect all planes of the universe from the lofty heights of their mountain tops to the deepest depths of their immense underground caverns. The Hills contain a multitude of caves, springs, unusual rock outcroppings, and distinctive high elevation prairies and meadows. They are also surrounded by a unique depression, the Red Valley, which nearly encircles the Hills and separates the interior limestone plateau from the outer sandstone Hogback. This formation, also known as the Race Track, is accessed through a number of different and unusual gateways, including the Buffalo Gap and Red Canyon. Finally, the two branches of a major waterway, the Cheyenne River, nearly surround them. Given the special character and diversity of their geophysical forms, many of which conform to tribal ideas about life-force centers, it is easy to imagine how the Black Hills serves as an hierophany, a place that metaphorically represents the entire cosmos. The Hills and their outlier formations not only contain the totality of elements and forces that make up Cheyenne and Lakota universes, but they do so while encompassing all tiers of the cosmos in every direction (Brown Hat in Mallery 1893: 289-290; Catches in Parlow 1983a:82-83; Catches in Gonzalez 1996:67). Like the sacred landscapes of many other tribal nations, which constitute an “integrated system of locations” (Kelly and Francis 1994:96), the Black Hills can be seen as representing for the Lakotas and Cheyennes an ordered and integrated group of landforms that, in part, derive their significance and meaning from their relationship to each other. As will be argued in the following chapters, the Black Hills form a unified landscape whose various sites are linked together in a variety of tribal narratives and ceremonial cycles.

While landforms in the Black Hills are tied to each other, they also express unique identities that reflect the distinctive characteristics of the spiritual potentialities with which they are associated. Different landforms carry different stories of extraordinary happenings that unfolded in myth time and of mysterious experiences that took place within historic memory. Some of these occurrences led to the origin of important forms of knowledge and practice, which not only

14 This idea has already been skillfully developed in Kari Forbes-Boyte’s writings (1996, 1999) on Bear Butte.
explain how the universe came to be, but also how humanity plays a role in its continuance and renewal. Some sacred places in the Black Hills have become the focus of intense ceremonial observance. As Kari Forbes-Boyte (1999:23-24) writes in relation to Bear Butte:

The Lakotas view the entire world as sacred; however, certain locales have become especially holy because of the activities that transpire there. The rituals, to an extent, continue to feed the power of the place. The spirits continue to contact the individual at the site and the Great Spirit continues to respond to prayers offered at Bear Butte.

Others are not associated with an elaborate or recurring pattern of ritual use, however. Only certain people approach them to carry on specific religious functions, or they come when they are spiritually prepared and called upon to do so. The prairie areas of the central Black Hills, which the Lakotas call Pe Sla, appear to be of this order. Finally, there are probably many places (not recorded in the literature) that receive little, if any, ceremonial attention and are largely left alone. These sites are avoided not because they are any less holy but out of a deep regard and respect for what spiritually resides there. Not uncommonly, the avoidance rests on the belief that ordinary people neither have the knowledge nor the spiritual qualifications to approach them in a correct manner. The place can be dangerous when people lack an awareness of how to properly conduct themselves in its presence.

It should also be said that places in the Black Hills derive significance not simply from the spiritual manifestations connected with their geophysical forms, but from the other living beings that reside there and make up their landscapes. As mentioned in other contexts, there is a synergistic connection between the spiritual potentialities expressed in landforms and the particular species of animals, varieties of plants, and classes of minerals who dwell in their reaches. In Lakota perspectives, for example, Harney Peak evokes a spiritual persona different from Wind Cave and its environs, which include the Hot Springs, the Race Track, and the Buffalo Gap. Together, all of the sites in and around the Black Hills form a totality: they are the gathering place of people, animals, plants, and minerals from all points of the compass. The incredible diversity of the Hills’ living forms makes it a special place for the Lakotas and Cheyennes, a location where the divine continues to be revealed through all of its myriad and mysterious manifestations.

II. SACRED COMMUNICATION AND OBSERVANCE

In Lakota and Cheyenne cultures, sacred places require an understanding of how to approach them in order that they might reveal and manifest their spiritual presence. Entering into relations with the sacred is created in many different ways, involving personal as well as communal forms of observance. In either case, forming such relations usually takes place in the company of intercessors who possess special knowledge and talents enabling them to bring about the manifestation of the sacred in human contexts. This section gives attention, albeit very briefly, to the language, people, and observances that make up Cheyenne and Lakota religious practice. There is an immense literature on this subject written by ethnographers and scholars in other disciplines that can only be highlighted here.

On the Lakotas, there are the early and important writings of James Walker (1917, 1980, 1983) and Francis Densmore (1918), which include the verbatim texts of their Lakota advisors. Since the 1970s, many writings have summarized this early work and also added new details.

In the case of the Cheyennes, George Dorsey (1905) and George Bird Grinnell (1910, 1914, 1919, 1972) wrote some of the major early works on religious practice, and more recently, Robert Anderson, R. (1956), Father Peter Powell (1969), Karl Schlesier (1987), and John Moore (1974, 1996) have written extensively on this subject too. There is also a literature on this topic from a Cheyenne perspective (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967; Ant et al. in Leman 1987; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988; Red Hat in Schukies 1993).

A. Sacred Language

Making a connection with that which is sacred always demands a basic sense of reverence and respect in order to invoke its powers and participate in some form of life renewal. It requires knowledge of proper forms of communication as expressed in words, music, dance, and art. Only language is described here, but many of the distinctions that apply in this mode communication also cover other forms of expression.

Spirituality, the act or sense of being spiritual, comes closest to the Lakota word wakan’la, which means to worship or to reckon something as holy (Buechel 1970:526). Another term, wowicala, refers to a petition, a consideration, or intention for invoking assistance in regards to spiritual matters (Powers, W. 1986:106-107). In the language and everyday life of the common people, the Ikce, there are a host of other words that express the awe, respect, and reverence customarily needed when beholding and experiencing Taku Wakan, that which is sacred. Oho’la and ok’niha both signify an act of respect, worship, or honor (Buechel 1970:374, 390). Ahokipa is a another verb that designates the act of taking care of, valuing, or respecting something (Ibid:62), while cante-eluyza expresses esteem, the process of having or holding something in one’s heart (Ibid:134), and yuo’nihan entails treating something with special attention (Ibid:646).

In contrast to the language typically used in everyday discourse about spiritual matters, there are two other forms of speech in the Lakota language. According to Charlotte Black Elk (1986b: 192) tobibob is a formal speech confined to religious settings and certain formal governmental contexts, and hanboglaia is a liturgical and sacred form of communication. The latter is associated with the telling of visions and dreams (Buechel 1970:165). It is the speech that medicine men and women employ in addressing the spirit world; it involves speech modifications of a morphological, lexical, and syntactic nature as well as unique metaphorical allusions that appear only in sacred contexts. As examples, the name of the South Wind, Wihoyiyanpa is abbreviated to Yanpa in sacred texts, the expression oyate wakan [sacred nation] is inverted to wakan oyate, or a word is metaphoric as when cante [heart] is used to connote a sacred center. It is also associated with unique forms of expression that communicate abstract philosophical ideas about the universe, its creation, its unfolding, and its purpose (Powers, W. 1986:11-41; Amiotte 1989b).

The Cheyennes make similar distinctions, using certain names only to address the maiyun in sacred ceremonies (Schlesier 1987:8). Originally, shamans formed an esoteric, closed group, the Ononeovataneo, who used language hidden to outsiders (Schlesier 1987:14). The word ma’heo-
netano describes the distinctive, non-ordinary way of thinking that is associated with the spiritual and the sacred, and one that is connected to the work of shamans and other religionists (Rock-roads in Leman 1987:210-212; Leman 1987:415).

B. Tribal Religionists

All Lakota and Cheyenne people can approach the sacred. However, some are more gifted at doing so, either because they experience extraordinary spiritual encounters and/or they learn through apprenticeship the knowledge and practice necessary to enter into relationships with the spirit world. Generally speaking, communication with this world is associated with gifted men and women who are able to properly address spirits through their knowledge of special words, songs, dances, and designs.

Historically, among the Cheyennes, spiritual intercessors served as vehicles or conduits through which sacred information and power flowed for the benefit of humankind (Schlesier 1987:18). The Cheyennes appear to have had three major groups of intercessors. One group, known as naetan or nae, received their spiritually derived talents from animal spirits, and they used these in the practice of doctoring, hunting, and warfare but without the assistance of the Maiyun. Another group, called zemaheonesso [mysterious ones], was granted their power by specific Maiyun (Schlesier 1987:14). These shamanic intercessors were further divided into two categories, according to whether the Maiyun they served were of the sky or the earth. The shamans affiliated with the sky included the Hemaneli [half man, half woman] and Hohnuhka, or Contraries, who received their powers from Nonoma, the Thunder (Schlesier 1987:14-15). Those connected to the earth included the shamans who held powers to influence game and to practice certain kinds of healing associated with the earth’s fauna and flora (Anderson, R. 1956 1956; Schlesier 1987:16; Powell 2002a, 2002b). The last group was the Maheonhetaneo, men and women who served the Maiyun and contacted them during the Cheyennes’ major religious observances. These people functioned more as priests or as “theologists” in conducting the tribe’s major ceremonies, the Oxheheom [Sun Dance] and Massuam [Animal Dance], and in caring for the tribe’s two sacred covenants, Mashoet [the Sacred Arrows] and Esevone [the Sacred Hat]. The Maheonhetaneo held a sacred trust that obligated them to make many sacrifices on behalf of the Maheyuno and Maiyun they served and to conduct themselves among the people with the highest degree of circumspection (Moore, J. 1974a:258-260; Schlesier 1987:14-16).

Among the Lakotas, people who are adept at interceding with the spirit world are known as wicasa wakan or winyan wakan [holy men or holy women] (Powers, W. 1986:181; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:126-141; Feraca 1998:45). These people are gifted with special talents, which they receive in dreams or visions and through recurring relations with their spiritual helpers. Most of these men and women do not practice alone; they enter into longtime apprenticeships with experienced holy people to learn the specialized knowledge associated with the spiritual talents they receive. According to William Powers (1986:181, 190), these holy people were historically divided into several different classes, which include wakan kaga [people who imitate something sacred], wapiyupi [people who make something anew], and wicahmunga [wizards] and wimunga [witches] about whom little has been written in the literature (Powers, W. 1986:188; Feraca 1998:47). Those who heal and renew life through the use of plants with or without the intervention of spirit helpers are known as pejuta wicasa or winyan [herb men or women] (Powers 1986:182-183; Lewis T. 1990:111-112, 124-139; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:28, 31-33; Feraca 1998:46, 71-80).

The wakan kaga are differentiated by the nature of their dreams and spiritual partners (Powers, W. 1977:56-67; 1986:180,183-188). The tatanka kaga or tatanka inhanblayaci, for
example, are bison imitators or bison dreamers. They are people who have been given “permission” to imitate the buffalo and conduct performances that, in effect, call forth the bison’s spiritual potentialities. Heyoka kaga are people sought out by the Thunders and inspired to perform on their behalf. Historically, men and women with similar dream experiences, whether of bison, elk, bear, wolves, or badgers, formed loose associations where they enacted their shared spiritual strengths. Depending on the nature of their spiritual prowess, holy people applied their talents in specific ways. Some were able to heal, while others were skilled at hunting and attracting the animals they imitated. Some were endowed with the knowledge to make protective medicines to keep themselves and others from danger and misfortune (Wissler 1912:81-99; Powers, W. 1977:57-59, 1986:182).

People who engage in healing, the wapiyapi, are also distinguished by the source of their spiritual powers. A tatanka wapiye [buffalo healer], for example, is spiritually partnered with bison\(^{15}\) and able to make medicines associated with this animal (Powers, W. 1986:183; Lewis, T. 1990:93, 96-98, 100-105; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:27-31). Closely related to the wapiye and part of the same class are the Yuwipi wicasa, whose healing roles and performances, according to William Powers (1986:183; Lewis, T. 1990:71-105), best conform with the idea of a shaman. Historically, some of the most revered wapiyapi had multiple spirit partners, and in modern times, many of the most admired Yuwipi serve as a vehicle for many different spirits (Powers, W. 1986:126). Frank Fools Crow (in Mails 1991:30-45) describes Yuwipi like himself as “hollow bones,” people who are able to “channel” or serve as a conduit of power from the spirit world: he emphasizes here that wicasa wakan do not inherently possess power.

Today, many of the specialized forms of spiritual intercession that were once common in Lakota communities have disappeared or have been reworked and combined with the spiritual performances of Yuwipi. Even though these healers were prohibited from practicing their talents by the federal government in the early reservation era (Densmore 1918:245), they are now the most prevalent class of wapiyapi among the Lakotas (Densmore 1918:204-244; Kemnitzer 1970; Powers W. 1982; Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990; Lewis, T. 1990:90-93, 108, 183; Feraca 1998:53). Yuwipi wapiyapi not only have partnerships with their original patron, Inyan [Stone], but they also have relations with a host of other spirits whose potentialities, sicun, are embodied in stones and other objects (Densmore 1918:204-273; Kemnitzer 1970, 1976; Powers, W. 1982:11-15; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:96; Feraca 1998:30-44). From Fools Crow’s various discussions (in Mails 1972:49-52, 93-94, 186; Lewis, T. 1990:72-80) on these matters, Lakota Yuwipi appear to differ from other wapiyapi, not so much by the character of their spiritual benefactors but in the ways in which they handle and transmit the ton or power of these spirits. The hallmark of the Yuwipi is their ability to transmute and contain spiritual power through the workings of the sicun (described earlier in Chapter Nine). There is a rich published literature on Yuwipi and the ceremonies they perform. The reader is advised to consult these sources for further details (Densmore 1918:204-244; Kemnitzer 1970; Fools Crow in Mails 1972; Powers W. 1982; Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990; Lewis, T. 1990:90-93; Feraca 1998; Holy Bull in Keeney 1999).

Beyond their ability to heal and do other mysterious works, a few of the most talented holy men and women, with a broad and powerful base of knowledge, also perform major ceremonies, such as the Pte San Lowanpi (White Buffalo Cow Sing), Hunkapi (Making Relatives), and the Wiwinyan wacipi (Sun Dance), where the sacred is invoked on behalf of an entire community. Among the Lakotas, there does not appear to be a conventionalized set of distinctions that formally separate the religious intercessors for public observances from other spiritually gifted people,

\(^{15}\) Other animals, as described in Chapter Nine and Appendix A, are associated with other specialized forms of healing (Powers, W. 1986:180).
as exists among the Cheyennes. The most accomplished intercessors are singled out for their public roles by the nature and degree of their spiritual talents, their knowledge, and the respectful ways they conduct their lives (DeMallie 1984:102n3; Powers, M. 1986:126; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:17-35; Feraca 1998:27).

C. Spiritual Observances

In the Lakota and Cheyenne scheme of things, spirituality is not simply an attitude but a respectful relationship that binds people to the spirit world through complex reciprocal exchanges. The reciprocity that exists between people and the spiritual beings that make up the universe of the Lakota and Cheyenne is often expressed, as described in previous chapters, through the metaphorical use of kinship terminology (Moore, J. 1996:245-249; DeMallie 1984:81-82; 1987:30-31).

Among Cheyennes, power or energy flows from Ma’heo to human beings through several different channels. It first comes through the highest spirits, the mayiun, and from them to lesser spirits who represent different species of natural phenomena. According to John Moore (1996:246), “birds and animals are said to receive their power in the same manner as human beings, through dancing, singing, eating certain herbs, and painting themselves.” Cheyennes mimicked the actions, sounds, and colors of animals in their own ceremonies in order to replicate the spiritual potentialities of different species. For this imitation to work, however, the Cheyennes are expected to gain permission from the animals: this usually takes place through reciprocal partnerships formed in dreams and visions (Schlesier 1987:13,15).

Similarly, Lakota see themselves as vehicles through which powers coming from the spirits can be generated and imitated [kagapi] or transmuted to stones and other objects as in the work of the Yuwipi (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:235-238; Fools Crow in Mails 1991:46-60). These transformative processes take the form of dance, song, prayer, and art based on the inspiration and instructions received from the various spirit potentialities that represent Wakan Tanka (Powers, W. 1977:56-60,1986:183-188; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:232-235, 240, 242-244; DeMallie 1987:34; Lewis, T. 1990:71-150; Fools Crow in Mails 1991:30-168; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:156-167). Beyond their partnerships with particular spirits, the Lakotas sought in all of their rituals to get in touch with fundamental life-processes at the core of creation (Amiotte 1989a). To engage the spiritual and to bring its gifts into the realm of human activity took place in many different ways.

1. Petitioning the Sacred

All religious observances involve, at their heart, prayers and offerings to the sacred. These may be as simple as the placement of tobacco and the recitation of a prayer when a plant is taken for food or medicine. In these simple petitions, offerings of value -- tobacco, stones, coins, or beads -- are not necessarily visible at the locations where they are left. Often, these gifts are placed at a spot discreetly and hidden from view, or like tobacco, they are perishable. Prayers and offerings can be made anywhere and anytime a person deems it appropriate to do so to demonstrate their respect to specific spirits or Ma’heo and Wakan Tanka in general.

Among the Lakotas, some of the more visible offerings, such as cloth banners, waumyapi, or tobacco ties, canli wapahta, small pieces of red cloth containing tobacco and strung together, are associated with certain forms of religious practice (Kemnitzer 1970:68-72; Powers, W. 1982:14; Feraca 1998:15, 36, 53); they are not ubiquitous. They are not commonly used by the Cheyennes,
and even among the Lakotas, they represent only two of the ways in which offerings are made (Feraca 1998:72-75). The absence of cloth banners or tobacco ties does not mean, a priori, that an area is not being used spiritually, as Beverly Chirinos (1992:96-98) assumed in her assessment of Lakota relations to Inyan Kara Mountain. While the use of tobacco ties is very common at Bear Butte and the Medicine Wheel in the Big Horns, it is not always necessary or even appropriate at other locations or under other circumstances. What is offered and how it is offered depends in large part on the spiritual presence associated with a place and also the cultural background of the petitioner. Indeed, according to one of Stephen Feraca’s Oglala consultants, Mrs. Fast Horse, who was a pejuta winyan [a female herbalist], it is a good sign when the offerings are blown away or disappear because it means they’ve been taken by the spirits (Feraca 1998:76-77).

At Wind Cave National Park, the park’s staff has sighted only a few tobacco ties over the past decade (Terry 1999, personal communication). This should not imply that offerings are not placed here with any frequency or regularity; it only suggests that a certain type of offering is not widely seen. Wind Cave is connected to things of the earth, stone, and the underworld. It is the home of the bison, and offerings to their spirits are often perishable, placed on the earth’s surface, and/or buried in the ground. This appears to be the case not only with some of the offerings given to the sacred tree at the Sun Dance, but also with the placement of white buffalo skins at the completion of a Spirit Keeping ceremony (Curtis 1907:30:3:110; Densmore 1918:118; Sword in Deloria 1929:398). Indeed, Wallace Black suggests as much when he writes about how the prayer ties from a Yuwipi are wrapped up and buried. As he writes:

Then you take this bundle up to a mountain or hill. You find a virgin spot where there are no tracks, where there’s a lot of bushes or tall grasses. You tuck it in there or put it in the crouch of a tree or lift a rock and put it underneath.

When these offerings are visible, they need to be left alone. Some of the tribal cultural officers with whom we spoke emphasized the need to advise tourists at the park not to touch and handle these offerings (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

Petitions to the spirit world are also an integral part of the elaborate sequence of offerings and prayers that make up major ceremonial observances such as the Lakota’s Hunkapi [Making Relatives] or the Cheyennes’ Massaum [Animal Dance]. Throughout the entire ceremonial realm of the Lakotas and Cheyennes, the making of an altar and ceremonial fire on virgin ground (cleared of all vegetation) and the smoking of a pipe are fundamental features of most prayerful observances (Walker 1917:129-130; New Holy 1997:139-142). The pipe is the vehicle through which tobacco is transformed into the smoke, which carries the prayers of the people to their creator, Wakan Tanka or Ma’heo, and to all of the spirits who signify their presence in the world (Lame Deer and Erdoes 1978:2). Smoking a pipe that is lit from a specially built altar and ceremonial fire is absolutely indispensable in communicating with the spirit world. Pipe offerings may be made on their own, but they are always incorporated into ceremonies where they are a necessary and integral part of all religious observances (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:93; Powell 1969:14, 17, 291, 334, 402-403, 835, 855, 897, 900; Black Elk in Brown 1971:13-14 et seq.; Sword in Walker 1980:75-77; 87-90; Walker 1980:176-177, 219-221, 249-250, 260-261; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:34, 46, 48, 117-118, 223-234, 236-239, 240, 243-244, 334, 372-373; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:49-50; Moore, J. 1996:240, 246; Bucko 1999:204).

2. Preparing for the Sacred
Communicating with the sacred requires a cleansing of the mind and body in order to restore the life force, or “breath,” in preparation for receiving spiritual gifts. The purification lodge or sweatlodge is the most common vehicle for achieving this state of renewal. Among the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, these lodges are increasingly practiced as rites unto themselves and with considerable variation (Moore, J. 1996:234-237). Yet, they remain an indispensable part of the preparations behind all other ceremonial observances, including the Sun Dance, vision seeking, and Yuwipi (Grinnell 1919; Powell 1969:1:324, 328, 352, 2:492-493, 609-610, 854-855; Black Elk in Brown 1971:31-42; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:82-84 et seq.; Schlesier 1987:59-66, 79-80; Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990:67-86; Catches, Sr. and Catches 1990:77-91; Feraca 1998:32-35; Bucko 1999).

Among the Cheyennes, the sweatlodge is used for purification in many different contexts to prepare people to receive spiritual powers without being harmed (Schlesier 1987:62). Historically, it was part of the ceremonial observances used in “calling” game during communal hunts, in releasing the spirit of the deceased, in purifying a white buffalo skin, in healing of various kinds, in making warriors ready for battle, and in preparing people to participate in all sacred endeavors (Curtis 1907:6:117, 145; Grinnell 1919, 1972:1:272-273; Anderson, R. 1956; Powell 1969:1:324, 328, 352, 2:492-493, 609-610, 854-855; Schlesier 1987:59, 62, 64-66; Moore, J. 1996:234-237). The classic sweatlodes, either the emaom [concealed lodge] or vonhaom [to lose by heat lodge] of the Cheyennes originate with the bison, and both are associated with the accounts of Ehyophstah, the Yellow Haired Woman, Sweet Medicine, and/or Stands on the Ground (Grinnell 1919; Anderson, R. 1956; Schlesier 1987:62, 64-66, 77-79). According to Edward Curtis (1907-30:6:117), the Cheyennes believed that the sweatlodge originated with the bison and that its structure represented the animal’s backbone. Another kind of sweatlodge is linked to conjuring, called nisimatozom or mxeem in Cheyenne, where spirits are called upon to assist in healing or to advise on weighty issues (Schlesier 1987:58-59). Today, sweatlodes are held for many different purposes from healing the sick to preparing for a convocation where weighty educational and political issues are deliberated. In general, any modern undertaking that requires some form of spiritual assistance, intervention, and renewal is likely to be accompanied by sweatlodge observances (Moore, J. 1996:234-237).

The same is true for the Lakotas. In the Lakota language, the word for a sweatlodge, is initipi [the lodge of breath]; the observance itself is called inipi or inikagapi, which means respectively “to live again” and “to make breath” (Medicine 1987:167; Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1980:61; Bucko 1999:123). The sweatlodge, often described as the ribs or womb of Maka Ina, brings the spiritual and physical together and mimics the process of conception and birth (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:48; Bucko 1999:63, 76, 85, 148-149, 197, 199, 210, 211). One of Raymond Bucko’s Lakota advisors told him:

The rocks go into the lodge, and we enter into ući makȟá’s belly. In the womb of the mother, you can ask the father for anything. The breath of the rocks allows us to leave in there the old and come out with the new. This is the place of connection between heaven and earth; this connects us to makȟá and tobôb, the sixteen spirits. We don’t know their names. The lodge is about relationship: commerce and development; our duties as mothers and fathers; relationship to the stars and burial places—you have a place to go when you die. We also need to understand the star formations, so that we know where we need to go. My grandmother says they used to go to the Black Hills to read the prophecy walls, so that we will know what will happen that year (Bucko 1999:199).

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16 This comes closest to the sweatlodes associated with Yuwipi among the Lakotas.
Among the Lakotas, the Inipi is used to strengthen and renew a person in the course of healing or in preparation for ceremonies, communal hunts, and warfare, and its many functions and purposes are described in great detail by Raymond Bucko (1999) and others (Powers, W. 1977:52; Black Elk in Brown 1971:31-43; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:82-84 et seq.; Medicine 1987:16; Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990:87-86; Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990:67-86; Catches, Sr. and Catches 1990:77-91; Feraca 1998:32-35; Bucko 1999:123).

Sweatlodges or “sweats,” as they are often referred to in English, are one of the spiritual observances Lakotas have conducted at Wind Cave National Park (Terry 1999, personal communication; Albers and Kittelson 2002). The remains of some of the lodges are still evident on park properties (South Dakota Archaeological Research Center, CU-900). There are a number of different reasons why the park might be chosen to hold sweatlodge observances, and many of these are revealed in more depth through the materials presented in Chapter Fifteen. But a few points can be made here. First, Wind Cave and caves in general are intimately associated with the relationships between bison, the breath of life, renewal, and rebirth (see discussion in Part II of this chapter). The sweatlodge structure, often described as the backbone, ribs, or womb of Maka Ina [Mother Earth], brings the spiritual and physical together and mimics the process which creates the breath of life, widely understood by both the Cheyennes and the Lakotas as originating in caves (Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990:70; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:48; Bucko 1999:76, 85, 148-149). Wallace Black Elk (and Lyon 1990:70) points out that sweatlodges are “homes to the ‘stone people’ that contain all the elements that form the human structure,” including the spark, which is the little soul or nagila. This connection is also made explicit, according to Raymond Bucko (1999:148-149), in accounts of the birth of the culture hero Blood Clot Boy, who is born in a sweatlodge from a bison cow’s blood clot, which is given life when a badger pours water on the clot, causing steam to rise from the rocks and imparting ni [breath] to the boy, and it is also apparent in various Stone Boy stories (Bucko 1999:150-154).

Like the sweatlodge, Wind Cave and other caves in the Hills are understood to be birthing chambers where animals, particularly bison, undergo the process of materialization that is signified by the presence of ni or breath. The first Lakota man to emerge from Wind Cave, Tokahe, is associated with the introduction of the sweatlodge to humans as a means of treating illnesses caused by small water spirits, called mini watu (Walker 1983:375). The Cheyennes connect an unidentified cave in the southern Hills with the travels of their culture hero, Sweet Medicine, who performed a sweatlodge ceremony at this location and brought humans back to life (Schlesier 1987:79). George Bird Grinnell (1972:2:135-136) gives another account of the origin of a Cheyenne pipe ceremony used in healing that is also associated with a cave, although the specific location of this subterranean locale is unreported. Finally, Wawoslata (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:264-269; Buechel and Manhart 1998:452-463) told about a Yuwipi sweatlodge that was held at an unidentified location along the Race Track sometime in the nineteenth century.

3. Beholding the Sacred

The spirit world can reveal its presence to humans in many different ways. It may make its appearance in dreams or unusual events and visitations without being petitioned. Often people who are singled out for special spiritual callings are approached in this way. When someone has been spiritually “called” without solicitation, s/he seeks further encounters to gain the necessary knowledge in order to learn how to use their spiritual gifts. This typically takes place under the supervision of a spiritually experienced intercessor in the context of observances variously called “fasting,” “vision questing,” or “dream seeking.” Whether people have a prior spiritual “awakening” or not, there are conventional steps that need to be followed to reach an awareness of what their spiritual knowledge means for them. There is an extensive literature on this subject for the
4. Renewing the Sacred

The process of seeking spiritual awareness through visions and dreams can take many forms. Typically, it involves seeking an isolated location on some eminence where the landscape is visible in all four directions. Specially built pits or holes are prepared in the earth, often not dissimilar to those constructed for eagle trapping. Here the supplicant fasts, prays, makes offerings, and awaits a spiritual visitation. Once a spirit has made its presence and gifts known, the supplicant shares the experience with a mentor who interprets its meaning and instructs the person on what must be done to “honor” the knowledge. Spiritually gifted people commonly seek a dream on a recurring basis to renew old spiritual partnerships or gain new ones (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984; Fools Crow in Mails 1979; Feraca 1998:27).

In contrast to Bear Butte and Harney Peak, widely understood as locations to seek visions, there is little evidence in the published literature, other than a remark by James LaPointe (1976:79-80) that identifies or even suggests that Wind Cave National Park is a place where Lakotas typically go to fast, pray, and seek visions. As mentioned before, there are references to caves being sites for visionary experiences, but it is more typical for Lakotas and Cheyennes to use high elevation, conical shaped buttes or mountain peaks with an unobstructed view in four directions for this purpose. Some of the higher elevation sites in the area that might meet this specification, including Battle Mountain to the south and Mount Coolidge to the north, are outside the boundaries of the park. Inside the park, Rankin Ridge and Elk Mountain may have been used for vision seeking, and both appear to conform to some of the conventional properties of preferred vision seeking sites. Today, however, these locations have undergone extensive development, and they appear to lack the solitude necessary for religious observances of this order. Nonetheless, several cultural preservation officers from different Cheyenne and Lakota tribes identified the general area of the park with prayer and fasting (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

Not all vision seekers search out the highest peaks for fasting and prayer, however. After all, Sitting Bull is reported to have had a life-defining vision near a spring now inundated by Sylvan Lake (Vestal 1932:73), and there are many historic and modern examples of visionary dreams taking place inside caves (Parkman in Feltskog 1969:156-157; Bucko 1999:172-173, 184-185). In fact, Wind Cave is located on the side of a mountain (Elk Mountain to be exact) and this is significant because stories of visionary origin among Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos are commonly associated with caves inside mountains or buttes, locations that directly juxtapose earth and sky spaces.

4. Renewing the Sacred
Beyond the fundamental acts of praying, undergoing spiritual cleansing in a sweatlodge, fasting, and seeking dreams, there are many other ways in which the Lakotas and Cheyennes make contact with and renew that which is sacred.

a. Renewing Life for People

As described earlier, Lakota and Cheyenne spiritual intercessors enter into relationships with the sacred through their knowledge of symbols capable of evoking a particular spiritual presence. In doing this, they are able to perform different forms of healing (usually specific to the spiritual partners with whom they have a relationship), attract specific kinds of game (again specific to their spiritual partners), confer protection and ward off danger, and/or predict the outcome of future events. Individually and collectively, spiritually gifted men and women are able to advance the well-being of their people through innumerable acts of ritual observance that vary both within and across tribes. Some of this has already been described in the discussion on the characteristics of human encounters with spirit animals, and many of the specific details of these encounters are included in materials presented in Appendix A. A few points, by way of a summary, need to be made here as well.

The imitation of animal partners and their powers was performed in special ceremonial dances organized by the devotees of a particular spirit. Among the Lakotas, Heyoka [contrary], mato [bear], tatanka [bison], sunkamanitou [wolf], hehaka [elk], and winyan Nupapika [double woman] inhanblapi/kagapi [dreamers/imitators] formed loosely knit associations and held their own rituals on a recurring basis (Wissler 1912:81-99; Densmore 1918:284-310). Such performances were very common among the Lakotas in historic times, but since the late nineteenth century, these have largely disappeared, even though people still have spiritual partnerships with the Thunders and various animal spirits. These kinds of dreamers apparently formed dance associations among the Cheyennes as well (Hayden 1862:280-282; Anderson, R. 1956:93), but by the early twentieth century, their performances took place primarily within the context of the Mas-saum [Animal Dance] (Moore, J. 1996:237-238).

Of particular importance, given the association between bison and caves, are the performances of the Tatanka Ihanblapi [Bison Dreamers] in Lakota (Wissler 1912:91) and Isiwunhetániu [Buffalo Men] in Cheyenne (Anderson, R. 1956 1956:93). Among the Lakotas, these men often served as “buffalo callers,” and they were the ones who presided over communal bison hunts (Curtis 1907-30:3-63, 139; Densmore 1918:285; Hassrick 1964:144, 187, 239, 253, 310-311; Standing Bear 1978:141-142; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:7, 88-89, 240-241). They were strongly connected to healing and herbal medicine, and they served as spiritual intercessors for a number of major ceremonies. One well-known story entitled Tatanka kagapi kin [Making Buffalo] and told in Chapter Fifteen, took place inside the Buffalo Gap at Tatanka makalhpaya [The Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull] (Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978: 242-245); it describes a mysterious event associated with the transmogrification of a bison bull into a human. Among other things, this story reveals the seamless and fluid nature of spiritual connections between bison and humans, but it also demonstrates the power of certain animals and humans to reveal themselves in other forms.

Similarly, the Cheyennes depended upon Buffalo Men in “calling” the bison and in healing (Grinnell 1919; Anderson, R. 1956 1956:100-101; Powell 1969:1:324-327, 341, 343, 344, 388, 408; Grinnell 1972:1:196, 151; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:34; Schlesier 1987:15-16, 52-58). Many stories in Cheyenne traditions tell of the emergence of bison from springs and caves in association with their culture heroes, Motseyoef [Sweet Medicine] and Tomosivsi [Erect Horn/Stands on the Ground]. Most of the stories associated with Sweet Medicine are linked to a

Both of these culture heroes are linked to the introduction of sweatlodge ceremonies among the Cheyennes, but Stands on the Ground and the Sutaio division of the tribe are explicitly connected to the Buffalo Men and their lodge or ceremony (Grinnell 1919; Anderson, R. 1956 1956), which in turn is connected to the Buffalo Gap, the Great Race, and the first Sun Dance (Powell 1969:2:472-478). In the Buffalo Lodge, a man would dedicate a ceremony on behalf of a sick child or relative. Under the direction of an intercessor, he took the role of a bull; his wife, a cow; and his child, a yellow calf (Grinnell 1919:361). Much of the ritual associated with this paralleled sweatlodge practices in ceremonies linked to the Sacred Hat and the Massaum (Anderson, R. 1956:95, 98). In the original rite, a tipi was set up in the midst of a bison herd. A young virgin sat inside wrapped in a bison robe, and an intercessor walked towards the bison with a pipe singing a song that called the bison to him. When the buffalo approached, the hunters ran around the herd and drove them to a spot where they were killed. From the first animal killed, a piece of fat was extracted and given to the virgin who covered it with her robe (Ibid:100).

**b. Renewing Relationships**

Many of the ritual observances that spiritually gifted people led were held to renew different kinds of relationships either among the membership of a single tribe or across tribal boundaries. The Lakota *Pte San Lowanpi*18 and *Tapaw Wanka Yap* [Throwing of the Ball], for example, can both be seen as ceremonies that promote the fertility and fecundity of women, thereby renewing relations across generations (Walker 1917:141-151; Densmore 1918:63-67; Black Elk in Brown 1971:116-138; Powers, W. 1977:101-103; Powers, M. 1986:66-72). One story of the origin of this ceremony takes place in a cave (No Flesh in Walker 1980:193-194). The *Hunkapi* [Making Relatives] is an adoption ceremony, which takes place to cement ties between families, including those of different tribes (Walker 1917:122-140; Densmore 1918:68-76; Black Elk in Brown 1971:101-116; Powers, W. 1977:100-101; Thunder Tail in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:222-234 [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:384-403]). One story about its origin is also associated with a cave (Little Wound in Walker 1980:196) The *Wanagi Yuhapi* [Spirit Keeping Ceremony] serves to renew the cycle of life by embracing, then breaking, ties with the deceased to permit their safe passage to the spirit world (Densmore 1918:77-83; Black Elk in Brown 1971:10-30; Powers, W. 1977:93-95). As discussed previously, Lakotas were reported to bury the white buffalo skins used

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17 There are various interpretations of where the Black Mountain is located (Powell 1969:2:469n4). In some stories, it appears to designate the Black Hills not only because many of the stories connected with *Tomosotusi* end up being related to the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and the Sun Dance but also because the narrative of *Is'siwun* (The Sacred Hat) explicitly refers to “the beautiful river,” an expression often reserved for the Cheyenne River. Reverend Peter Powell (1969:2:469n4) indicates that some Cheyennes claim that the Sutaio’s Black Mountain refers to the Timber Mountains north of the Pipestone Quarry in Minnesota. The only possible Hills that meet this description are near present day Milbank, South Dakota. If the story was transported and replanted in the Black Hills, as many narratives seem to have been, then these might refer to the Sutaio’s “Black Mountain” as well. As Powell (1969:2:870-871) argues, there are significant differences between the Northern and Southern Cheyennes in the ways the stories of Erect Horns are told and the locations where they are purported to have taken place. Some of the stories appear to be located in different sorts of environments, suggesting that they were adapted to new landscapes as the Cheyennes migrated from areas east of the Missouri River to the Black Hills.

18 This ceremony goes by several different names including *Tatanka Lowanpi* [Bison Bull Sing], *Tona Ta Awi Cha Lowanpi* [They Sing Over Her Seclusion], and *Isnati Lowanpi* [Seclusion Sing]. *Isnati* refers to the ritual practice where women were secluded during their menstruation to protect themselves and others from the ton or powerful spiritual essence associated with this event.
in these ceremonies in caves (Curtis 1907-30:3:110; Densmore 1918:118). Many of the renewal ceremonies, which marked important life cycle transitions, were particularly important to the Lakotas, as they were the gift of Pte San Winyan, the White Buffalo Calf Woman (Black Elk in Brown 1971:3:9; Powers, M. 1986:42-52). Although many of these were no longer practiced by the middle of the twentieth century, they are now undergoing a revitalization and are conducted, albeit with some modification, by many contemporary Lakotas. While the Cheyennes also mark some of these transitions in ritual ways, they have not been emphasized and elaborated upon in the same way or to the same degree as they have been among the Lakotas (Moore, J. 1996:238-240).

In historic times, what both tribes shared were a series of ceremonial observances performed by men who were members of various soldier societies and who shared dreams of the animals that served as the guardians of these organizations (Wissler 1912:13-62; Densmore 1918:311-378; Grinnell 1972:2:48-86). Military sodalities built a sense of camaraderie and solidarity between men who fought together in battle, and many of the traditional ones fell into disuse in the early reservation era. Some, like Tokalas of the Lakotas, are now being revived. The origin site for this group is linked to the Black Hills, although not to the area around Wind Cave (Wissler 1912:72; Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:290; La Pointe 1976:54-55). The Plains Apaches also believe one of their military societies, the Manatidae, originated in the Black Hills, but the precise whereabouts is not documented in published sources (Schweinfurth 2002:60-66, 90, 150).

Women who belonged to war and/or quilling societies also performed shared rituals that renewed their ties in common endeavors (Wissler 1912:76, 79-80; Hasrick 1964:42-45; Grinnell 1972:1:159-167, 2:385-391; Powers, M. 1986:25-26, 73-74, 86-87, 137-139). As previously reported, the Cheyenne women’s quilling society is associated with the story of the Buffalo Wife that some Cheyenne connect to the Race Track and the Buffalo Gap (Grinnell 1972:2:385-391; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24; Powell 1969:2:472-478).

\textbf{c. Renewing the Nation}

Highly important to the Cheyennes were ceremonies that renewed their sacred tribal covenants, Mashoet [the Sacred Arrows] and Isuwan or Esevone [the Sacred Hat]. The Sacred Arrows, which stand for the well-being of the whole Cheyenne nation, is associated today with the Southern Cheyennes, while the Sacred Hat is connected to the Sutaio-Omisis divisions that make up the Northern Cheyennes. Elaborate rites of renewal are associated with these tribal covenants. The Sacred Arrow Ceremony was given to the Cheyenne people by the Maiyun through their prophet Motseyoef [Sweet Medicine] in a cave at Bear Butte (Dorsey, G. 1905:41-45; Powell 1969:2:43-46, 73-75, 89-90, 399-400). This ceremony, which serves to reunite and renew the Cheyennes as a people, takes place periodically in early summer, at which time the bundle containing the sacred arrows and other objects is opened and its contents displayed and propitiated while the story of Sweet Medicine is retold (Dorsey, G. 1905:1-12; Grinnell 1910; Powell 1969:2:481-610, 875-895; Moore, J. 1996:214-218). The Sacred Hat was brought to the tribe by Tomosivsi [Erect Horn/Stands on the Ground] from a spring or cave, depending on the particular story, at a place called Black Mountain, and it plays a significant role in various ceremonies connected with the bison, including the Sun Dance (Dorsey 1905:39-40, 46-49; Powell 1969:1:55-56, 283-285, 2:467-471, 807-808; Grinnell 1972:2:192, 197, 231, 285, 377, 344). The Sacred Hat is also propitiated and renewed in an elaborate ceremony, in which the story of Stands on the Ground is retold (Powell 1969:1:99-100, 105-107, 326-327; Grinnell 1972:2:344-345, 368-372, 380-381). The Lakotas’ sacred covenant is the White Buffalo Calf Pipe, which is periodically displayed and renewed for the well-being of the Lakota people (Densmore 1918:63-67; Black Elk in Brown 1971:3-9; Looking Horse 1987). The Pipe is
supposed to have been given to the Lakota people by *Pte San Winyan* (White Buffalo Calf Woman) at Bear Lodge Butte, commonly known as Devil’s Tower. Similarly, the Arapahos’ sacred Pipe continues to be displayed and renewed on set ceremonial occasions (Anderson, J. 2001).

d. Renewing the Universe

The Cheyennes had two ceremonies, the *Massaum* [Animal Dance] and the *Oxheheom* [literally translated as “New Life lodge,” or “Life Generator Lodge” but commonly called a “Sun Dance”], that functioned as world renewal observances. The *Massaum* was held in the Black Hills until the early twentieth century (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:12, 69) but is no longer performed today. Its primary purpose was to recreate the evolution of the cosmos and thereby, replenish the game animals and plants on whose lives the Cheyennes depended (Schlesier 1987, see also discussions in Chapter Nine and in Appendix A). The *Oxheheom* is still practiced today among the Cheyennes in their reservation communities in Montana and Oklahoma, but it was originally performed near Sundance Mountain in Wyoming on the northwestern edge of the Black Hills (Powell 1969:2:477). There are two early descriptions of this ceremony by George Dorsey (1905:57-177) and George Bird Grinnell (Grinnell 1972:2:211-284) and a number of accounts of more recent dances by John Stands in Timber (and Liberty 1967:99-100), Father Peter Powell (1969: 2:611-858), and John Moore (1996:219-228). Like the *Massaum*, the purpose of the *Oxheheom* is to regenerate and replenish the universe and its myriad species of plants and animals. Today it is a “celebration of cultural continuity,” according to John Moore (1996:219), and also “an attempt to bring health, well-being, and harmony to the people by tapping into the energy network of *Maheo* as transported through the *Maiyun* who are represented in the dance” (Ibid: 221).

The *Oxheheom* begins in what is known as the ‘Lone Tipi,’ which is situated outside the dance lodge and erected before the lodge is constructed. Here, the priests, the pledger, and his wife, the “sacred woman,” conduct various observances, not only to cleanse, paint, and otherwise prepare the dancers and the objects used in the dance, but also to insure the success of the ceremony (Dorsey, G. 1905:91, 97, 100; Hoebel 1960:13; Powell 1969:2:614-645; Moore, J. 1996: 221). When the observances in the Lone Tipi are completed, the ritual of securing and implanting the center pole takes place. The forks of the tree, which serve as the center pole, hold the “thunderbird’s nest;” it contains a wide variety of different plants and animal parts that symbolize the natural world (Moore, J. 1996:222). After the tree is implanted, the structure of the lodge is constructed with four posts representing the cardinal directions (Moore, J. 1996:222; Powell 1969:2:646-684). The altar is then built to recreate the Cheyennes’ image of a prosperous universe with abundant buffalo and plants, the presence of sunshine, rainbows and good spirits, and a people with good health and the ability to vanquish their enemies (Hoebel 1960:14; Powell 1969:2:646-684). During the construction of the lodge, families pray, smoke, and make offerings to *Maheo* and the various *maiyun* whose presence is called forth in the lodge when the dance begins (Moore, J. 1996:223).

Once the lodge is completed, the dances and sacrifices commence on the last day. The dancers are men who have made a pledge to dance, and each must have a qualified instructor to assist them (Moore, J. 1996:221). Each dancer bears objects that represent the four souls of the

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19 The tipi is said to stand for Bear Butte (1969:2:616n2), while the lodge itself (as described in Chapter Fifteen) stands for the Black Hills. Helen Rezatto (1989:27) also writes that Bear Butte is often described as a miniature replica of the Black Hills.
body, the four directions, and their corresponding whirlwinds and animals. Each dancer makes sacrifices to seek the spiritual benevolence of Ma’heo and his maiyun in order to renew the world and the lives of the people (Dorsey, G. 1905:176; Powell 1969:2:841-852; Grinnell 1972:2:211, 224). During the dance itself, the Cheyennes engage in acts of suffering and self-sacrifice, which include inserting skewers into the back and shoulders, to which rawhide ropes are tied and buffalo skulls hung. Men either drag these skulls around the dance area or dance with them in place on their backs (Dorsey 1905:176; Grinnell 1972:2:211). This and other acts of offering are intended to seek the spiritual benevolence necessary to renew the world and the lives of the people. The dance ends with a race to the four directions and the homes or pillars of the four sacred Ma’he-yuno (Powell 1969:2:841-852).

Although the Oxheheom contains a rich symbolism linked to bison and female generative powers, it is dedicated to Ma’heo who represents the supreme male spiritual figure in Cheyenne cosmology. John Moore (1996:225-226) depicts the ceremony as the recreation of an “enormous fertility structure” embodied in the life-giving forces of spring thunderstorms that cross the plains in spring and summer. Yet, he also argues it contains many different symbols that reveal other life-giving forces, including the earth represented by the buffalo skull at the altar and the rainbow signified by four arched sticks in front of the skull (Ibid: 227-228). When the dance is completed, the earth is regenerated, the harmony of the universe restored, and the people’s health and well-being renewed (Ibid:228).

For the Lakotas, the Winwanyan wacipi [Sun Gazing Dance] is also their holiest religious observance for renewing the universe and their relationship to Wakan Tanka (Amiotte 1989c:245). Many early and modern accounts (Dorsey, J. 1894:459-467; Walker 1917:60-121; Densmore 1918:84-151; Sword in Deloria 1929; Black Elk in Brown 1971:101-116; Mails 1978; Amiotte 1989a; Feraca 1998:8-22) have described it in great detail, and again, aspects of it only need to be summarized here. It should be noted, however, that there are important differences in the performance of the dance between the southern Lakotas, about whom most of the literature on this subject has been written, and the northern Lakotas as described by Densmore (1918:84-151). Additionally, there have been significant changes in the dance over time (Feraca 1998:8-22).

In many basic ways the Lakotas’ observance of the Sun Dance is very similar to the Cheyennes’ from whom some scholars believe they learned it. Indeed, historical evidence and the traditions of both tribes identify Sundance Mountain in Wyoming as the location for their earliest Sun Dances (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:366; Sundstrom, L. 1997:186, 193). Today, the Sun Dance remains the Lakotas’ most significant communal ceremonial observance. Its observance includes the participation of friends from other tribes, especially Arapahos and Cheyennes. Likewise, Lakotas dance in Sun Dances held by these two tribes (Feraca 1998:12-13).

The Lakota Sun Dance takes place in the full moon of midsummer, usually in June or July. The month before the dance, those who conduct the ceremony begin making prayers and offerings to prepare for the ceremony, and those who pledge to dance work to fulfill their vows. Historically, the leaders of the tribe’s military societies met to select the Kiwa’ Kiya’pi (intercessors), the Itan’can (dance leader), the four male “hunters” or “scouts” who located the tree for the center pole, the four virgins who cut it down, the “digger” who prepared the hole in which the tree rested, and many others who played special roles in the ceremony (Walker 1917:95-98; Densmore 1918:98-103). In the four days preceding the ceremony, the dancers selected the mentors who painted them,²⁰ feasts were held by the military societies, and the

²⁰ Francis Densmore’s Sun Dance material was based on information she learned from northern Lakota consultants. Among the southern divisions, the Oglalas and Sicangus, the selection of a mentor appears to have taken place many
virginal female relatives of the dancers underwent the test of biting the snake or knife\textsuperscript{21} (Walker 1917:98-101; Densmore 1918:104-105). While the southern Lakotas used one lodge to prepare all their dancers, the northern Lakotas had a sweatlodge for each of the participating bands (Densmore 1918:98; Mails 1978:85-96).\textsuperscript{22}

On the first day of the ceremony, the grounds where the dance is held are located, staked, and sanctified, and the Sun Trail (or Sun Path) surrounding the dance area marked off (Walker 1917:100-101). This is followed by the preparation of the Sun Dance altar, \textit{owanka wakan}, where the vegetation is removed and the ground finely pulverized. Lines are traced around the altar and then two intersecting lines are made to create a cross. These are filled with tobacco, red paint, and gypsum, and eagle down is placed where the lines end and intersect. A bed of sage is laid down to the west of this altar where the bison skull rests (Densmore 1918:122; Powers, W. 1977:96; Amiotte 1989a:250-251). The digger also prepares the hole on this day for the placement of the center pole or sacred tree, where offerings of water, bison blood, tobacco, and \textit{wasna} are placed (Catches, Sr. and Catches 1990:112). Once the altar is completed, the lodge maker and his assistants construct the arbor or shade, [\textit{iyohanziglepi}] around the outer edge of the dance circle (Walker 1917:102; Densmore 1918:118-123; Powers, W. 1977:96).

On the second day, the sacred tree is located by the scouts and felled by four virgins, mimicking an attack on an enemy. It is carefully peeled and trimmed, leaving the top forked branches in place, and then it is carried back to camp by a procession of twenty men singing victory songs. Upon returning to the camp, the men race against each other to the center hole to win the honor of carrying a special banner into the circle when the pole is raised (Walker 1917:100-105; Densmore 1918:111-116; Sword in Deloria 1929: 394-398; Powers, W. 1977:97).

On the third day, the tree is brought into the center of the dance circle where it is painted by the intercessor and a bundle of offerings are hung on a cottonwood crossbar placed in the tree’s fork. As with the Cheyennes, this bundle represents the thunderbird’s nest (Feraca 1998:17). The tree is then planted in its hole in the ground and earth is packed around it to keep it in place. While the tree is raised, the story of creation is retold, how the four winds came to be, how humans emerged from the underworld, and how the sacred pipe was brought to the people (Amiotte 1989a:249-252). It is during this part of the ceremony that families are told to bring their offerings into the enclosure. Following the tree raising, the men dance towards the tree and shoot at the effigies of a bison and an enemy hung on its branches. This is followed by parades and celebration (Walker 1917:106-111; Densmore 1918:117-122; Powers, W. 1977:98).

The pledgers who participate in the dance do so in different ways, although all are required to fast. There are dancers who simply dance, the ones who lacerate the flesh in small ways, and those who have skewers put through their skin, either by piercing the chest and being suspended by ropes hung to the center pole or by fastening buffalo skulls to ropes which are tied to skewers inserted into their back and arms. There are also other and more severe variations of piercing (Walker 1917:61-62; Densmore 1918:131-135; Powers, W. 1977:98-99). Women who participate also fast, dance, and sometimes have small pieces of flesh cut from their upper arms (Dens-

\textsuperscript{21} In order for a woman to give support to her relative by dancing with him in the sacred enclosure, she had to make a public declaration of her chastity by biting a knife or a snakeskin.

\textsuperscript{22} Thomas Mails (1978:95) suggests that the differences in the number of sweatlodges may be a function of the number of dancers who participate in a ceremony.
more 1918:132,135). During the dance, children’s ears are pierced too (Walker 1917:115-116; Densmore 1918:137-138).

In the first morning of the dance, the dancers eat a morning meal and enter their respective sweatlodges where they are dressed and their bodies painted by the men who have been chosen to be their mentors (Densmore 1918:123-126). This is considered a joyful day as the people prepare themselves to appear before the Sun (Walker 1917:111). When the ceremony is about to begin, the Crier goes around the camp to summon the dancers and their mentors, who follow the Intercessors into the camp circle. The Dance Leader walks into the circle next to the Intercessors, carrying the buffalo skull. As the skull is placed on its bed of sage, the Intercessor burns sweet grass and lights the pipe praying to the sky, the earth, and the four directions (Ibid:126-127). The opening dance is accompanied by gift giving among the people assembled, with many showing “respect” in this way to the dancers’ families (Ibid:129).

Once the ceremony begins, the participants dance continuously with brief intervals for rest, and each takes a turn undergoing the form of piercing h/she has pledged. According to James Walker (1917:114-115), two kinds of dances, the Buffalo and Sun-Gaze, are performed during the ceremony. In the Buffalo dance, dancers who are hunters/warriors capture the dancers playing the role of bison/enemies. The hunter/warriors then pierce the captives according to the particular vows they made prior to the ceremony. After the capture and piercing, the Sun-Gaze dance begins and continues while the captives attempt to break their skin loose from the ropes suspended to the center pole or fastened to bison skulls. The captive dancers are freed when they break their bonds (Walker 1917:116-118; Powers, W. 1977:99-100). Once they are released, the Scalp-Staff Dance is performed with the participation of the women. After its completion, the ceremony is concluded (Walker 1917:119-120).

The Lakota Sun Dance also contains an elaborate symbolism. Much of it is linked to male generative power, as embodied in the figures of Tatanka [Bison Bull] and Wi [Sun], but Pte San Winyan [White Buffalo Calf Woman] also occupies an honored position in this observance. In many ways, Lakota Sun Dance observances recreate the lifecycle of the bison and the movements these animals once followed in their yearly migrations along the sun’s path or trail (Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a:42-43). Here the bison serves as an overarching metaphor of life and its continuity, and the symbol through which humans are able to renew the world and their own humble place within it (Amiotte 1987:78).

The Lakotas do not appear to have had a ceremony equivalent to the Cheyennes’ Massaum, although their recently described religious pilgrimage into the central regions of the Black Hills to perform a spring renewal ceremony, called Okisataya wowahwala, appears to have objectives that parallel the Massaum (Goodman 1992:8, 13,16). The Lakotas also continue to hold pipe ceremonies at the Buffalo Gap and the general region of Wind Cave National Park to celebrate the arrival of the vernal equinox and the beginnings of a new cycle of rebirth, and they observe another ceremony near Harney Peak to mark the arrival of the Thunders later in the spring (Black Elk, C. in Goodman 1992:50; Albers and Kittelson Interviews 2002). Historically at least, all of these ceremonies were held in preparation for the observance of the Sun Dance after the summer solstice (Black Elk, C.: ibid).

III. WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK AS A SACRED PLACE

The original Sun Dance, as first performed by the bison before they turned it over to humans, is explicitly associated in some Cheyenne traditions with the Buffalo Gap. Some Cheyennes also
believe that many aspects of their Sun Dance recreate the story of the Great Race, which took place in the Red Valley or Race Track of the Black Hills (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:23; Powell 1969:2:472-478; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:72). The Sun Dance is held within a circular enclosure, which like the Race Track’s opening at the Buffalo Gap, faces east. Ralph White Tail told Father Peter Powell (1969:2:475n5) that the red and black painted rafters in the Cheyenne Sun Dance lodge represent the painted sticks the racers carried when they ran around the Hills. Powell (Ibid:2:476n5) reports that during the final dance of the ceremony, the instructor pushes the pledger against the cottonwood brush surrounding the altar, reenacting the efforts of the buffalo to drive the human runner over a cliff along the Race Track, and he also notes, probably not coincidentally, that at the end of the ceremony the dancers imitate the “Great Race,” by circling the center pole several times (Ibid:852). Powell (Ibid:473n2) further mentions that the arrow pierced through the meat and placed as an offering in the nest of the Thunderbird signifies the injury endured by the Buffalo Woman who brought a human man to her people, the buffalo, who then challenged him to race against them. In addition, he notes that the Lone Tipi, where the initial preparations for the Sun Dance take place, stands simultaneously for Bear Butte and also the lone lodge in which the Buffalo wife lived in the Great Race Story (Ibid:616n2). Finally, John Stands in Timber (and Liberty 1967:24) points out that the clay figurines of animals that children once placed around the center pole represent the animals that competed in the Great Race.

There are other possible metaphoric allusions to the Great Race story not mentioned by Powell or Stands in Timber. Some of the painted dancers in the Sun Dance, notably the Swift Hawk and Deer, are singled out as major racers in various Cheyenne versions of the story (Powell 1969:2:612, 806, 832, 838, 848-849, 851). One could also argue that when the dancers drag the skulls of the buffalo on their back, pierce their chests and suspend themselves from the sacred tree, they are sacrificing themselves and shedding their blood, both literally and figuratively, as the buffalo and other animals did when they careened around the Black Hills forming the Red Valley with its blood-soaked soil so that humans became the predators and the bison their prey.

In one Cheyenne story of the Race Track, the gypsum formations commonly found along its reaches are described as the remains of the froth issuing from the lead bison’s mouth as she raced (Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:30-31). In their Sun Dance, the Cheyenne marked their altar and painted many of its sacred objects with burnt gypsum (Grinnell 1972:1:163, 192, 2, pp. 202, 242, 262; Schlesier 1987:93; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:54). Another Cheyenne name for gypsum is “Sun Arrow” (Grinnell 1926:179). The connection with gypsum also appears in Densmore’s description (1918:122) of the Lakota Sun Dance, in which the line around their altar is filled with tobacco (bearberry), red paint, and then gypsum. The placement of the gypsum on red paint mirrors the way this mineral is embedded in the limestone and red clay beds that make up the Race Track (Newton and Jenney 1880:134-135), and bearberry is a plant that is found in the Black Hills but not in the surrounding grasslands.

The Lakotas and Cheyennes both have a thunderbird’s nest in their Sun Dance that sits atop the sacred tree, surrounded by a larger sacred circle within which the dancers dance, a relation mirroring the geographic position of Harney Peak, widely associated with the nest of Thunderbirds and eagles, in relation to the surrounding Race Track (Hinman 1874:95; Curtis in

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23 This mimics the coloration of the rock formations straddling the Red Valley, the purple colored limestones towards the center of the Hills and the red hued formations along the Hogback (see Newton and Jenney 1880:132).
24 George Dorsey (1905:49) reports the presence of these figurines too but argues that they represent the animals that Sweet Medicine and Stands on the Ground brought out of a spring.
25 She uses the term “mica” here but she is probably talking about gypsum. Lakotas and Cheyennes loosely refer to gypsum as “mica” (Moore, J. 1996:67).

Indeed, the association of the Hills’ high elevation interiors with the thunders recalls John Moore’s apt description (1996:225-226) of the Cheyenne Sun Dance as a recreation of an “enormous fertility structure” that makes up a spring thunderstorm on the plains. The base of the tree is placed in a ritually prepared hole that is fed with buffalo fat and other offerings. The tree, as an axis mundi, ties the two together in a manner not dissimilar to the way these tribes understand the relationship between the high reaches and underground recesses of the Black Hills. The tree channels the thunders’ powers to the hole (cave) in the earth where life is regenerated.

There is yet another connection to this region. Joseph Eppes Brown (1992:102-103) writes that, among the Lakotas, men’s robes were typically fabricated from the hides of bulls and embellished with quilled “sun-burst” designs, signifying sunflowers, which symbolized male fertility. When Sun Dancers followed the sun in their movements, they were imitating the way the sunflower turns towards the sun (Standing Bear 1975:120). In Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, porcupine quills, like the tail feathers of eagles, are believed to hold the ton of the sun, and among the Cheyennes, the founding of their quillworkers guild, Me e no’ist st, is connected to some of the stories of the Great Race and the Buffalo Gap (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24; Powell 1969:2:472-477; Grinnell 1972:1:163-164, 2:385-391). The yellow hair of newly born bison also contains the sun’s essence, and along with porcupine quills and the tailfeathers of eagles, they symbolize the “breath of life” (Moore, J. 1974:163).

In Lakota traditions, the sun is a special friend of the bison whose annual movements follow the sun’s path, and this trail is believed to encircle the Hills and mirror a celestial star circle (Looking Horse in Parlow 1983:42-43). Historically, the Lakotas held certain ceremonies in different parts of the Hills to mark the sun’s movements from the time of the vernal equinox until after the summer solstice, and today, many of these observances are being reinstituted. In many Cheyenne and Lakota traditions, the Buffalo Gap is where the Great Race is believed to have started, and it is here that Lakotas hold pipe ceremonies to light the sacred fire that renews, as the sun does, a new cycle of birth and growth. When the sun begins to rise higher in the sky, triggering regeneration through the heat of its rays, the Lakotas respectfully celebrate this event by lighting their own sacred fires. Importantly, this event is tied to the season when bison are born and given the breath of life through the interactions of the sun, stone, and water.

It is also not coincidental that the Race Track story is sometimes preceded by a story involving a marriage between a human man and a subterranean buffalo woman. In Cheyenne and Lakota stories relating to the area, it is her people, the buffalo, who turn the Sun Dance over to humans (Walker 1917:212-215; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24; Powell 1969:2:472-478). Indeed, in one Lakota story of the Sun Dance’s origin, the buffalo woman and her people inhabit a cave (Left Heron in Walker 1917:212-215). Although many of the most famous stories about the early performances of the Sun Dance take place at sites on the northern end of the Hills, notably near Sundance Mountain, the fact remains that several traditions point to the Buffalo Gap/Wind Cave area as the setting for the Sundance’s origins among the bison and the site of its original transfer to humans. In fact, Olivia Pourier (in Neihardt and Utecht 2000:135) recalled her grandfather, Nicholas Black Elk, telling of Sun Dances held in the southeastern Hills near Smithwick, South Dakota, a town not far from the Buffalo Gap.

At different times in the past twenty-five years, Lakotas have held Sun Dances at Wind Cave National Park (Terry 1999, Personal Communication; Albers & Kittelson 2002). Nothing about the Sun Dances held here has appeared in the published literature, nor has anything been written...
about what motivated some Lakotas to chose this site for their most sacred ceremonial observance. It may have been based on traditions that this is the area where the bison performed the dance and turned its teachings over to humans, or it may have originated in a recent vision that instructed a Sun Dance leader to hold one at this location. Whether the inspiration is old or new, the decision is certainly in keeping with Lakota and Cheyenne understandings of the area and the workings of that which is sacred. Given its long association with the Race Track and bison/human relations, Wind Cave National Park encompasses an area that is sacred in the eyes of contemporary Lakotas, Cheyennes, and perhaps other tribal nations as well (see Chapters Fourteen and Fifteen for a fuller discussion of this). Indeed, several Lakota and Cheyenne cultural resource officers singled out the Race Track as a significant sacred site. The cultural officer of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe noted that everything that is close to it is sacred and requires some sort of protection (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

Besides the Sun Dance, there are other religious observances that have ties to this area as well. Most of these associations, however, are more abstract and generic. The most important one is the link between what happens in caves and what takes place in Lakota and Cheyenne sweatlodges. Caves and sweatlodges are sacred because both embody processes that revivify the breath of life. The Cheyennes believe that caves throughout the Black Hills are the spiritual homes of the animals, the places where they undergo materialization before appearing on the earth’s surface. One cave in the southern Black Hills, whose identity is not specified, is the location where their culture hero, Sweet Medicine brought people back to life in a sweatlodge ceremony. The Lakota culture hero, Tokahe, who led people to the earth’s surface through the opening at Wind Cave, is also associated with the introduction of sweatlodges for healing. Many stories of the journeys of earlier culture heroes, Fallen Star and Stone Boy, are implicitly or explicitly tied to this area and/or the nearby Buffalo Gap. Some of these narratives also speak to the origins of the sweatlodge, and a few tell of the beginnings of bison pounds (a structure of which is mirrored in Animal and Sun Dance lodges and also in the circular configuration of the Black Hills (Sundstrom, L. 2000). These stories, together with those about miraculous happenings that took place on the “Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull,” which represents the entire area near the Buffalo Gap, link park lands to any of a variety of religious observances that relate to healing and renewal, but especially to those associated with bison (see Section Four for details). Contemporary requests to hold sweatlodges and pipe ceremonies on park lands are certainly consistent with wider Lakota and Cheyenne understandings of the area, and indeed, a few tribal cultural resource officers from Lakota tribes specifically connect this area to these observances (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

There are also other religious observances whose origins are connected to visionary experiences that take place in caves. Many of these are no longer practiced, nor are they specifically identified with the Wind Cave/Buffalo Gap region of the Black Hills. One religious observance that has continued into modern times, the vision quest, typically occurs on high mountains and buttes with unobstructed vistas in all directions. Except for Elk Mountain and sections of Rankin Ridge, there appear to be no other locations on park properties that conform to typical vision questing sites. Although these sites may have been used in the past for seeking visions, there is nothing in the published record that suggests that these are, or were, preferred places to seek spiritual partnerships in visions or dreams. Even if they had been used for these purposes in the past, they may no longer be desirable for this purpose because of the developments surrounding them, including communication towers, roads, and campsites. In relation to

26 For reasons elaborated upon elsewhere in this report, the absence of references in the published literature neither confirms nor disconfirms the sacredness of a site or the performance of religious observances at a particular locale. Sacred locations are often kept secret not only out of respect for the spiritual character of a place, but also out of fear that its “discovery” by outsiders will compromise, and even destroy, the site.
other sites in the Black Hills, notably Harney Peak and Bear Butte, which are widely recognized as major vision seeking locales, Lakotas and Cheyennes have expressed deep concerns about how the development of these areas has interfered with their ability to conduct their religious observances (Schlesier 1974; Forbes-Boyte 1996, 1999). Indeed, some Lakotas have even suggested that these sites are losing their spiritual power because the spirits are abandoning them behind all the tourist traffic (Eagle Elk in Erdoes 1976:33-36; Forbes-Boyte 1996:112). Vision seeking and many other religious performances require places of solitude, not only because these are necessary to the conduct of a particular observance but also because the spirits dislike unnecessary and disrespectful activity taking place at the sites they frequent. Nevertheless, several Cheyenne and Lakota cultural resource officers specifically identified the general park area as a place for prayer and fasting (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

Historically, vision seeking appears to have taken place inside certain caves, or, at the very least, people were transported to caves in their visions. Often, these caves are located inside mountains because of the powerful effects created at these locations through the juxtaposition of earth and sky spaces. There are no reports of other ceremonial observances being conducted inside caves, but there is a great deal of evidence of ceremonies being practiced in areas where caves are located. The Standing Rock Sioux culture resource officer indicated that areas on the mountain above Wind Cave have been used in modern times for ceremonial observances. Informally, some of us have been told by Lakotas that people frequently see spirits or hear them talking when they tour Wind Cave, and this was also reported by some of the cultural resource officers we interviewed (Albers and Kittelson 2002). Subterranean locations, including the interiors of caves, are sometimes avoided because they are understood as places where spirits dwell. Entering them unnecessarily and without invitation constitutes a form of trespass that may have dire consequences (Albers 1966-1976). Catherine Stabler’s remarks (in Bohi 1962:301) about Lakotas refusing to enter Wind Cave in the 1890s and “singing” when they did so reveals the respect they held for this place.

Today, Wind Cave National Park remains a location for the conduct of traditional religious observances and a site associated with many sacred stories and the origins of important ceremonies. Although many tribal observances are no longer undertaken at the places where they are believed to have originated in the Hills, these locations are still considered highly sacred in the minds of the Cheyennes and Lakotas because they are the sites where important spiritual figures dwell, where humans received sacred knowledge, and where other mysterious occurrences took place. The area around Wind Cave and the Buffalo Gap, as argued in Chapters Fourteen and Fifteen, is associated with a set of narratives that both distinguish and connect this area to stories of other highly revered landscapes in the Black Hills, notably, Harney Peak, Reynolds Prairie, Bear Butte, Bear Lodge Butte, Inyan Kara Mountain, and Castle Rock. Together, these places constitute a single overriding unity, that is the Black Hills, the center of the Lakota and Cheyenne universe.
Chapter Thirteen

THE BLACK HILLS AS SACRED GROUND: 
THE CHRONOLOGY AND CONTROVERSY

There is a continuous record of evidence from prehistoric times to the present of the Black Hills’ spiritual significance to the various indigenous peoples who once lived or still live in their vicinity. The Arapahos, Arikaras, Crows, Hidatsas, Kiowas, Mandans, Poncas, and Plains Apaches are among the tribal nations who retained stories in their oral traditions of the Black Hills and/or specific sites in their reaches. The Cheyennes and Lakotas, however, are the two populations who not only hold the richest body of published cultural narratives relating to the Black Hills, but who also maintained an active and continuing spiritual relationship to many sites within their range.

This chapter reviews much of the evidence on sites in and around the Black Hills that many tribal nations consider sacred, and it also discusses the controversy that surrounds at least one tribe’s spiritual relationship to the region, the Lakotas’. In doing so, it sets the stage for a more exhaustive and in-depth coverage of materials on Wind Cave National Park and its environs.

I. THE CHRONOLOGY

Two comprehensive articles by Linea Sundstrom one entitled “Mirror of Heaven: Cross-Cultural Transference of the Sacred Geography of the Black Hills” (1996) and another “The Sacred Black Hills: An Ethnohistorical Review” (1997) offer exhaustive summaries of much of the existing ethnohistoric and ethnographic literature on the sacredness of the Black Hills. In order to place the information on the area in which Wind Cave National Park is located in some perspective, much of the territory that Sundstrom traveled so thoroughly must be covered here. This chapter contextualizes the evidence on sacred sites in relation to the time periods in which it emerged in order to document the overarching integrity and continuity of the sacred stories, ideas, and practices that Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribal nations associate with the Black Hills.

A. The Prehistoric and Early Historic Record, Pre-1877

There is a wide range of evidence in the form of rock art, cairns, and medicine wheels to suggest that various locations in and around the Black Hills had spiritual meanings and ritual uses. Some of the richest archaeological remains revealing a sacred connection to the area are exhibited in the region’s rock art, and some of the largest concentrations of rock art panels, dating back over a period of 5000 years, are found in the Hogback canyons of the southern Black Hills (Bad Horse 1979; Sundstrom, L. 1984, 1989, 1990, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2001; Sundstrom and Keiser 1998). Certain panels contain motifs that bear striking resemblance to the sacred iconography of tribal nations known to have used the region in the protohistoric and historic eras, including the Cheyennes and Lakotas (Sundstrom, L. 1990, 2001; Sundstrom and Keiser 1998). The archaeological record reveals, as Linea Sundstrom (1997:208) puts it, that the Black Hills area had “considerable, religious significance for much, if not all, of its human habitation.”
The spiritual importance of the Black Hills is also revealed in the writings of early European Americans who traveled in the northcentral Plains before 1877, when the United States extinguished tribal title to the area. Of those who wrote about the Hills and their inhabitants, only a few made any comment about their possible spiritual meaning or the sacredness of any of the sites associated with them. One of the earliest accounts is contained in the journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition (Moulton 1987:3:179), where William Clark relates a conversation he had on October 1, 1804 with an Arikara chief, who told him that the Black Hills were the winter home of the animals. Although there is no suggestion that this association is sacred, it is entirely consistent with spiritual meanings attached to the Black Hills as a place of emergence and gathering for animals (see earlier discussions in Chapters Nine, Ten, and Twelve).

Also persistent over time is the observation that booming noises emanated from the Hills, a subject Clark reported in his journal entry for 1804, based on information he received from the fur trader, Jon Vallé. When the expedition stopped again at the Arikara villages on their return trip in 1806, Clark was told that local tribes believed the Black Hills made a great noise, which he compared with the Hidatsas’ descriptions of the loud sounds originating in the Rocky Mountains (Moulton 1983-87:4:374-375). Again, nothing about the meanings of these sounds to local tribes was recorded, but fifty years later, another trader on the upper Missouri, Edwin Denig would offer further explanation.

Denig is generally credited with offering the first specific account of the Hills’ sacredness to the Lakotas. In 1851, he wrote:

Much superstition is attached to the Black Hills by the Indians. The principal peak, called the Hill of Thunder, is volcanic, and in 1833 was in almost constant action. In almost any clear day large volumes of smoke could be seen, which the Indians took to be the breathing of the Big White Man buried beneath. Unnatural noises are said to be heard, which, whether originating in their fancy or caused by wild beasts, are thought to be moans of the Great White Giant, when pressed upon by rocks as a punishment for being the first aggressor in their territory. They say that he issues forth on occasions and his tracks seen in the snow are twenty feet in length. He is condemned to perpetual incarceration under the mountains as an example to all whites to leave the Indians in quiet possession of their hunting grounds (in Ewers 1961:6).

It is difficult to make sense of what was meant by the “volumes of smoke” issuing from the peak, since the area was not volcanically active at this point in history (Sundstrom, L. 1997:186). It is true, however, that the Lakotas did associate the Hills’ highest mountain, Harney Peak, with the Wakinyan or Thunders. Other than the echo of thunder, neither Denig nor earlier William Clark, were able to account for these sounds.  

Twenty-five years later, in 1875, while traveling in the vicinity of Harney Peak, Professors Henry Newton and Walter Jenney (1880:311), both geologists, would write,

...the Indians are said to desert the Hills in the summer on account of the lightening, and I can easily understand that a band of superstitious Indians, after experiencing such a storm, especially if any of their number were injured by lightening, would forever forsake the locality.

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27 Eight years later, Ferdinand von Hayden (1862:365-366) reiterated nearly word for word what Denig had written about Lakota beliefs surrounding the Black Hills.
In view of this, it is quite possible that the heavy plumes of smoke Denig wrote about were the result of an explosive wildfire caused by lightning, not a volcanic eruption (see also Case 1952a:39; Parker, W. 1985:590).

Denig’s story about a white giant, on the other hand is remotely related to one of the Lakotas’ spiritual figures, Waziya, commonly depicted as a giant and the harbinger of winter. Henry Boller (1972:327), a contemporary of Denig, described this figure based on information he learned from a Hunkpapa Lakota named Grindstone and also associated it with the Black Hills. The idea that, in Denig’s words, “superstition” surrounded the area only confirms what would be described in today’s less off-putting terminology as its spiritual significance (Sundstrom, L. 1997:86-187). Notwithstanding some of the problematic aspects of Denig’s representation, it does establish several things: one, the importance of this area as a hunting ground; two, its mysterious or wakan character; and three, its association with the Thunders [Wakinyan] and the Winter Man [Waziya].

Although Denig wrote explicitly about the “supernatural” character of the Hills in relation to the Lakotas, there were other writers before him who wrote about spiritual connections to the region and its surroundings. Washington Irving’s account (1897:1:344), first published in 1836, of the 1811 Astoria Expedition describes the Black Hills as:

…the abode of the geneii or thunder spirits, who fabricate storms and tempests. On entering their defiles, therefore, they often hang offerings on trees, or place them on rocks, to propitiate the invisible ‘lords of the mountains,’ and procure good weather and successful hunting; and they attach unusual significance to the echoes which haunt the precipices.

Francis Parkman’s record (in Feltskog 1969:156-157, 572-573 n21) of his travels along the Oregon Trail in 1846 contains references about Lakota spiritual associations to the Black Hills. He writes of a Lakota man named La Borgne or One Eye, who fasted in a cave somewhere in the Hills during the early nineteenth century. While traveling in the Hills, Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:286-287) himself encountered an elderly man engaged in solitary worship on a pine-laden precipice. Another early report, introduced previously, comes from E. De Giradin’s journal (1936:63), which records his travels in the Badlands during 1849 and includes references to the use of the Black Hills as a place the Lakotas collected kinnikinick [bearberry], a sacred plant used in tobacco mixtures. In the same decade, Rufus Sage (in Haflen and Haflen 1956:268-272) re-corded a story of how Lakotas warriors encountered an old spirit woman living in a cave on a butte west of the Black Hills, known as Old Woman’s Butte. In the narrative, the old woman fore-tells the successful outcome of their raiding party against the Shoshones. When the warriors re-turn to the butte to leave an offering to the old woman, the cave has disappeared, and in its place, they find a small springs and a stream.

Some of the same spiritual themes found in Denig, Boller, Irving, Parkman, De Giradin, and Sage’s accounts also appear in the writings of journalists who accompanied the Black Hills Expe-

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28 The same figure is also associated with stories that refer to the area where Wind Cave National Park now sits (see Chapter 14).
29 One Eye was one of the leaders of a Sicangu band that wintered in the Sand Hills of Nebraska in 1839 (DeMallie 1976:261).
30 As mentioned before, two of the scholars, Mason Wade (1939) and Feltskog (in Parkman 1969), who edited Parkman’s journal, claim that many of his references to the Black Hills actually refer to the Laramie Mountains, not the Black Hills proper. Whether or not this refers to the Black Hills proper, it is an early document reporting on the Lakotas’ use of mountain zones for prayer and other religious observances.
dition in 1874, and many of these are reprinted in Herbert Krause and Gary Olson’s work *Prelude to Glory* (1974). N.H. Knappen (in Krause and Olson 1974:28), writing for the *Bismark Tribune*, reported that the Hills “has been held as a sacred spot to them as the Hunting Ground of the Great Spirit,” while A. B. Donaldson (in Krause and Olson 1974:41), special correspondent to the *St. Paul Pioneer*, stated: “It is the famed stronghold and a favorite hunting ground of the red man...To the simple faith of the Indian, it is the most sacred spot of earth to him the ‘holy of holies.’” William E. Curtis of the *New York World* and the *Chicago Inter Ocean* conveyed a similar picture and said: the “Black Hills are holy ground of the very holiest sort” (in Krause and Olson 1974:150). He depicted them as a “Mecca,” a place the Lakotas jealously guarded because of their faunal riches (Krause and Olson 1974:149-150).

Beyond their special place as a spiritually protected game preserve, Curtis (in Krause and Olson 1974:150) argued that the Hills were a location for the Lakotas’ “grand councils” and their most “solemn festivities,” including the Sun Dance. He further described them as “the very antechamber of Manitou,” containing the “springs of immortality.” In a story he heard from the guide Bear’s Ears, an Arikara who once lived among the Lakotas, he wrote that a cave ran underneath the Hills leading to a “living river.” Magical deer and panthers were said to block the cave’s entrance (Krause and Olson 1974:129,150). Individuals who were able to find it and cross to the other side were able to gain a “new lease on life till the eagles, whose eyrie was on the summit of the hill, entered another century of their eternal existence” (Ibid:150). The cave was the home of a very tall medicine man with a long white beard, who used the river and its springs to advance his death-defying schemes, but he was eventually engulfed by the Hills and never to be seen again (Ibid:129). Curtis (Ibid:129) further writes: “The same as to the eagles, but the thunder remained as a perpetual sentinel to guard their nest. A compensatory fountain poured out from the hill which still confers upon those who bathe in it the gift of invulnerability -- it is a Dakotan Lethe.” From Bear’s Ears, Samuel Burrows (in Krause and Olson 1974:192) of the *New York Tribune* also learned of a great nest located in the center of the Hills, a place “even the Indians themselves do not visit because of fear.” Allowing for some misunderstandings and mistranslations of the Arikara and Lakota scouts’ stories, the journalists recorded many ideas that continue to hold currency in modern tribal understandings of the Hills’ sacredness. As Linea Sundstrom (1997:208) astutely notes: “The reporters, who reflected the prevailing sentiments of the day, had no motive for exaggerating the Indians’ beliefs about the sacredness of the Black Hills.”

Richard I. Dodge, another of the earliest European Americans to explore the interiors of the Black Hills, also described their spiritual associations. Following Castle Creek near Reynolds Prairie on June 11, 1875, Dodge (in Kime 1998:79) reported that the party arrived at a spring where they found the remains of a large camp ground where lodge poles had recently been cut and trimmed. The area was also used, according to Dodge, for “making medicine” because of the presence of a “Medicine Lodge.” It is impossible, however, to determine whether this was a sweatlodge, which seems the most likely given its location, or as Sundstrom (1997:188) suggests, a Sun Dance structure. A couple of weeks later, while traveling near Rapid Creek, Dodge heard a story from one of his guides, California Joe, about a Lakota named Robe Raiser who is reputed to have said that his people rarely entered the Hills, and when they did so, it was to hunt and cut tipi poles. In the book *The Black Hills* (1965:138), the account Dodge himself published, he claimed the Hills were avoided because, among their other liabilities, they were “‘bad medicine’ and the abode of spirits.” It is interesting to note, however, that Dodge did not include this as one of the liabilities he actually recorded in his original field journal based on the information that California Joe received from Robe Raiser (in Kime 1998:139). We can only speculate what motivated him to add this spiritual dimension to his published account, but as already indicated in Chapter Five, there are many reasons to be leery of his work, not the least of which was his
staunch support for opening the Hills to white settlement. As Edward Lazarus (1991:72) writes in reference to the remarks of people like Dodge:

Those who wanted to dispossess the natives of their land seized with particular vigor upon the legends that related the Indians’ fear of the Hills; but whatever beliefs the Indians cherished about the land were based on veneration not terror. The Indians did not value gold; the Hills themselves were their treasure and they guarded them vigilantly. At the Great Council held in their midst during the summer of 1857, the Sioux resolved to execute any tribesman who revealed the existence of gold in the Hills to the whites. And they took their vow seriously; even alcohol, one frontiersman lamented, could not loosen Sioux tongues about the Hills.

There are also a variety of more specific references in the early literature regarding the Hills’ sacredness. Journals, expeditionary reports, and newspaper accounts from Harney’s exploration of the Hills in 1857, Raynold’s in 1859, Custer’s in 1874, and Jenney’s in 1875 not only contain Lakota names for places now widely regarded as sacred, but some of them also include specific references to the spiritual activity connected with these places. Some of the richest material comes from John Gregory Bourke’s military diaries, written from 1872 to 1896, which contain rich accounts of the spiritual significance of various sites in and around the Black Hills (see, Sundstrom 1997:189, 192, 194, 200). Bear Lodge Butte a.k.a. Devil’s Tower, for example, was described as a location where the Lakotas believed the Great Spirit placed the game animals to provide them with food (Ibid:192), and Bear Butte was characterized as a ‘mecca’ for the Cheyennes (Ibid::200). William Ludlow (1875:15), Chief Engineer of the Black Hills Expedition, described a location in the western Hills where there were enormous quantities of gypsum. As he wrote:

One of the guides took me off to the right to see a huge mass of it, crystallized and shining beautifully in the sun. The Indians, for generations, have, in passing, split off pieces for ornaments, and by degrees cut a shoulder several feet deep on it at the level of the ground. Inyan Kara was in sight all day to the southward.

Samuel Burrows (in Krause and Olson 1974:208) of the New York Tribune wrote about Heeng-ya-kara (sic Inyan Kara) on August 24, 1874:

The knob is composed of metamorphic sedimentary rock, granitoid in appearance, but difficult to characterize accurately. The strata dip toward the east and west at an angle of 40 degrees. On top of the ridge, small pieces of white quartz were found. As they had no geological business to be there, they were no doubt left there by the Indians, who are fond of making offerings to their gods from these lofty altars...

Burrows (in Krause and Olson 1974:87-88) also wrote about a stream in the Floral Valley that was believed to have its origin in an underground cave that supplied all the “luxuries of life.” Near Reynolds Prairie, various members of the Black Hills Expedition reported the presence of a large pile of antlers (Ludlow 1875:17; Knappen in Krause and Olson 1974:28; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974:61; Grant in Krause and Olson 1974:250), a practice with known religious significance among the Arapahos and the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:276). Finally, William Curtis (in Krause and Olson 1974:150,192) related Bear’s Ears and Goose’s accounts of an area near Harney Peak where the Thunders had their nest.

Federal officials also recognized the area’s spiritual value. Samuel Hinman (1874:95), in his appendix to the “Report of the Sioux Commission,” wrote that the Black Hills were “high, bleak, and cold, traversed by fearful storms in winter and spring and in summer time almost truly said
by the Indians to be inhabited by the thunder-gods, ever angry at and jealous with hot displeasure of intrusion upon their sanctuary and mountain home.” This refers, of course, to the well-known connection of the Hills to the Wakinyan or Thunders. A year later in September of 1875, E. L. Howard (1875:253), the Agent at Spotted Tail Agency, wrote in his annual report to E. P. Smith, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs the following:

Other apparently insurmountable difficulties have been overcome by the same means, notably the preparations for opening the Black Hills, which it was predicted would surely precipitate an Indian war, so violently opposed had the Indians been, by tradition and education, to the presence of the white man on that their sacred ground (emphasis ours).

From these comments, it is clear that federal officials were well aware of the Hills’ sacred significance to the Lakotas. Taken together, all of the early written sources suggest that the tribal nations who lived in the area had important spiritual connections to the Black Hills. Yet, ironically, a century later a number of historians and anthropologists would cast doubt on the time depth and veracity of Lakota claims that their ancestors held the Black Hills sacred.

None of the sources written before 1877 offer any in-depth interpretation of the spiritual meaning behind the region and its various sites, but all of them uniformly agree that it was sacred to the Lakotas and Cheyennes. Nevertheless, there is enough information to determine what sites were important, especially in the northern and central areas of the Hills where most of these outsiders traveled. There is also enough to suggest some of the reasons for their centrality in tribal religious traditions. It must be remembered that, with the possible exception of Hinman and some members of the Black Hills and Jenney expeditions, most of the early observers never reached locations in the southern Hills. The sites identified in most reports include places in the far north, Inyan Kara Mountain, Bear Lodge Butte (a.k.a Devil’s Tower), and Bear Butte, and in the central Hills, Harney Peak and the Central Prairies. They also include, at least generically, references to the religious importance of the caves and springs located in the Hills. All of this documentation suggests at least seven significant religious interpretations of the Black Hills, all of which can be traced to later writings on the subject: 1) the area’s association with the Thunders and renewal; 2) its link with game animals and ideas of emergence; 3) its relationship to winter and a spiritual figure of gigantic stature; 4) its connection to sacred caves and springs; 5) its importance as a location for collecting plants, stones, and minerals used in religious practice; 6) its position as a sanctuary for individuals seeking a relationship with the sacred; and 7) its ties to the conduct of tribal ceremonial observances, including the Sun Dance.

B. Ethnographic Writings and Texts: 1878-1945

From 1878 to the end of World War II, several ethnographers and historians began working with Native peoples to record their oral traditions, some of which include references to the Black Hills and specific topographic features within their range. American Indians themselves also drew, narrated, or wrote their own cultural accounts, and many of these contain revealing information about the region as well. The enormous body of material from this period can be divided into four general groupings. The first contains a wide variety of sacred texts that specifically mention the Black Hills as a location of genesis and emergence in myth time or as a place where mysterious events took place within historic memory. It also includes a large number of narratives where the Hills are not identified, but where, nonetheless, they can be inferred indirectly from the kind of landforms described in a text. The second encompasses a wide range of ethnographic descriptions of specific places where religious observances were actually conducted or where significant cultural institutions originated. The third contains stories from Euro-
pean Americans who lived in the Hills. These range from historically valid eyewitness observations to romanticized legends and lore of the type typically aimed at popular audiences. Finally, the fourth covers accounts by Lakotas and Cheyennes, who conveyed varied information about their own sacred knowledge of and spiritual experiences in the Hills.

Much of the early literature on sacred sites in the Black Hills, with a few possible exceptions, offer only hints of how some of these places may have been interpreted and used when the Lakotas, Cheyennes, Arapahos, and other tribes occupied the area. The common impression that information on the religious significance of the area is spotty is true, if examined in the absence of a wider body of traditional cultural texts. There are many bits of material in early sources that appear as isolates, unstitched pieces in a larger quilt pattern whose design remains elusive. This need not discourage the intrepid researcher, for as the archaeologist Robert Hall (1997: x) wrote in his classic study Archaeology of the Soul “texts were valuable for discovering mental associations between otherwise discrete classes of phenomenon, associations that provided clues to patterns of thought and belief that might otherwise escape attention.” When taken as a whole and contextualized in a larger body of information on Lakota and Cheyenne cultural traditions, the record is far richer, allowing for the reconstruction of wider cultural patterns that shed light on the spiritual significance of the Black Hills over time.

Above all, the paucity of certain kinds of documentation should not be read, as some scholars have, as evidence of an absence of any sacred attachment to the area. Instead, it should be viewed first in light of the times and circumstances under which the knowledge was preserved as part of the written record. It must be remembered that the decades immediately following 1878, when ethnographers began their systematic efforts to salvage information on pre-reservation tribal cultures, were difficult and stressful times for the Lakotas and Cheyennes, who had been forcibly removed from areas to which they held strong emotional attachments. Two Lakotas, Battiste Good and Luther Standing Bear, as well as two Cheyennes, Wooden Leg and Iron Teeth, vividly conveyed the painful memories of their tribes’ expulsion from the Black Hills. But the enormity of the loss to the Lakota and Cheyenne people and their reservoirs of cultural knowledge are incalculable and only hinted at in the published literature. One of the reasons some of the Lakotas and Cheyennes did not specifically identify sites of sacred significance is that their recollection brought with it the painful memories of losing the Black Hills.

It should also be remembered that the late nineteenth century was a time when many Lakota and Cheyenne religious practices were being outlawed by missionaries and government officials. Understandably, people would have been reluctant to talk about some of these things, even with outsiders they respected and looked kindly upon. Many of the elders of the time certainly knew the whereabouts of spiritually significant sites, but as George Bird Grinnell (1910:574) wrote, nearly a century ago, certain sacred matters are simply not discussed and “excepting in rare instances the old men are reluctant to talk of these things, partly because the subject stirs up painful regrets and partly from the inherited feeling that these are matters which must not be talked of under any circumstances to anyone outside the tribe.” Some twenty years later, when Dick Stone (in Shirl 1982:14) attempted to collect stories about Devil’s Tower from Cheyenne elders, he was told: “There are some things we don’t like to talk about, that was a very ‘Holy Place’ to us.” There is no question that some of the rich body of sacred knowledge about the

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31 One of the well-known psychological effects of traumas associated with Diaspora is amnesia (Lifton 1961,1983). This can take many different forms, including the refusal to name and mention the places from which one has been dispossessed because it recalls the separation and the pain this evokes.
Black Hills held by the Lakotas and Cheyennes was kept secret during this time and off-limits to ethnographers.

A case in point involves one of the most important documents from this period. This is a map drawn by Amos Bad Heart Bull at the end of the nineteenth century that was not widely known until Helen Blish published a copy of it in 1967. The map (Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289) locates and gives the names of several significant sites in and around the Black Hills, including Bear Butte, Bear Lodge Butte, the Black Mountains, Warbonnet Creek, Old Woman Butte, Thunder Butte, Slim Buttes, the Buffalo Gap, Hot Springs, and the Race Track. It is one of the earliest tribal sources that actually document many of the sites to which Lakotas and Cheyennes of the same and subsequent generations attributed sacred properties. Many of these are sites that hold spiritual significance for other tribes too, including the Arapahos, Arikaras, Crows, Hidatsas, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Mandans.

1. The Race Track

The Race Track was identified as *Ki Inyanka Ocanku* [The Running Path] on Bad Heart Bull’s map (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289), and it was called *Okin’inyanka Ocanku* by another Lakota Wawoslata (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:264; Manhart and Buechel 1998:452). Contemporary names in Lakota include *Wamaka Xhan O’Ki’inyanke* [Running Path of the Animals] or *We Ok’papsun Xkokpa* [The Valley Where They Shed Their Blood] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:208). Also known as the Red Valley, this depression nearly encircles the Black Hills and crosses the eastern section of Wind Cave National Park. Samuel Hinman (1874:93) referred to it as “the great Indian trail leading around the hills,” when he toured the southern Black Hills in the late summer of 1874, and Henry Newton and Walter Jenney (1880:136) called it the “Race Course” when they traveled the area a year later.

In the early twentieth century, Eagle Shield, one of the Lakota consultants for Francis Densmore’s monumental text *Teton Sioux Music and Culture* (1918:319) spoke about its meaning, and Little Cloud narrated a story about it in Lakota to Reverend Eugene Buechel that was transcribed by Ivan Stars and entitled *Unkcekiha Kin Kiinyanka Ohiya* [The Magpie Wins the Race]. Although Little Cloud’s story was collected in May of 1915, it did not appear in print until 1978 when it was published in the book *Lakota Tales and Texts* (Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:94-96 [also, in Buechel and Manhart 1998:145-150]). In 1915, Wawoslata told Ivan Stars a story about Tall Dung performing a *Yuwipi* ceremony at an unspecified location along the Race Track that predicted the successful outcome of a raid (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:264-269; [also in Manhart and Buechel 1998:452-463]). In 1944, Nicolas Black Elk shared another Lakota rendition of the Race Track story with John Neihardt (in DeMallie 1984:309-310).

Four decades earlier, Alfred Kroeber (1900:161-163) published a narrative about the Race Track from the Cheyennes. In subsequent years, George Bird Grinnell (1926:252-254), Frank Marquis (collected in 1928 and published with Limbaugh in 1973:30-31), and Richard Randolph (1937:189-192) recorded other Cheyenne versions of the story as well. Described in greater detail in the next chapter, the various renditions of the story not only explain how the nature of relations between humans and animals was established, but they also account for many topographic features in the Hills including the Race Track itself. This is one of many cases where striking similarities are found in Lakota and Cheyenne interpretations of the cultural significance of sites.

32 The original map was buried with Amos Bad Heart Bull’s sister when she died in 1947 (Blish 1967: xx).
associated with the Black Hills. It is also a site that cultural resource officers from different Lakota and Cheyenne tribes told us remains very important to their tribes and needs protection (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

Within and beyond the Race Track, most of the sites appearing on Bad Heart Bull’s map can be organized into three general geographic groupings that roughly correspond with the southern, central, and northern regions of the Black Hills.

2. The Southern Hills and Their Peripheries

Closely connected to the Race Track and the stories of its importance is the Buffalo Gap. Marked and named Pte Tali Yapa [the Doorway of the Bison Cow] on Bad Heart Bull’s map (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289), the Buffalo Gap is located less than ten miles east of Wind Cave National Park. Another site in the southern Black Hills located on his map are the thermal waters at Hot Springs, Mnikahta [Hot water] also near Wind Cave National Park. Wind Cave, however, is not indicated on this map, although some of the spiritual significance attached to it by modern Lakotas is linked to early representations of the nearby Race Track, Buffalo Gap, and Hot Springs. Also not identified on Bad Heart Bull’s map are the rich flint quarries at Battle Mountain and Flint Hill or the rock art sites in Craven and Red canyons in the southern Hills. Warbonnet Creek and Old Woman Butte, located just outside the Hills’ southern borders, are located and named, however.

a. The Buffalo Gap

The Buffalo Gap was one of the sites singled out in early historic records because of its significance to local tribes. In early ethnographic sources, it appeared in a Cheyenne story about the Race Track published by George Bird Grinnell (1926:252-254), and it can also be identified as the location where quillwork originated among the Cheyennes because of its connection to the story of the Buffalo Wife in other Cheyenne texts (Grinnell 1972:2:385-391; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:9-24; Powell 1969:2:472-475). The Buffalo Gap’s name in Lakota also appears in a Little Cloud story published by Father Buechel in Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:96. In this story and another collected from Lone Wolf in Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:242-245 in 1915, the Buffalo Gap is called He Okiksaha [the ridge with a gap] and the land inside the gap is known as Tatanka makalhpaya [the Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull] (Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:95; Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:242).33 In Lone Wolf’s story, the Buffalo Gap is the location where a spiritual bison bull transforms himself into a human (see translation in Chapter Fourteen). Another contemporary name for the gap is Tatanka Ta Tiyopa (Black Elk, C. 1986a:210), identifying the gateway with the bison bull [tatanka] instead of the bison cow [pte].

The Buffalo Gap and other Hogback gateways to the Hills are identified today with the hero figure Stone Boy (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:29; Bucko 1998:208). In his travels, the hero confronts various dangers including the double-teeth bison of the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1926:178-182) and Iya or Waziya of the Lakota (Bad Wound in Walker, 1917:193-202, in Walker 1983:140-153). In these and other versions of the story (Wissler 1907:199-201; McLaughlin 1916:179-197; Old Walker in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:56-57 [also in Buechel and

33 Yvonne Kelly translated these names with the assistance of Jerry Dearly. These translations may very well have other meanings and metaphorical associations. They are different from Paul Manhart’s translations of Buechel’s texts. Manhart translates He Okiksaha as “Mount Abyss,” which is not the best way to interpret the name of this site.
Manhart 1998:5-20]; Deloria 1978:87-95; Sword in Walker 1983:89-100), most of which were collected in the early twentieth century, he is associated with the origins of the sweatlodge. In George Sword and Old Walker’s texts, he is also connected to the origin of pounds used in bison hunting.

Luther Standing Bear (1975:3), who was born in 1868, made references to the Buffalo Gap in two of the books he published between 1928 and 1934. In his work My People The Sioux (1975:19 [reprint of 1928 edition]), he described it as a passageway through which the buffalo entered the Black Hills to winter and where the people followed them to camp when he was a child. In the same era, Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:155-156) also identified the Buffalo Gap as a location for hunting and camping. In a later book Land of the Spotted Eagle (1978:43 [reprint of 1935 edition]), Standing Bear again described the importance of the Buffalo Gap as a gateway to some of the Oglalas’ favorite winter camping grounds. He wrote:

According to tribal legend these hills were a reclining female figure from whose breasts flowed life-giving forces and to them the Lakota went as a child to its mother’s arms. The various entrances to the hills were very rough and rugged, but there was one very beautiful and easy pass through which both buffalo and Lakota entered...Every fall thousands of buffalo and Lakotas went through this pass to spend the winter in the hills. Pte ta tiyopa it was called by the Lakotas, or ‘Gate of the Buffalo.’

One observation is worth making here about Standing Bear’s words, and that is the obvious contextual connection between the Buffalo Gap area and Lakota stories of fecundity and emergence, a linkage that is made very explicit in later published sources. His statement does not appear to identify the area as sacred in a literal sense, but metaphorically, his description of the Hills as a feminine force giving birth to life has strong spiritual roots not only in Lakota cosmology but also in Cheyenne and Kiowa traditions.

Although the Buffalo Gap is outside the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park, it is integrally connected to the Race Track and Wind Cave in Cheyenne as well as Lakota traditions. It remains a culturally important area today as evidenced in some of the contemporary sources discussed momentarily.

b. The Hot Springs

Although marked and named on Bad Heart Bull’s map as Mnikahta [Hot water], the spiritual significance of the thermal waters at Hot Springs is not well documented before World War II. There is one story, however, recorded for the Cheyennes by George Bird Grinnell (1926:193-200), in which a hero figure, Red Tracks, triumphs over a “Bad Hearted Man,” who has his lodge near these springs. A few references also appear in local history accounts, but most of them constitute the sort of legendary tales written for popular consumption. If we look beyond some of their flights of fancy, they contain certain elements of truth. In 1927, Badger Clark, the Poet Laureate of the state of South Dakota, published, through the Hot Springs Kiwanis Club, a book entitled When Hot Springs Was Still A Pup (republished in 1983). This includes a lengthy story about how Battle Mountain received its name from a hostile encounter between the Lakotas and Cheyennes over access to the region’s hot springs, which were known and valued by both for their therapeutic properties. He describes how after the Lakotas discovered the area: “...a band of Cheyennes, coming to the springs with their sick people as their fathers had done before them, found the strange intruders in possession of the canyon, and were by no means pleased...”(Clark 1983:3). A battle ensued and afterwards, he goes on to write:
That evening the Sioux plastered their wounds with mud made of the sacred red soil and spring water, and held a victory dance, but it was not long until they discovered that they were not to be left in undisturbed possession of their winnings. It was in the nature of a holy war, and the Cheyennes’ religious feelings would not let them leave the shrine (Clark 1983:4).

Whatever else one might gain from the story, one may presume that local whites, at the very least, recognized these hot springs had some spiritual value to the area’s native inhabitants. In their book The Black Hills Trails, Jesse Brown and A.M. Willards (1924:18) also wrote about the healing properties the Lakotas attributed to these waters. Twenty five years earlier, in 1899, Annie Tallent in her classic history The Black Hills or The Last Hunting Ground of the Dakotahs (1899:644,695) described the unverified battle34 between the Lakotas and Cheyennes near this site, and the moccasin-shaped stone used by them for bathing at one of the springs. She also wrote down some of the “Indian” legends35 that local whites associated with the springs, and one of these about a distraught maiden who flung herself over a precipice,36 was republished by S. Goodale Price (1935:45) nearly forty years later. Even though none of her stories appear to be tribal in origin, they at least acknowledge an indigenous connection to the springs.

Two decades earlier, in 1877, John Setter (in Richter n.d:1) sighted Lakotas bathing at the thermal waters where Hot Springs now stands, and in 1888, S. D. Cook wrote that the Lakotas called the region of Hot Springs mini kata and the springs proper, wiwila kata [Hot springs]. He went on to write that prior to their occupation of the area, the springs were possessed by the Cheyennes, who “built an immense city here which covered many hundred acres. The remains of this once great Indian city are still plainly apparent and the evidence is seen upon the lands adjacent to and within a circuit of many miles around the springs.” In fact, in 1940, a group of Cheyennes from Montana were reported to have visited one of their sacred springs near Hot Springs (Odell 1942:144). Over the years, many other local residents and visitors also commented on the Lakotas’ frequent use of these thermal waters in the early days of Hot Springs (Rosen 1895: 473-474; Tallent 1899:651-652; Casey 1949:284; Petty 1973; Williams, B. 1973:16, 30-31; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:143; Clark 1983:9, 23,26; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:293-294). One of Hot Springs’ long-time residents, Mary Bingham (1973:3-4), recalled how the Lakotas would cover themselves with mud from the springs and the Fall River to obtain relief from various ailments.

Although Luther Standing Bear (1978:51) did not single out these thermal waters in his writings, he does describe the reverent attitudes that Lakotas held towards springs and the reasons why they did so. As discussed earlier, springs were highly revered by all the tribal nations who occupied this region. Another Lakota name, Mni Woblú [Boiling Water], is the ascription for the nearby Fall River (Buechel 1970:339).

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34 Although this battle is seen as an important event in local history texts, confirmation of its occurrence is lacking in the oral traditions and winter counts of either the Lakotas or the Cheyennes. While hostilities did exist for a short time between segments of these two tribes at the turn of the nineteenth century, the likely combatants for a major battle at this locale are the Lakotas and the Kiowas (who might have included some of the Wotapio Cheyennes that apparently lived among them) or the Lakotas and Crows (a battle between these two tribes is reported to have taken place at the Buffalo Gap in some Lakota winter counts).

35 Tallent’s legends represent a genre of stories with European American origins that were popularized during the Victorian era and commonly associated with thermal springs throughout the United States, including Saratoga Springs in New York State. They constitute one of the common ways in which native landscapes are culturally appropriated by whites in tourist settings.

36 This story is remarkably similar to the suicide story of a young Dakota woman connected to one of the bluffs, called “Maiden’s Leap,” near Lake Pepin in Wisconsin.
Again, this area is located outside the borders of the park, but many of the stories associated with it are integrally tied to the Race Track and Wind Cave in the historic and modern cultural traditions of the Cheyennes and Lakotas (Herman 1965a, 1965b; La Pointe 1976:45-46, 79-84; Goodman 1992:61; Catches in Parlow 1983a:2-3; Catches in Gonzalez 1996:67).

c. Wind Cave

Wind Cave, also located near the Race Track, is not indicated on Bad Heart Bull’s map, nor is it explicitly named in any of the Lakota and Cheyenne texts collected by ethnographers before World War I. Nevertheless, versions of three Lakota stories collected by James Walker, when he served as a physician at Pine Ridge from 1896 to 1914, became associated with this cave in later years. One story, told by Long Knife (George Sword) (in Walker 1917:181-182, 1983:204-206), refers to a cave from which Tokahe and the Buffalo people, the Lakotas’ ancestors, emerged to the earth’s surface. Two stories narrated by Left Heron (in Walker 1917:183-190,212-215, 1983:109-117) specifically designate a cave in the mountains where a human man marries a woman of the underground buffalo nation. That the caves in Walker’s texts are not located or specifically identified with Wind Cave is not surprising since few of the narratives in his collections have any geographic placement. What is significant, however, is that different renditions of these stories came to be identified with Wind Cave by later generations of Lakotas (Herman n.d.; Herman in One Feather 1972:102-105, 149; Black Elk, H. in Theisz 1975:16-18; LaPointe 1976:79-84; Powers, M. 1986:38-42, 50; Lone Hill 1996:550-553). Also important are the early and recurring symbolic connections between caves, bison, and ideas of human emergence in these and other narratives from the Walker collection (Walker 1980:144, 229), all of which are consistent with contemporary Lakota and Cheyenne ideas about the role caves play in the emergence and regeneration of animals and humans.

In 1915, Asa Bad Yellow Hair told another version of the Buffalo Wife story to Father Eugene Buechel (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:66-69 [also in Buechel and Manhart [1998:91-93]). In this story, the Buffalo wife’s mother lives in a cave “in the hills” where she keeps the dead remains of the men she has taken captive. A third variation of the Buffalo Wife story was given by Left Heron to Dakota scholar Ella Deloria, who translated and published it in 1932 as part of a collection of Lakota (and Dakota) texts (Deloria 1978:86-89; also, in Rice 1994:67-126). Joseph Eagle Hawk narrated an abridged version of the story to Martha Beckwith (1930:399-400) in the 1920s. In his text, entitled “The Story of Blue Jay” he passes through a hill with a canyon in it that closes in on him, but there is no mention of a cave.

Lakota narratives of the Buffalo Wife have many of the same motifs as a Cheyenne story collected in the same time period and later associated with the Buffalo Gap and the Race Track (Grinnell 1926:87-103; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:9-22; Powell 1969:2:472-475). As reported in the previous chapter, the story of the Buffalo Woman or Buffalo Wife is told among many tribes in the northern Plains (Parks 1996:165). Most of the tribal nations who tell the story associate it with the origin of some kind of sacred knowledge. Narratives about subterranean encounters between humans and bison are present in other early sources on the Lakotas too (Bushotter in Dorsey, J. 1894:476-477; Judson 1913:53; Robinson, D. 1928:515; Little Wound in Walker 1980:124), and as discussed in the next chapter, the connection between caves, bison, and the breath of life is a ubiquitous theme in the sacred stories of tribal nations throughout the Plains (Powers, M. 1986:38; DeMallie 1987:28).

There are other early sources that provide more concrete evidence about the Lakotas spiritual relationship to Wind Cave. One comes from Catherine Stabler’s recollections of the cave (in Bohi 1962:391), in which she talks about a group of Lakotas singing as they toured the cave in the
1890s. This describes one form of prayerful communication common among the Lakotas when beholding a sacred place and encountering its spiritual presence. The other is found in an article from the *Custer County Chronicle* written by Rufus J. Pilcher (1964, n.p), a former superintendent at Wind Cave National Park. He describes an incident that took place in 1910 when Stinking Bear and his party requested permission to take a stone from the cave’s floor. He explains why he reluctantly allowed them to do so “because the amulet would cure the old lady of her lameness and good luck would be had by everyone including myself.” These are two of the earliest accounts we came across that suggest this cave had spiritual significance, and what they record is consistent with other early reports of the sacred nature and healing powers of caves in Lakota traditions.

There are also materials in park documents that suggest early spiritual connections to the area of Wind Cave National Park. A newspaper clipping from the Hot Springs Star (July 22, 1937) reveals how tribal elder Left Hand Bear associated the area with bison, health, and healing (his words are quoted in Chapter Six). In a letter sent to Edward Freelend the park superintendent, Charley Eagle Louise (1939) reiterates the connection between the park’s lands, the bison, and good health (also quoted in Chapter Six). Another unpublished document from this period is especially instructive. In a letter written to Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the National Park Service, on July 25, 1937, William S. Campbell a.k.a. Stanley Vestal, the well-known historian of Sitting Bull and White Bull’s lives, wrote that Wind Cave was a “sacred spot” to the Lakotas and that they called it the “Cave of the Winds.” Equivalent Lakota names provided more recently by Charlotte Black Elk (1986a:209) include *Tatoye Oyrulokapi* [The Opening of the Four Winds] and *Tate Waxun* [Cave of the Wind]. As Campbell’s letter reads:

> I have just returned from a trip into the northern plains, where I was doing research among the old Indians. On my way through the Black Hills I stopped at the Wind Cave National Park...While there I was given a booklet on the Wind Cave National Park...

In this booklet, I find a statement that the Wind Cave was discovered by a white man in 1881. Of course it was known to the Sioux Indians long before that. As I recall, their calendars show that they discovered the Hills about the time of the Declaration of Independence.

As you may know, the four winds were major deities of the Plains tribes, and wind was associated in their belief with the breath of life and the vital principle. Hence the Cave of the Winds was a sacred spot to them. Many of the Plains tribes had myths in which the story was told of how the buffalo first came out of a cave (I suppose this was an objectification of the fact that all flesh is made of earth), and Chief White Bull (Pte San Hunka), Sitting Bull’s living nephew, informed me that the Sioux believe that the Wind Cave in the Black Hills was the cave from which Wakan Tanka, Great Mystery, sent them out into the Sioux hunting grounds. This was a reason why the Sioux fought so hard for the Black Hills when they were invaded by the whites. The Chief also told me that some of his people still hoped that when they regained the favor of their gods, the buffalo would once more issue from that cave, and fill the Plains.

Not only does he identify Wind Cave as sacred to the Lakotas from information that White Bull shared with him, but he also clearly links it to Lakota stories of animal emergence. Campbell’s letter appears to have been taken seriously, because in a statement issued by the National Park Service (n.d), entitled “Know Your Service” (No. 12) and contained in the same document box at the Wind Cave National Park Library as the copy of the letter, is a printed description of Lakota beliefs about the cave that reads as follows:

> One thing pretty special to the Sioux aside from the plentiful game and other Indians to fight, was a little hole in the ground through which air whistled in and out. To the Indians of the
Great Plains this was the Home of the Four Winds, and thus a sacred spot, closely associated in their beliefs with the Breath of Life and the Vital Principle. To this general legend the resourceful Sioux added one of their own: According to Chief Joe White Bull (Pte San Hanka), nephew of the late great Sitting Bull, the Sioux like to think that Wakan Tanka, the Great Mystery, sent the buffaloes out through the wind crack to populate the plains with fresh meat. It was these convictions which fired the Sioux with such enthusiasm when they defended their Hills against the white man.

If we can assume that this was an officially approved document, probably one distributed to the general public, then we have evidence that the National Park Service agreed, almost word-for-word, with W. S. Campbell that Wind Cave was sacred to the Lakota people. A year later, in 1938, a similar statement about the cave appeared in *The Black Hills Engineer* written by the Superintendent of Wind Cave National Park, Edward D. Freeland (1938:272):

> From various sources have come colorful Sioux legends, the common theme of which seems to be that the cave was sacred, being the dwelling-place of the four winds. The buffalo lived there also, and when the Great Spirit is no longer displeased with his red children, the sacred animals will come forth again in great numbers from their subterranean home.

Excluding its message of divine wrath and redemption, this quote echoes some of the Lakota beliefs that Campbell spelled out in his earlier letter.

In the same era, Dick Stone gathered many stories from tribal elders about Devil’s Tower or Bear Lodge Butte. Recently, some of these stories have been republished in a booklet entitled *First Encounters: Indian Legends of Devil’s Tower* (edited by Shirl in 1982) and sold by the National Park Service at Devil’s Tower National Monument. It contains a narrative by One Bull (Stone 1982: 24), who told Stone that his uncle, Sitting Bull, had visited Wind Cave sometime in the mid-nineteenth century, suggesting that the Lakotas knew about it before it was “discovered” by European Americans.

The area of Wind Cave may also be associated with the genre of orphan boy narratives, including a Lakota Falling Star story that Nicolas Black Elk told Neihardt in 1944 (in DeMallie 1984:400-403) and that Iron Shell recounted in 1915 (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:24-36). In this cycle, the hero travels to several different star villages where he performs miraculous feats. In the one we believe is connected to the Wind Cave/Buffalo Gap region, Falling Star saves a village from starvation at the hands of Waziya. While this connection is entirely hypothetical, it is consistent with the theme underlying two other stories where Waziya or a giant figure is explicitly mentioned in relation to Wind Cave (Herman in One Feather 1972:149; Anonymous n.d., Manuscript in Wind Cave National Park Archives). As discussed in other chapters, the connection also makes sense given the long-held and ubiquitous idea among the Lakotas that bison come from the direction of the North Wind, Waziyatay, and his grandfather, Waziya. Also, one additional story in Black Elk’s Falling Star cycle (in DeMallie 1984:401-408) is specifically identified with a site in the Black Hills at Rapid Creek and another appears to be connected to Pe Sla, the high elevation central prairies of the Black Hills (Sundstrom, L. 1996:179-180, 1997: 195). There is also a parallel Lakota story of an encounter between Blood Clot Boy and Waziya near a cave that was preserved in the early twentieth century by Edward Curtis (1907-30:3:111-118). Cheyenne versions of the Falling Star (or Bow-Fast-to-His Body)

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37 Another subterranean location connected to Sitting Bull is a cave the Duhamel’s operated in the Black Hills and where Nicholas Black Elk performed. The name of the cave, Sitting Bull Cavern, was adopted because Sitting Bull was known to have camped in this area (Born 1994).
cycles are very similar to those of the Lakotas. One cycle was recorded by George Grinnell (1926:189-190, 209-211) and another by Richard Randolph (1937:37-42). Both include the story of the Winter Man. In the Cheyenne stories, one of the villages the hero saves is clearly identified with the lake below Bear Butte (Grinnell 1926:185-186).

**d. Craven, Red, and Hell’s Canyons**

Also situated in the southern Black Hills are Craven and Red Canyons, where some of the richest displays of rock art in the Black Hills are located (Sundstrom, L. 1990). Neither of these is identified on Bad Heart Bull’s map, even though later generations of Lakotas clearly held them in high regard. Craven Canyon is called Maya Kaka [The Cliffs of Writing] in Lakota (Black Elk, C. 1986a:210). Thomas Tyon told James Walker (1980:101), more than a century ago: “Some cliffs and hills are mysterious. A cliff with round rocks in it is mysterious. Certain cliffs had hieroglyphics on them; they were mysterious.” Nor were Battle Mountain and Flint Hill singled out on Bad Heart Bull’s map, even though both contain some of the richest flint quarries in the region (see Chapter Eleven). As the case with caves and springs, there are a number of sources on the Lakotas and Cheyennes that describe the generic spiritual importance of rock art but do not locate the specific sites to which it applies (Good in Mallery 1893:290; Densmore 1918; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984; Clark 1982 [reprint of 1885 edition]). These canyons are considered very sacred to the Lakotas today (La Poitie 1976:54-55; Around Him in Lewis, L. 1980:22; Eagle Hunter in Parlow 1983a:13; Red Owl in Parlow 1983a:21; Phylis Young in U.S. Senate 1986:48; Good Eagle in Little Eagle 2000:212-213). Another location not designated on the Bad Heart Bull map is Hell’s Canyon, which contemporary Lakota identify as one of the routes people followed in their ceremonial pilgrimages to the Black Hills (Black Elk, C. 1992a:51).

**e. Warbonnet (a.k.a. Hat) Creek and Old Woman’s Butte**

To the south and outside the Black Hills proper are Warbonnet Creek and Old Woman’s Butte, both of which are located on Bad Heart Bull’s map (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289). Warbonnet (or Hat) Creek, Wapaha Kagapi [Warbonnet Maker] is a tributary of the South Fork of the Cheyenne River. It is reputed to be the place where warbonnets were originally created (Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:290). This may also be the location, reported by Clark Wissler in 1912 (p. 72), where a spirit wolf visited a Lakota war party and gave them instructions on the manufacture of regalia associated with the Brave Heart Society.

Old Woman’s Butte, Winurcala Wanti, is a famous landmark north of Fort Laramie. Situated along the historic “Cheyenne” trail, which entered the Hills from the west along Stockade-Beaver Creek, it is associated with the story, reported earlier, about an old woman who predicts the success of a Lakota war party (Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:290; Sage in Haflen and Haflen 1956:268-272).

**3. The Central Hills**

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38 Falling Star stories appear among tribes throughout the Great Plains and with considerable variation. Not uncommonly, the stories are linked to the geographic area in which a tribe lives, and they contain implicit or explicit references to specific local landforms. The Cheyenne narrator of the Falling Star stories that Randolph (1937) collected explicitly locates them in the Black Hills.
Three locations in the central Hills are identified on Bad Heart Bull’s map (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289). Two are identified as Pe Sla [Bald Hill] and Mnilusahun [Fast Running Water]. The first name refers to the upland central prairie region of the Black Hills, specifically to Reynolds Prairie, and the second glosses the waterway known as Rapid Creek. The specific identity of the third location marked on Bad Heart Bull’s map in the graphic image of a spirit figure is not clear. Later interpretations associate it with two different places, Harney Peak or Inyan Kara Mountain. Another location, Sylvan Lake, is not on Bad Heart Bull’s map, but the region where it is located is widely regarded as a sacred place in Lakota traditions. All of these areas are important especially to contemporary Lakotas, and although they have a broad connection to the Wind Cave National Park region, the cultural meanings attached to them are different.

a. Rapid, French, and Grace Coolidge Creeks

European Americans identified Rapid Creek, Mnilusahun, by its Lakota name as early as 1859 (Raynolds in McLaird and Turchen 1974:49), but little about its spiritual importance appears in ethnographic sources published before World War II. The Cheyenne name for this creek is Haeoeohe (Petter 1913-15:124). In Black Elk’s myth cycle, this waterway is explicitly identified as one of the star villages that Falling Star visits (in DeMallie 1984:406). It is also the place where Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:159) reported that the famous medicine man Chips erected a sweatlodge in 1874 and received a vision warning people of danger. Areas along its mainstream and tributaries remain culturally significant to contemporary Lakotas (LaPointe 1976:89-91), and one of these Victoria Creek was the sight of the well-known and highly politicized Yellow Thunder Camp.

French Creek is not marked on Bad Heart Bulls’ map, although it is an area where rock art sites are found with probable Lakota attributions (Sundstrom, L. 2002). Grace Coolidge Creek and the great Council Oak on its lower reaches are associated today with one of the routes Lakotas followed when they traveled to the high elevation interiors to conduct their ceremonial observances. The start of this pilgrimage coincided with the time when the bison moved through the Buffalo Gap to the open prairies from their wintering grounds along the Race Track near Wind Cave (Black Elk, C. 1992a:50).

b. The Central Prairies: Slate, Gilette, and Reynolds

As noted earlier, the high elevation central prairies of the Black Hills were identified in the 1870s with sightings of an abandoned “medicine lodge” and a large stack of elk horns, both of which have spiritual significance. Indeed, one of the modern sacred names in Lakota for Reynolds Prairie is Heraka blaye [Elk flats], which is also known as Pe Xla [Bare/Bald Head], and Pe Hunkakoza [Head of Peace Making Rite] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:208). Neighboring Gilette Prairie is called Keyapia [Meadow of the Turtle] (Ibid:209), while Slate Prairie is known as R’e Xla [The Bare Ridge] or Tayamnipa [Principle of the Three Relations] (Ibid:208). This region was not singled out in early ethnographic writings, although Sundstrom (1997:195) speculates that this may have been one of the places Falling Star visited in the myth cycle Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:400-407) narrated in the 1940s. It was identified, however, as a site for eagle trapping in a Lakota winter count for the year 1807 (Colhoff in Powers 1963:29). The three central prairies are considered highly sacred today and the location for a ceremony known as
FIGURE 23. Sacred Sites In and Around the Black Hills

Bear Lodge Butte
Belle Fourche River
Limestone Plateau

Sundance Mt.
Bear Butte

Inyan Kara
Central Plains

Rapid Creek
Crystalline Core

Harney Peak
Sylvan Lake

Hogback

Wind Cave
Red Canyon

Buffalo Gap
Hot Springs

South Fork of Cheyenne R.
Warbonnet Creek
c. Castle Rock and the Cathedral Spires

West of Pe Sla on Bad Heart Bull’s map (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289) is a graphic image of a spirit figure with the name Hinyankagapa [owl maker/imitator hill] written below it. As Sundstrom (1997:190) notes, this name is frequently associated with Harney Peak, but the geographic placement is incorrect. She suggests that the figure, but not the name, might denote Inyan Kara Mountain, which is located west of these prairies. Based on some of the names that Charlotte Black Elk (1986a:209) compiled for locations in the Black Hills interiors, this image might refer to Castle Rock, known today as Hinhan Karata [Flapping Owl], which is located to the west of the upland prairies as opposed to Hinhan Raka [Rattling Owl], a name for the Cathedral Spires, situated to the east close to Harney Peak. Black Elk (Ibid.) also indicates that this site is connected to stories told to children that teach them how to properly behave or the “owl would get them.” In both Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, according to Helen Blish (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:290), Hinyankagapa is also known as Ghost Butte, and it is associated with a spirit buffalo bull that was often sighted but always disappeared into the rock.39 In 1940, a group of Cheyenne traveled to the nearby town of Mystic to locate their legendary “Hole-in-the-Wall” (Odell 1942 144).40

There are two famous stories, one Cheyenne (Marriott and Rachlin 1975:43-47) and another Lakota (Deloria, E. 1978:113-116), about an owl-maker associated with a high mountain whose geographic identity is unspecified. In these stories, which some Lakotas associate with Harney Peak, the owl captures and takes away small children (LaPointe 1976:89-91). I would suggest, however, consistent with Charlotte Black Elk’s interpretation (1986a:209), that a more likely geographic placement is Castle Rock, Hinhan Karata. As Sundstrom (1997:190-191) also notes, the name for ghost in Cheyenne is the same as the name for owl. Owls, as already described in Chapter Ten, are not considered birds but ghosts by the Cheyennes. Given the likely Cheyenne origin of these stories, it is not surprising that ideas associated with the two became conflated. The Lakotas also link owls and ghosts and believe that when an owl hoots, it foretells of death (Tyon in Walker 1980:165). In addition, one of the names of the female figure that admits the spirits of the deceased into the spirit world is Hinhan Kaga [Owl Maker] or To Win [Blue Woman] (Little Day in Hassrick 1964:298; Goodman 1992:22-23, 38).

d. Harney Peak and Sylvan Valley

Harney Peak and Sylvan Valley do not appear on Bad Heart Bull’s map. Many modern Lakotas (Black Elk, C. 1986a:206, 209) call the mountain Ox’kate Paha (Mountain of the Playful Thunder Beings) or Rpanta Yate [Territory Where Wakinyan Hatches His Young], names that are consistent with early historic descriptions of Lakota beliefs dating back to Denig’s writings in 1851 (Ewers 1961:6). The South Dakota Writer’s Project (1941:110), which collected Lakota oral traditions in the depression years, associated this site with the Thunders too, as did S. Goodale Price in his book (1935:44) on Black Hills legends. Harney Peak is most widely known as the place where Nicholas Black Elk was taken to the center of the earth as a child and received the Daybreak Star herb in an important and life-defining visionary experience (in DeMallie 1984:

39 Whether or not these are one and the same place is not known. David White (2002:203) claims that Hinyankaga Paha refers to a site at the head of the Moreau River near Spearfish, South Dakota.
40 A similar story of a spirit buffalo bull, incidentally, is connected with Wind Cave (see Chapter 14).
in his narratives, he spoke about it as the “center of the earth” (Ibid:258), and today, another sacred ascription for the peak is Opahata I [Mountain at the Center Where He Comes]. The common household name for this mountain is Paha Pestola [Pointed Hill] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:209). This is another location where ceremonial observances were conducted during the Lakotas’ spring ceremonial pilgrimages (Goodman 1992:12).

Also in the central Black Hills, but not on Bad Heart Bull’s map, is the area around Sylvan Lake, which is considered sacred to many modern Lakotas. In Stanley Vestal’s work (1934:73), it was identified as the location where, according to his nephews, One Bull and White Bull, the much revered Hunkpapa leader, Sitting Bull, had an important prophetic vision about his future role in Lakota society. In the stories he collected about Devil’s Tower, Dick Stone (in Shirl 1982:23) was told by One Bull that his grandfather often camped at this location during the winter months because its climate was more moderate than the surrounding plains. Obviously, all of these places are now submerged under the lake that was created in the twentieth century.

In the 1930s, the South Dakota Writer’s Project (1941:113-114) collected a story about the origin of Sylvan Lake’s distinctive rock formations and S. Goodale Price published a story in his Black Hills, The Land of Legends (1935:25-28) about an owl maker that he attributed to the Cheyennes. Its Lakota name does not appear in the published literature.

3. The Northern Hills and Their Peripheries

Five sites, Bear Butte, Black Mountain, Bear Lodge Butte, Thunder Butte, and Slim Buttes, on the northern side of the Black Hills or their peripheries are marked on Bad Heart Bull’s map (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289). Besides their importance to the Lakotas and Cheyennes, several of these sites have long been known to have sacred meanings for many other tribal nations too, including the Arapahos, Arikaras, Crows, Hidatsas, Kiowas, Mandans, and Plains Apaches. Indeed, most of the sites with documented multi-tribal cultural affiliations and with continuing spiritual significance to multiple tribes are located in this area. Two other sacred locations, the Cave Hills in northwestern South Dakota and the Medicine Rocks in southeastern Montana, are curiously not marked on the Bad Heart Bull map.

a. Inyan Kara Mountain

Inyan Kara Mountain is not identified on Bad Heart Bull’s map, unless it is the figure associated with the name Hinyankagapa drawn at a location west of Pe Sla. The name of this site, which European Americans adopted directly from the Lakotas in the 1850s, refers to the first act of creation when Inyan, the spiritual essence of stone, produced earth and sky out of its own movement or flow, Kara (Sundstrom, L. 1997:189-190). Today, it is also called Hor’ewin Ti Paha [Mountain Home of Creation], which is a sacred name denoting an old woman who quills a bison robe representing creation (Black Elk, C. 1986c:206). Intriguingly, in 1849, De Giradin (1936:62) learned that Harney Peak was called Inyan Kaga. How and why the Lakota names

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41 The tribal attribution of this story and the name of the owl figure are hard to trace. While the author acknowledges that he secured this and other stories in his book from the work of scholars like George Bird Grinnell, this one is hard to link with any story in the published literature other than one appearing some years later (Marriott and Rachlin 1975:44-47).

42 This has intriguing connections to Arapaho ideas of a female whirlwind figure associated with creation and the art of quillwork (Anderson, J.2000, 2001:103-104, 127-128).
associated with these peaks became conflated over the years is a complete mystery for which there are no ready or obvious explanations.43

To add further confusion, Sundstrom (1997:189) points out that John Bourke was told in 1877 by some Cheyennes that the Lakotas called Inyan Kara Mountain, *Ihancaja-paja*, “the butte where ghosts live” (Sundstrom, L. 1997:189). This translation makes no sense in the Lakota language unless the word is a corrupted form of *inyan kaga pa* [stone maker butte], as Sundstrom (1997:189) suggests, or it might be another name entirely, which means “the hill that ice passes through.”44 In Lakota, *ihan* means “to stand in or at” or “to remain” (Buechel 1970:216), while *paja* when combined with a verb denotes an action that moves or passes “through” or “into” something (Ibid:427). *Caja* might be a corruption of the word for ice *[caga]* (Ibid:113; see also discussions in Appendix C). The crystalline, ice-like appearance of gypsum formations that wind their way like ribbons through limestone formations may very well be what the name, *Ihancaja-paja*, denotes. This translation also makes sense for the general area, which is well known for its rich gypsum deposits, but it probably applies to another location, perhaps even the one that Ludlow described north of Inyan Kara Mountain along Redwater Creek. Historically, at least, gypsum powder was used by the Cheyennes and Lakotas to mark lines around ceremonial altars (Densmore 1918:122; Grinnell 1972:2:292; Schlesier 1987:93; Whiteman in Schultz 1988:54). Other than the names associated with this mountain, there is little published information on its meaning before pre-World War II. More recently, however, the region has been reported as a location for important ceremonial observances (Goodman 1992:12; Chirinos 1991:86-88; Black Elk, C. 1992a:51).

b. Sundance Mountain and the Black Buttes

Sundance Mountain, which is located in the vicinity of Bear Lodge Butte in Wyoming, does not appear on Bad Heart Bull’s map, although early references to its importance can be found in the literature on the Lakotas. Sundstrom (1997:193) reports that one account from 1886 identified it as the site of a summer rendezvous linked to subsistence activities and the Sun Dance. Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:366) described this area as the site of an old Sun Dance grounds for the Lakotas, and it was also recognized as such in the work of European American writers who wrote popular accounts about the Hills during the same period (Price 1935:42-43). 45 Several decades later, Rev. Peter Powell (1969:2:477) connected this site with some of the Cheyennes’ earliest Sun Dances.

The Black Buttes, west of the Black Hills and northeast of Inyan Kara Mountain in Wyoming, are marked on the Bad Heart Bull map as *He Sapa* [Black Ridge], but there is little we could find in early published sources that describe the specific nature of their spiritual importance to any of the tribal nations known to have occupied this area. This may have been the general area, already reported previously, where Ludlow (1875:15) found an outcropping of gypsum that local tribes were mining north of Inyan Kara Mountain.

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43 One possible explanation relates to the common practice of Lakota *Heyoka* (Contraries) inverting the names, and possibly even the locations, of places. Since Harney Peak is associated with their guardian, the Thunders, it is quite likely that they may have switched its name with another nearby site actually identified as Owl Maker Peak, *Hinhan Kaga Paha*.

44 Yvonne Kelly translated this word with the assistance of Jerry Dearly.

45 S. Goodale Price (1935:31-33) also offers a story about Spearfish Canyon, which comes from the work of the Rev. Peter Rosen (1895:438-442). The story is about the Little People. Although he claims the story is “Sioux,” the native words included in the story appear to be from an Algonkian rather than a Siouan language.
c. Bear Lodge Butte (a.k.a. Devil’s Tower)

This site is sacred to all of the tribes who were known to occupy the Black Hills in historic times and to other tribes as well. In the late nineteenth century, when they shared stories of their former homelands in the northern Rockies and Black Hills with James Mooney (1979:156-160, 322-324), the Kiowas talked about the spiritual significance of Bear Lodge Butte (Devil’s Tower), which they call *Tso ai* [Tree Rock]. Other early ethnographers, including Elsie Clews Parsons (1929:9-11) and John Harrington (1939:169, 174-176), also collected stories about this site from the Kiowas. The Kiowas’ story, common among other tribes, tells about a girl and her brothers being chased by a gigantic bear. As they stand on a tree stump, or rock in some versions, and pray to it for help, it begins to rise underneath them. The bear claws the side of the butte as it attempts to reach the children, who eventually are taken to the sky where they become the stars of the Pleiades constellation. Early on, similar stories were recorded about this site for the Arapahos (Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:152-153), Cheyennes (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:52-54; Randolph 1937:185-188), and the Hidatsas (Lowie 1939:220-227).

This landform appears on Bad Heart Bull’s map (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289) in a pictorial representation. Many tribes shared the same name for this butte, Bear Lodge, including the Cheyennes, who knew it as *Nakoewe* (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:51) and the Lakotas, who called it *Mato tipila*. It is explicitly named along with the Buffalo Gap in the Race Track story that Little Cloud shared with Buechel in 1915 (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:95), and it is also named as a vision questing site in a story Lone Man told Ivan Stars in 1920 (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:275-276; [also, in Buechel and Manhart 1998:472-474]). Harrington (1939:169) provided three other Lakota names for this land formation: 1) *Witchatchepaha* [Penis Mountain], 2) *Hinyin kaga paha* [Owl Maker Mountain], and 3) *Wanaghipaha* [Ghost Mountain]. The last two names were also applied to Harney Peak, Inyan Kara Mountain, and Castle Rock as noted previously. Today, the Lakotas have many different names for it including *Hu Nump Otiwita* [Sanctuary of Wisdom], with which the sacred bear [*Hu Nump*] is closely associated, and *Inyan Wiconi* [Stone of Life Renewed], a name linked to the observance of the Sun Dance held in its vicinity (Black Elk, C. 1986a:207).


d. Bear Butte

This site has long been recognized as a highly sacred place for many tribal nations. The Cheyennes and their close relatives, the Sutaios, called it, *Nowah’wus* (Teaching Hill). In his ethnographic monograph on the Cheyennes, first published in 1923 (1972:1:368-381, 2:201-202),

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46 I heard and read stories about the sacred significance of this sight to members of the Shoshone-Bannock tribes in Idaho when I conducted ethnographic and ethnohistorical work for them in the 1990s. This information, however, is privileged and confidential.
and in other publications (1909, 1910) as well, George Bird Grinnell ranked it as one of their most important ceremonial locations, the origin place of highly sacred religious objects, knowledge, and practices.\textsuperscript{47} Earlier in 1905, George A. Dorsey (1905:1-15,30-48) also acknowledged its place in Cheyenne origin stories and in the emergence of two of their most important ceremonies, the *Oxhehoem* [New Life Lodge or Sun Dance] and *Massaum* [Animal or Contrary Dance]. Dorsey never identified the place by name or location, but it is obvious from Grinnell’s later work that the “mountain” in Dorsey’s writings is unquestionably Bear Butte. Finally, the local historian Thomas E Odell’s self published book *Mato Paha: The Story of Bear Butte* (1942:9-20,140-152) contains excerpts of interviews with Cheyennes that reveal Bear Butte’s importance as an origin place for their Sacred Arrows as well as a major site for fasting and vision seeking. He also includes some of General Hugh Scott’s recollections of the Cheyennes’ strong religious attachments to this site in 1878 (Odell 1942:17-18).

In the same period, less substantial, but no less significant, information appeared on the importance of Bear Butte to the Lakotas, who call it *Mato Paha*. James Owen Dorsey (1894:448-449) quoted George Bushotter’s recollections of his visit to Bear Butte as a child:

> The mountain had many large rocks on it...The children prayed to the rocks as if to their guardian spirits, and then placed some of the smaller ones between the branches of the pine trees...Some trees had as many as seven stones apiece. No child repeated the ceremony of putting a stone up in a tree; but on subsequent visits to the Butte he or she wailed for the dead, of whom the stones were tokens.

This site also appears on Bad Heart Bull’s map (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289), and there is an early reference to it in one of Eagle Shield’s healing songs recorded by Francis Densmore (1918:256) that establishes its early connection to visions and medicine in Lakota traditions. Pretty Weasel narrated a story to Ivan Stars in 1915 that gives an alternate name for this site, *Wa-cinko Paha* [Pouting Butte], because of a young man who once sulked there. His actions led to wondrous events after which people left offerings of remembrance there (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:121-130; [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:201-225]). White Bull told Stanley Vestal (1934:92-93) that an elk spirit came to him in an oak grove west of the butte. The sacred importance of this site was recorded in a story about Crazy Horse collected by the South Dakota Writer’s Project (1941:111-112) in the 1930s. Thomas Odell’s book (1942:21-30) also includes materials from his interviews with Lakotas that reveal Bear Butte’s significance as a major location for fasting, vision seeking, Sun Dances, and Scalp Dances, and as a place to memorialize the deceased. This site has other names in Lakota, including *Sinte O Cunku Paha Wakan* [Sacred Mountain on the Road Along the Trail], or simply *Paha Wakan* [Sacred Mountain], and *Okawita Paha* [Gathering Mountain] and (Parlow 1983b:xii; Black Elk, C. 1986a:207).

Additionally, there are references (Sundstrom, L. 1996, 1997) on its importance to other tribes. One early source (Rosen 1895:54) connects a Mandan tradition of the Great Flood to Bear Butte and an annual pilgrimage from their home on the Upper Missouri to conduct ceremonies at this site. Even the Kiowas and Plains Apaches, long removed from the Black Hills, remembered Bear Butte and the lake beneath it as the source for some of their most sacred stories and objects (McAllister 1937:162; Mooney 1979:322-324).\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{47} The origin of their Sacred Arrows, *Mahots*, comes from Bear Butte and the use of shields is also said to have originated here (Price, S. 1935:21-22).

\textsuperscript{48} The Plains Apaches called this landform Black Rock (McAllister 1965:217).

\textit{e. Thunder Butte, Slim Buttes, and the Cave Hills}

\textit{Makinyan Paha} [Thunder Butte] and \textit{Baha Zizipela} [Slim Buttes] are also marked on Bad Heart Bull’s map (in Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289). Located outside the Hills, these buttes and the Little Missouri Buttes \textit{Unći Yapi} [The Grandmothers] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:207) have cultural significance to the Lakotas and other tribes as well, most notably the Hidatsas and Mandans (Bowers 1950, 1963). Of particular importance here is Ludlow Cave, not placed on the map, which is located in the Cave Hills north of the Slim Buttes. Some of the older traditions associated with this cave were recorded by members of the Black Hills Expedition (Krause and Olson 1974:19; Sundstrom and Keyser 1998; Sundstrom, L. 2002:110; Sioux Ranger District 2003:3:60-73; see also, Chapter Twelve), and a few of these bear a striking resemblance to early narratives about subterranean locations in the Black Hills, including Wind Cave.

\section*{5. The Black Hills As A Whole}

The literature from the pre-World War II era clearly suggests that a number of specific sites within or surrounding the Black Hills were held sacred because they were locations where spiritual happenings took place in mythic times, where sacred objects, knowledge, and performances originated in tribal memory, where communal ceremonial observances were held, and/or where individuals sought and received personal visions with extraordinary messages and meaning. But a question that remains unanswered is whether any of this earlier literature reveals a spiritual significance for the Black Hills as a distinct entity that transcends the sites contained within them.

In the case of the Lakotas, the answer is clearly yes. In 1893, Garrick Mallery published his work \textit{Picture-Writing of the American Indian}, in which he included Brown Hat or Battiste Good’s recollection (pp. 289-290) of a vision he received in the Black Hills (the specific location of which remains unidentified).

In the year 1856, I went to the Black Hills and cried, and cried, and cried, and suddenly I saw a bird above me, which said: ‘Stop crying; I am a woman, but I will tell you something: My Great-Father, Father God, who made this place, gave it to me for a home and told me to watch over it. He put a blue sky over my head and gave me a blue flag to have with this beautiful green country. [Battiste has made the hill country, as well as the curve for the sky and the flag, blue in his copy]. My Great-Father, Father God (or the Great-Father, God my Father) grew, and his flesh was part earth and part stone and part metal and part wood and part water; he took from them all and placed them here for me, and told me to watch over them. I am the Eagle-Woman who tell you this. The whites know that there are four black flags of God: that is, four divisions of the earth. He first made the earth soft by wetting it, then cut it into four parts, one of which, containing the Black Hills, he gave to the Dakotas, and because I am a
woman, I shall not consent to the pouring of blood on this chief house (or dwelling place),
i.e., the Black Hills.

The time will come that you will remember my words; for after many years you shall grow
up one with the white people. She then circled round and round and gradually passed out of
my sight. I also saw prints of a man’s hands and horse’s hoofs on the rocks [here he brings in
petroglyphs], and two thousand years, and one hundred million dollars ($100,000,000). I
came away crying, as I had gone. I have told this to many Dakotas, and all agree that it meant
that we were to seek and keep peace with the whites.

We cannot conclude very much from this because Good was speaking in bitter times, only a few
years after the Black Hills had been taken from the Lakotas. In his text, the words, “sacred” and
“spiritual” are never used to describe the Black Hills, but their presence is implied by the source
of the narrative -- a vision, which by definition is wakan. We can also deduce that the Black Hills
represented an extraordinary place. Not only did they constitute four distinct tiers of the cosmos,
but they were also a space where blood was not to be spilled. This is culturally significant.
Blood shed through war, parturition, and menstruation was understood by Lakotas to hold
properties inimical to the

We can also deduce that the Black Hills represented an extraordinary place. Not only did they constitute four distinct tiers of the cosmos, but they were also a space where blood was not to be spilled. This is culturally significant. Blood shed through war, parturition, and menstruation was understood by Lakotas to hold properties inimical to the...of other phenomenon that possessed wakan or created it in acts of religious observance (Powers, M. 1980). Peace, therefore, was not simply a political strategy: it was a necessary observance in a consecrated setting. This may explain, in part, why many of the reported raids on the early white prospectors and settlers entering the Hills took place at the gateways to the Hills and in regions outside the Race Track.49

Similarly, Luther Standing Bear (1978:44-45) expressed the deep seated emotional suffering
the Lakotas experienced after the Black Hills were taken, and he again alludes to their importance
as a site of birth and emergence when he writes:

Two lovely legends of the Lakotas would be fine subjects for sculpturing -- the Black Hills as
the earth mother, and the story of the genesis of the tribe. Instead the face of a white man is
being outlined on the face of a stone cliff in the Black Hills. This beautiful region, of which
the Lakota thought more than any other spot on earth, caused him the most pain and misery.
These hills were to become prized by the white people for reasons far different from those of
the Lakota. To the Lakota the magnificent forests and splendid herds were incomparable in
value...If the Lakotas had been relinquishing any part of their territory voluntarily, the Black
Hills would have been the last from the standpoint of traditional sentiment...

Standing Bear’s association of the Black Hills with genesis and a feminine force matches
cosmological connections made and recorded in the same period for the Cheyennes and Kiowas.
The Cheyennes, as noted in Chapters Nine and Twelve, believed that two female spiritual figures,
Grandmother Earth, Esceheman, and her daughter, the Yellow Haired Buffalo Woman,

49 Similar prohibitions against the spilling of blood were also reported in the early nineteenth century for another site
sacred to the Lakotas and Dakotas, the Pipestone Quarry in Minnesota (Nicollet in Bray and Bray 1976:72-85). Indeed,
contemporary Lakotas believe the Cheyenne River is a road that connects the Hills to this quarry (Black Elk, C.
Eyostopah, lived in sacred caves underneath Bear Butte where they nourished and guarded the game animals upon whose flesh humans depended (Schlesier 1987:79,82,102-104). The Kiowas’ called the Black Hills Sadalkani K’op [Tripe Mountains], which, as originally reported in the late nineteenth century by James Mooney (1979:419), referred to the intestines of a bison cow. Gadombitsonhit, Old Woman Under the Ground, is a Kiowa spiritual figure that is envisioned as a member of a dwarf-like race living in the subterranean habitats of the Black Hills and other mountainous regions (Mooney 1979:239).

Like Brown Hat, Standing Bear does not explicitly speak of the Black Hills as sacred or wakan, but, again by context and association, we can infer its implicit presence as a concept. He clearly emphasizes that the Lakotas saw the Hills and their surroundings differently than the Whites, and that the basis of this difference was rooted in the Lakotas’ sense of the relatedness and oneness of all living things. As discussed in great detail in Chapter Nine, this is a foundational precept underlying Lakota religious thought: it speaks directly to the cosmic singularity that is Wakan Tanka (DeMallie 1987:27-28). Moreover, the overall respect and veneration that Standing Bear expressed for the Hills is consistent with a Lakota understanding of wakan as something possessing a sacred quality and capable of generating an ultimate state of goodness (Buechel 1970:525).

The same can also be said about Nicholas Black Elk’s words regarding the Black Hills. Again, he never literally talks about them as sacred, but he refers to them in a variety of metaphorical ways typical of Lakota sacred forms of address (Black Elk, C. 1986b:192; Powers, W. 1986:11-41; New Holy 1997:113-154). This is especially clear in Black Elk’s rendition (DeMallie 1984:310) of the Race Track story in which he said:

...The Thunder-being told Red Thunder: ‘With this weapon the tribe shall expand and be mighty. So you go back to your people and teach them to make bows. Hereafter you can shoot buffalo.’ (Red Thunder: Wakina Luta [Wakinyan Luta]) They further told him that at the place where they had the race was the heart of the earth. He said, ‘Someday your tribe will be in this land.’ It was the promised land. ‘This land is a being. Remember in the future you are to look for this land.’ I think at the present time we found it and it is the Black Hills.

Similar to Standing Bear, Black Elk attributed a distinct animate quality to the Black Hills, which as all other living things in the Lakota world, manifest some measure of wakan (Brown 1992:6-10; DeMallie 1987:28-32). This is made even more emphatic by the idea that they were “the heart of the earth,” and in his vision at Harney Peak, “the center of the earth” (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:296), a sacred position recognized by the central placement of the hocoka (altar) within the circle of the Sun Dance and all other important Lakota ceremonies (New Holy 1997:113-154). It is also implicated in the reference to the “place they had the race” or the Race Track, a location long recognized as culturally significant and sacred to the Lakotas.

If we go back even earlier in time, as discussed elsewhere, we can see in the words of Red Cloud and other Lakotas the use of metaphorical expressions that impute a sacred quality to the region. Certainly, some of the early government agents among the Lakotas understood this, as did various newspaper reporters writing of the area in the 1870s. Even military men, such as Richard I. Dodge, admitted to this, but only as way to justify seizing the Hills because the Lakotas purportedly did not occupy them. So, it is curious that a century later some scholars (Parker, W. 1985; Feraca 1990; Chirinos 1991; Worster 1992) and journalists (Bordewich 1996) would argue that ideas regarding the Hills’ sacredness are recent inventions.
C. The Transitional Years, 1946-1981

From World War II until 1981, when Lakotas occupied lands at Wind Cave National Park, materials on the sacredness of the Hills as a whole or specific sites in their midst continued to appear in print. The published material, however, is very uneven. Although some of the richest information on Cheyenne and Kiowa sacred sites in the Black Hills comes from this period, the Lakota record is very sparse until the 1970s. This is the decade when a variety of publications begin to appear that explicitly identify sites in the Black Hills of sacred significance to the Lakotas and that also reveal the nature of some of their spiritual underpinnings. Most of these publications are based directly on Lakota sources and do not represent the views and interpretations of ethnographers.

1. Lakota Sources

Curiously, from 1946 to 1969, there is a striking absence of published ethnographic material on places in the Black Hills of spiritual importance to the Lakotas. It is difficult to know what to make of this except to note that anthropological interests at this time were generally directed towards documenting change and acculturation among the Lakotas, not recovering traditional knowledge, reinvented or otherwise. In his famous work *The Sioux: The Life and Customs of a Warrior Society*, Royal B. Hassrick (1964:75, 165) wrote that the Lakotas called the Black Hills their “meat pack,” a reference to its value in their historic subsistence cycle. He made no mention of its place in their spiritual life, however. Yet, even ethnographers (Malan and McCone 1959; Hurt 1960; Feraca 1961, 1998; Kemnitzer 1970, 1976; Powers, W. 1977) who conducted studies on Lakota religion during the 1950s and 1960s did not give much attention to geographic places of sacred significance to the Lakotas, including sites in and around the Black Hills. Generally speaking, their work focused on some of the more abstract tenets behind Lakota religion and/or the conduct of the ceremonies, which remained important in the mid-twentieth century, especially vision seeking, the Sun Dance, the Native American Church, and *Yuwhipi*.

This stands in marked contrast to a variety of different non-ethnographic publications, which were written locally and based on materials collected in the 1950s and 1960s. One of these is a remarkable book *To Kill An Eagle* published in 1981 by Edward and Mabel Kadlecak, local ranchers from Beaver Creek in northwestern Nebraska, and based on interviews conducted in the 1960s with over twenty different Lakota elders from the Pine Ridge, Rosebud, and Standing Rock reservations. The book is remarkable not only because of its geographic specificity, but also because it includes the verbatim narratives of the elders who described the significance of sites in Nebraska’s Beaver Valley and the nearby Black Hills. Harney Peak, Bear Butte, and other high peaks in the Hills were noted as locations where the Lakotas fasted, prayed, and sought visions (Bordeaux in Kadlecak and Kadlecak 1981:90-91; Gregg in Kadlecak and Kadlecak 1981:107; Kicking Bear in Kadlecak and Kadlecak 1981:118, Swift Bird in Kadlecak and Kadlecak 1981:146-147). Wind Cave was singled out in a story Stella Swift Bird (in Kadlecak and Kadlecak 1981:118) narrated about her grandfather and so were the neighboring Hot Springs. Also collected in the 1960s but published two decades later is a story about an eagle who saved a young girl and married her, eventually taking her to his home on the highest pinnacle of the Black Hills, obviously Harney Peak, when the earth was flooded (Lame Deer in Erdoes and Ortiz 1984: 94-96).

Another source of stories about Wind Cave comes from *Ehanni Ohunkakan: A Curriculum Resource Unit*, first published in 1972 (revised in 1974) and compiled by Vivian One Feather for the Oglala Sioux Culture Center. It contains many stories drawn from tribal elders in the 1960s.
and also from unpublished materials in the Dr. James Walker Collection at the State Historical Society of Colorado. It includes the Walker version of Tokahe’s emergence from a cave (Sword in One Feather 1972:102-105), but no explicit connection is made to Wind Cave. Instead, Wind Cave is linked to a different story narrated by Jake Herman (in One Feather 1972:149), a respected Lakota storyteller, well known rodeo clown, and a former member of the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council, who passed away in 1970 at the age of 77 (Cash and Hoover 1971:102-103; Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:142 n4). Another version of Herman’s story, whose lineage can be traced to an earlier narrative that Left Hand shared with James Walker, is found in an undated manuscript held at the Wind Cave National Park Library (n.d) and was probably recorded in the 1960s. Herman also wrote stories about the sacred significance of the Hot Springs, Bear Butte, and the Black Hills in general that appear in the One Feather collection (1972) and in other publications, including Oglala Sioux Historical Pictorial Booklet (1965a) and Historical Stories and Legends of the Oglala Sioux Indians (1965b), or as unpublished manuscripts in the collections of various libraries and archives, such as the South Dakota History Center and the American Indian Oral History Project at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion.

Wind Cave is also the subject of a story in Emerson Matson’s Legends of the Great Chiefs, published in 1972 and narrated by Edgar Red Cloud four years earlier. Unlike Jake Herman’s story, Red Cloud recounts an incident that took place within historic memory. This is also true of an article written two decades earlier on March 11, 1951, entitled “37 Years Haven’t Dimmed the Memory of Being Lost in Wind Cave” by Joe Koller and published in the Rapid City Journal. Reprinted in 1970 in Wi-lyohi, Bulletin of the South Dakota Historical Society, this is the earliest published reference we were able to find that links Wind Cave to a Lakota story with spiritual significance. Wounded Horse’s narrative is also not related to any stories that claim Wind Cave is the origin place of humans or bison. Instead, like Stella Swift Bird and Edgar Red Cloud’s accounts, it is a story about a mysterious event that unfolded at some point in historic memory.

A collection of contemporary Lakota oral traditions, Buckskin Tokens: Contemporary Oral Narratives of the Lakota (1975), edited by Ron Theisz, contains a series of traditional stories told by Lakota elders and audiotaped at Sinte Gleska College in Rosebud, South Dakota in the late sixties. Some of these narratives are site-specific, including a story about Wind Cave by Henry Black Elk, a descendant of the famous Nicholas Black Elk. In its essential features, this story is very similar to Jake Herman’s, and its lineage can be traced back to renditions of the Buffalo Wife story that Left Heron told James Walker and Ella Deloria in the early twentieth century. It also contains a Stone Boy story with possible connections to the Buffalo Gap by Kate Blue Thunder. Richard Erdoes also edited a collection of Lakota stories in a book entitled, The Sound of Flutes and Other Indian Legends (1976). In one narrative, Eagle Elk (pp. 33-36) tells how small thunderbirds once lived in the Black Hills near Harney Peak but left after the area became desecrated by tourist attractions, and in another text, Crow Dog (pp. 108-16) tells his version of a Stone Boy story.

Another very important work from this period is Legends of the Lakota (1976) by James LaPointe, a boarding school educated Lakota who was born on the Pine Ridge Reservation on April 6, 1883 (Giago 1999:85-87). Wind Cave and most of the other places LaPointe writes about are located in the Black Hills, and many of them correspond with locations marked on Bad Heart Bull’s early map of the region. In relation to Wind Cave, which he names Washun Niya [Breathing Cave], he tells the story of how Taopi Gi [Returns Home Wounded] brought the buffalo to the people through his marriage to a buffalo woman. This narrative shares many features in common with Left Heron’s Buffalo Wife story. LaPointe writes about how Wind Cave is not only connected to the Buffalo Gap in Lakota traditions, but to the Hot Springs as well (LaPointe 1976:45-46, 79-84, see Chapter Fourteen for details). He also had things to say about
Harney Peak, which he describes as part of the *Chokata*, a sacred and centrally located altar. He names it, *Hinhan Kagha Paha*, and associates it with the story of an evil, owl-like figure that abducts children and young animals (Ibid:89-91). In LaPointe’s version, the monster gets slain by Falling Star, the “divine helper of the Lakota people.” Falling Star also intervenes on the people’s behalf in another of LaPointe’s stories (Ibid:74-76) that takes place on the northeastern side of the Black Hills at Rapid Creek, *Mini Lusahan Wakpa* [Fast Water Creek]. The story of Red Canyon in the southcentral Black Hills, he relates a story about the journey of Fox Man and the wisdom he gained from *Inyan Owapi* (rock writing) that served him well and laid the foundation for the formation of the *Tokala* [Kit Fox] Society, a warrior organization among the Lakotas (Ibid:54-55). Bear Butte, according to LaPointe (Ibid:38-41), has many different spiritual meanings for the Lakotas, one related to healing and to the story of the bear after whom the mountain is named, another connected with the *Chekpa Oyate* [Twin Nation] who are guardians of twins and reincarnation, and many others associated with *hanblecheya* or vision seeking. Finally, Bear Lodge Butte is another site for a Falling Star story, but even more important, LaPointe claims it as the origin place for the Lakota Sun Dance (Ibid:66-68).

Comparing LaPointe’s stories for different parts of the Black Hills, it is clear that, more than any other location in the region, Wind Cave is closely associated with bison and game animals, although it is strongly linked to Little People, medicinal plants, and healing too. The other sites he describes don’t focus as much on the procreativeness of game, nor do they place as much emphasis on a subterranean universe. Lakota notions about Bear Butte make connections to an underground world, but these are not as comprehensive as the Cheyennes’, nor are they as extensive as those associated with the Wind Cave area.

The idea that the entire Black Hills is a sacred space for the Lakotas is also evident in LaPointe’s writings. It is revealed in his narration of the Race Track story (1976:17-20), which tells how the Hills rose out of a flat space through the energy released by the animals’ racing, and how the race determined the outcome, the present order, and relationship of humans to animals. LaPointe (1976:3,13) also argues that the Black Hills were the concrete embodiment of the Lakotas’ worldview. As he states:

> The Lakota loved the Black Hills for reasons vastly different [from the whites]. They held the Hills as a shrine, a sanctuary for both beast and man. It was a winter haven for the beast of the land a traditional place of procreation, under the protective shelter of the pines and the deep canyons, a place for worship, where the spiritual yearnings of bewildered mankind were calmed (LaPointe 1976:142).

And that they:

worshiped in the Black Hills ages before the white man came. Through this religious association he came to know every stream, the valleys, and from atop the craggy hills he knew awe when he viewed the breathtaking, panoramic land of the Black Hills, even as we see them now. With utmost devotion and faith, the Lakota traversed the very center of the Black Hills. The absurd notion that thunder gods, ghosts of ancestors, and evil spirits kept the

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50 This is also a site in one of the Falling Star stories that Black Elk shared with Neihardt in the 1940s.
51 This may be related to the origins of warbonnets and the Brave Hearts reported on earlier. In an interview with Lucy Lewis (1980:76), John Around Him, a Lakota elder, talked about how some of the petroglyphs in the Black Hills predicted whether there would be war or peace in the coming year.
52 On a recent trip to Sinte Gleska Tribal University (June 2003), a visit to the college’s bookstore revealed that this book and many of the others referenced here, written or narrated by Lakotas, were supplementary or required readings for classes on Lakota culture.
Lakota from venturing into the very central part of the Black Hills is absurd (LaPointe 1976:15-16).

In the same year LaPointe’s book was published, Gilbert Walking Bull (1976) published a book of Lakota stories, entitled Wo-ya-ka-pi: Telling Stories of the Past and Present, including one about the Race Track. Three years later, Rosebud Yellow Robe (1979) published another collection of Lakota stories, entitled Tonweya and the Eagles and Other Lakota Indian Tales, which contains references to areas in and around the Black Hills, including Bear Lodge Butte. Also in the 1970s, Thomas Mails (1972) published Fools Crow’s autobiography. The most important aspect of this book is the detail it provides about the history of Fools Crow’s fasts, prayers, and vision seeking at Bear Butte and also his involvement in the revitalization of Lakota religion in the 1970s. Starting in 1914, when he was taken to Bear Butte to seek a vision as a boy, until 1965, when he received his greatest vision there, he describes in some depth the chronology of the spiritual knowledge he received at this site, much of which was associated with his work as a Yuwipi and bear healer (in Mails 1972:86-87, 95, 102, 109, 149, 151, 169-171, 181-184). In the 1970s, Bear Butte gained considerable stature as a vision seeking location among the Lakotas and other tribal nations. This was not only a continuation of past practices for the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas, but also a result of its association with spiritual leaders, such as Fools Crow and Pete Catches (and Catches 1990), who guided many young Lakotas through their own fasting and vision seeking at this spot. Today, many of the Lakotas who apprenticed under Fools Crow and Catches are now elders themselves, and they are currently training future generations of Lakotas in this tradition (Forbes-Boyte 1996; 1999).

There is no doubt from the perspective of people who were tribal elders from 1950 to 1981 that the Black Hills are sacred to the Lakotas, a focus of their deepest veneration and spirituality. Their position then, and in later years, is quite explicit in this regard and is stated even more strongly and directly than some of their predecessors (i.e., Battiste Good, Standing Bear, Black Elk), whose sentiments on this subject were recorded well before Red Power and the rise of Lakota political activism in the 1970s. It might be argued that the timing of James LaPointe’s book lends credence to the position that its ends are political, and its stories shaped to justify the return of the Black Hills to the Lakotas on religious grounds. This seems unlikely. The author himself explains his reasons in the Preface, and these have everything to do with a nostalgic remembrance of his past, passing a cultural legacy onto his children, and little to do with political strategizing. Or it might be argued that Fools Crow’s religiosity and reverence for the Black Hills were manufactured for a political purpose, since he was active in the treaty-rights movement and other political struggles of the time. But again, it is hard to sustain this position given the history of his spiritual attachment to the region that extends back to the early years of the twentieth century, even predating the popularity of tourism in the area after the 1920s.

Importantly, while specific references to sacred locales in the southern Hills are generally lacking in writings on the Lakotas prior to World War II, these represent a significant portion of the literature dealing with Lakota sacred geography in later decades. The reason for this is difficult to determine, but it is noteworthy that places such as Hot Springs and Wind Cave receive as much coverage in publications from the 1950s and 1960s as Harney Peak and Bear Butte, which are widely acknowledged as sacred places to the Lakotas.

2. The Ponca Material

James Howard’s monograph (1965a:20) on the Poncas includes the first reference to Wind Cave in an ethnographic publication. It comes from an historical manuscript that Peter LeClaire, a Northern Ponca, shared with James Howard. Originally written in 1928 and then revised in
1947, much of it was based on information LeClaire learned from an elderly Southern Ponca chief by the name of Mazahade a.k.a. John Bull. It reads:

The Wind Cave in the Black Hills was found by the Poncas. It is called the hill that sucks in or the hill that swallows in Pah-hah-wah-tha-hu-ni.

The timing of this discovery is vague, but it probably took place sometime before the 1770s when the Ponca were still traveling to the Rockies and the Black Hills for their semi-annual bison hunts. There is no mention, however, of any sacred meaning attached to the site, although caves and other subterranean locations figure prominently in Ponca and Omaha origin stories (Dorsey, J. 1890).

3. Kiowa and Plains Apache Sources

A couple of important sources appear on the Kiowas and Plains Apaches from 1945 to 1969 that offer detailed readings of their spiritual connections to the Black Hills and its outlying formations, especially Bear Lodge Butte and Bear Butte. Even after a century of reservation life in Oklahoma, the Kiowas still remembered their former homeland in the Black Hills. They retained traditions about Bear Lodge Butte, which are connected to the origins of some of the their most sacred ceremonies (Nye 1962:49-50; Marriott 1968:140; Momaday 1969:7-8). One of the more detailed stories about a tribal connection to Bear Butte also comes from this period; it pertains to the origin of the Plains Apaches’ Four Quartz Bundle, which was given to its original owner at the lake beneath the butte (McAllister 1965:210-224).

4. Cheyenne and Arapaho Record

In contrast to the Kiowas and Plains Apaches, who knew traditions associated with the Black Hills but do not appear to have maintained an active onsite ceremonial attachment to them, the Cheyennes continued to actively engage and renew their sacred relationship to the region, especially at their holiest site, Bear Butte. Three important works from this era, Llewelyn Hoebel’s The Cheyenne People (1960), John-Stands-in-Timber and Margot Liberty’s Cheyenne Memories (1967:19-24, 41) and Reverend Peter Powell’s two volume treatise Sweet Medicine (1969:1:4, 18, 41, 2:467-469, 472-475, 483, 571) offer modern renditions of sacred stories relating to the Black Hills, including more recent versions of Sweet Medicine’s experiences on Bear Butte and the Race Track story. These and other sources (Marriott and Rachlin 1968; Ottaway 1970; Schlesier 1974) present concrete evidence of how sacred stories were remembered and recreated in the context of contemporary Cheyenne and Suhtaio religious observances. They tell how modern ceremonies conducted in Oklahoma and Montana, where the Cheyennes’ reservation homes are now located, symbolically recreate the geography of Bear Butte, and they also explain why the Cheyennes continue to travel to this site to seek visions and conduct other religious observances, especially the renewal of their Sacred Arrows and Sacred Hat (Stands-In-Timber and Liberty 1967:89, 90; Powell 1969:1:xxiii, 366, 390-391, 2:412, 414, 416-419, 423-424, 494). Likewise, the neighboring Arapahos (Trenholm 1970:80) continue to look towards Bear Butte as a site for spiritual inspiration, the place where their sacred pipe was revealed and a location for fasting too.

D. Modern Readings, 1982 to Present

Over the past three decades, there has been a stunning outpouring of published materials dealing with the sacred significance of the Black Hills, not only for the Lakotas and Cheyennes
but other tribal nations as well. The richness of more recent documentary sources is directly related to the renaissance of tribal religious belief and practice since the 1970s, and it is also linked to contemporary efforts to preserve indigenous languages and culture traditions through the work of tribal colleges and culture preservation offices. Although some of this writing involves new forms of interpretation, it does not depart in any significant way from earlier documents. Not only is there a striking continuity in the places regarded as sacred, but there is also a remarkable persistence in the spiritual meanings attached to these sites.

### 1. Lakota Narratives

Before 1981, most of the literature on the Black Hills’ sacredness to the Lakotas was not politically motivated. The same cannot be said for some of the writings by Lakotas in subsequent years that were clearly influenced by the political climate of the times. In the early 1980s, the Black Hills Steering Committee (BHSC) played a major role in documenting the sacredness of the Hills and in making this information available to Congress as part of the testimony surrounding the Sioux Nation Black Hills Act sponsored by Senator Bill Bradley. According to Gerald Clifford (U.S. Senate 1986:168), coordinator of the BHSC, “Individuals affiliated with the Black Hills Steering Committee have been conducting primary research on oral traditions and cross-referencing these legends with accepted scientific research.” Included in the report on the Sioux Nation Black Hills Act [S.1453], heard before the U.S. Senate’s Select Committee on Indian Affairs, are the testimonies of well known and respected Lakota religious leaders, such as Fools Bear (U.S. Senate 1986:43), and Reginald Bird’s Head (U.S. Senate 1986:83), who said:

> You would understand how we feel about the sacredness of these lands and why restoration is necessary. There are thousands of us who believe, as our ancestors before us believed, that the Paha Sapa, the Black Hills are very holy. All the Black Hills is like a temple to us. There are certain places in the Black Hills like Wind Cave and Mahto Tipi which the non-Indian identifies as the Devil’s Tower, and others that are emergence sites for some of our people. There are numerous places where our sacred ceremonies and common ground are still being held (emphasis ours).

Also, there is the testimony of Lakota scholar Charlotte Black Elk, accompanied by several important written statements by her and the Black Hills Steering Committee. One of these presents information on two buffalo robes: the first contains a map of important topographical features in the Black Hills and the second a map of the constellations associated with them. These robes, which had been kept secret until then, reveal what Lakota elders had long said: that the Black Hills’ topography mirrors the constellations in the Lakotas’ Falling Star cycle (Black Elk, C. 1986:189-190). Another refers to Long Knife’s narrative of Tokahe and the emergence of the Lakota people as well as a more recent version of the Race Track story (Black Hills Steering Committee 1986:196-202, 203-204). Finally, a list (Black Elk, C. 1986a:205-210) of names for sacred sites in the Black Hills is given along with their meanings.

Directly related to, and indeed, some might even argue, a direct result of the research behind Lakota testimony for the Bradley Bill, is a book written and edited by Ronald Goodman (1992 [reprint of 1982 edition]) of Sinte Gleska University, entitled *Lakota Star Knowledge: Studies in Lakota Stellar Theology*. Its original purpose was to gather together curriculum materials for Lakota students in K-12 and higher education institutions (Goodman 1992:2), and it is the first published effort to systematically link the Black Hills and its various sacred sites to a cosmologically integrated ceremonial complex. It is worth examining here in some depth.
According to Goodman (1992:1), certain constellations in the sky and certain physical features in the Black Hills are understood to mirror each other. Each spring, as these constellations moved across the sky, a select group of Lakota religious leaders would follow their movement through the Black Hills, performing particular ceremonies at specific times as directed in their star maps and oral traditions. He further asserts:

Traditional Lakota believed that ceremonies done by them on earth were also being performed simultaneously in the spirit world. When what is happening in the stellar world is also being done on earth in the same way at the corresponding place at the same time, a hierophany can occur, sacred power can be drawn down; attunement of Wakan Tanka can be achieved (Ibid:1).

The link, as it is formed when the activities of the star world match those of the Black Hills, is represented by two cone-shaped vortexes attached together at their apex as follows:

![Diagram of cone-shaped vortexes]

Each vortex (the top one descends from the stars, while the bottom ascends from the earth) channels a force that twists together with the other to create a powerful emanation (Ibid:31). As Goodman (Ibid:18) writes: “Sacred above grandfather and sacred below grandmother represent the two cosmic principles which together form a single unity; restoring a oneness to the One, the always and the only One -- Wakan Tanka” (Ibid.).

During a three month period from the spring equinox to the summer solstice, the sun travels through four Lakota constellations which are connected by oral tradition to specific places in the Black Hills. By synchronizing their arrival at each of the four sites with the entrance of the sun into a corresponding constellation, the Lakotas were following the sun’s path on earth. Furthermore, by being at the right place at the right time and doing the appropriate ceremonies, the Lakotas hoped to receive spiritual power from the Wakan Waste, the cosmic powers of good (Goodman 1992:11-12). As Goodman (Ibid:7) represents the Lakota perspective, the Black Hills constitute a “micro-cosmic hoop out of which annually new life is born.” In other words, it is a “consecrated enclosure.” The Race Track or the Red Valley is the physical manifestation of the circle within which the sacred space of the Black Hills was created, and it is linked to a circle of constellations known by the same name, Ki Inyanka Ocanku [the Race Track] or Can gleska wakan [the Sacred Hoop].

Later in the book, Charlotte Black Elk (1992b:44-45) gives her modern version of the Race Track story (the same one attached as a written statement in her testimony before the Senate, 1986c). In its essential features, it is basically identical to earlier ones appearing in the literature, including the version her great-grandfather narrated to John Neihardt. When a certain star, Capella, approached the sun, Charlotte Black Elk (1992a:50) wrote, people moved to an eastern entrance into the Hills for an annual ceremonial cycle which began and ended at this site:

As the bison entered through the Buffalo Gap, the Lakota entered at the Maka Can Opaya, Valley of the Council Oak. We were now entering back into our home in the spirit of renewal and regeneration, passing through the Wamakaskan Oki Inyanke, Running Path of the Animals, the red formation circling the Black Hills.
In describing the entire ceremonial pilgrimage, Black Elk (Ibid:49) writes:

Each spring a small group composed of especially devoted members from several Lakota bands journeyed through the Black Hills, synchronizing their movements to the motions of the sun along the ecliptic. As the sun moved into a particular Lakota constellation, they traveled to the site correlated with that constellation and held ceremonies there. Finally, they arrived at Devil’s Tower at midsummer for the Sun Dance where they were joined by many western Lakota bands.

After entering the Hills in the Valley of the Council Oak, probably Grace Coolidge Creek near Hermosa, South Dakota, the celebrants moved to Harney Peak, which is associated with the constellation Pleiades and the story of the seven little girls, Wicincala sakowin (Goodman 1992: 1, 3, 7). At Harney Peak, the Lakotas performed a ceremony called Yate Iwakcipi [Dancing for the Thunders] (Ibid:12). Charlotte Black Elk (1992a:50-51) also describes what happened at this site:

When the sun is aligned with the Tay ammonia, Principles of the Three Bodies, we are among the Grandfathers. The leaves of the shielding tree that whispers, the aspen, are now the size of a thumb nail. We travel to Opaha Ta I, Mountain at the Center Where He Comes, and welcome the thunders back for another season of renewal.

Once the ceremonies were performed to welcome the Thunders, the Lakotas moved to the prairies on the central Limestone Plateau to conduct additional rituals. This area is associated with the three stars of the Tay amni Cankaku constellation, each of which is linked to a different prairie -- Keyapiya (Turtle or Gillette), Tayamni (Bear or Slate), and Pe Sla (Bare Place or Reynolds) (Black Elk, C. 1992a:50-51). Here a ceremony of peace and renewal was conducted, called Okslataya Wowahwala [Peace at Bare Spot] (Goodman 1992:8, 13, 16; Black Elk, C. 1992:50-51). According to Goodman (1992:13), the ceremony involved “feeding the plants by pouring water into the earth; scattering seeds for the birds, and an offering of tongues for the meat-eaters.” This has some parallels to the Cheyenne Massaum ceremony, which was also practiced in the Hills and coordinated to celestial markers (Schlesier 1987:88-104; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:68-70).

After the ceremonies were completed on the central prairies, some of the people moved west and collected stones at Inyan Kaga, which carries the sacred name Pte He Sapa [Black Buffalo Horn], for use in the ceremonial sweatlodge at the Sun Dance. Others moved south through Hell’s Canyon to conduct ceremonies of an undisclosed nature in the southern Hills (Goodman 1992:12; Black Elk 1992a:51). The main group then traveled to Bear Lodge Butte, whose sacred name is Pte He Gi [Grey Buffalo Horn], where the annual Sun Dance was held when the sun entered the constellation Mato Tipila. This site is identified with a Falling Star story too, and the origin place of the Lakotas’ sacred pipe (Goodman 1992:4, 9, 12, 14; Black Elk 1992a:49,51). After the Sun Dance, people went to Bear Butte, which holds the sacred name Pte Pute Ya [Buffalo’s Nose], where important national councils were held (Goodman 1992:13-14). This site also goes by the proper name Sinte O Canku Paha Wakan [Sacred Mountain on the Road Along the Trail], which refers to the idea that the Black Hills is a south facing buffalo (Black Elk 1986a:207). The last three sites on this ceremonial pilgrimage form a triangle which the Lakotas called the ‘Buffalo’s Head.’ During the time when ceremonies took place before and after the Sun Dance, this head became spiritually alive, and its sites were addressed by their sacred names (Goodman 1992:13).
FIGURE 24. Spring/Summer Ceremonial Pilgrimage of the Lakotas

Returning to the location where the ceremonial pilgrimage begins and ends, there are some additional points of information with relevance to the general area of Wind Cave. The season before the people gathered at the Valley of the Council Oak to conduct their ceremonial cycle corresponded with the time when the sun approached a constellation the Lakotas call Cansasa Ipusye [Dried Red Dogwood], which is formed from stars in Triangulum and Aries (Goodman 1992:7). This time marked the season of the year when Lakotas gathered materials for their tobacco mixtures. These included various ingredients made up largely of the inner bark of the red dogwood combined with dried willow and kinnikinnick, which in this region is found primarily in the Black Hills. The Lakotas believe that the red dogwood used in tobacco must be gathered after the first frost in autumn and before thunderstorms arrive in spring (Black Elk, C. 1992a:59). According to Goodman (1992:7), “Cansasa Ipusye was also an esoteric shamanic expression for the wooden spoon used ritually to carry a live coal from the fireplace to light the contents of the Pipe during the smoking of the Sacred Pipe.” The pipe ceremony conducted at this season corresponded with the arrival of newborn buffalo calves who appeared on the prairies from their birthplace in the Black Hills by way of the Buffalo Gap (Black Elk 1992a:50). When the buffalo moved through this gap in the spring, the Lakotas entered the Black Hills to conduct ceremonies to celebrate life and its renewal.

Another constellation, the Big Dipper, was sometimes called Cansasa Ipusye, and it also served as a metaphor for the ladle that lights the Sacred Pipe (Goodman 1992:7; Black Elk, C. 1992a:59). Curiously, one of the stars in this constellation is called Tokahe after the name of the leader of the Buffalo people qua humans who lived in the cave formations underneath the Black Hills (Black Elk, C. 1992a:58). The bowl of the constellation is associated with the story of Falling Star’s mother who, while digging turnips, opens a hole in the sky and falls down to earth where she dies. Her son is raised by the meadowlarks. This woman, To win [Blue Woman], occupies the empty space between the four stars in the dipper’s bowl, and she is regarded as the spirit who guides women in childbirth but also the one who helps the spirits of the deceased find their path to the Milky Way (Goodman 1992:3, 22-23, 38). 53

This is the sky connection to the stories mirrored on earth that relate the ideas of birth and regeneration to Wind Cave and its environs. Wind Cave and the Hot Springs embody a primordial subterranean presence personified in the form of a buffalo. Goodman (1992:61) puts it this way, “We have heard the entire Black Hills frequently referred to symbolically as ‘A Buffalo,’ with Wind Cave as the opening of the womb, Hot Springs representing ‘milk’ and the Buffalo Gap leading to the outer world of the prairie.” From the perspective of modern traditionalists, at least, not only does Tokahe appear as a star on the ladle of a constellation which gives life to the sun and the people, but he also appears on earth in connection with a cave and an area that begins a ceremonial cycle renewing the sacred fire and pipe each year, a cycle that connects the origin of the Lakotas to Wind Cave and their rebirth to Bear Lodge Butte with the coming of the White Buffalo Calf Woman, the Sacred Pipe, and the Sun Dance. Indeed, the timing of this ceremonial cycle makes perfect sense given the fact that this was the off-season in the local hunting cycle; it was a time when game was generally not taken because the meat was considered unpalatable (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:128).

Notwithstanding the political context in which the book Lakota Star Knowledge was produced, and notwithstanding the political purposes for which it was used, it does not produce in principle anything that is inconsistent with stories collected and recorded in earlier times. It

53 There are also accounts (Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:135-136 [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:232-233]; Tyon in Walker 1980:123; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:127) where another spiritual figure, identified as Waziya or Waziyata, determines the path a spirit will follow.
integrates sites in ways the older texts do not. Some of the details are new (the sacred names of sites in the Buffalo Head, for example). Many of the interpretations use a more modern language to express various Lakota philosophical ideas about sacredness and spirituality. But there is nothing to suggest, as some writers (Parker, W. 1985; Chirinos 1991; Worster 1992; Bordevich 1996) have, that all of this is a recent fabrication invented for political ends.

One year after *Lakota Star Knowledge* first appeared, Anita Parlow (1983a) edited a book on behalf of the Oglala Lakota Legal Rights Fund, entitled *A Song from Sacred Mountain*, that contains the words of many influential religious leaders among the Lakotas and Cheyennes. In addition to talking about the sacred character of specific locales in the Hills’ region, including Wind Cave, Craven Canyon, Harney Peak, Bear Butte, and Bear Lodge Butte, the contributors discuss the importance of the Hills as an integrated totality. This is an important book because it offers further interpretation of some of the sacred meanings of the Black Hills to contemporary Lakotas. Also appearing in the 1980s is Tom Charging Eagle and Ron Zeilinger’s book, *Black Hills: Sacred Hills* (1987), published by Tipi Press of St. Joseph’s Indian School in Chamberlain, South Dakota. This book confirms the continuing importance of the Buffalo Gap, Wind Cave, the Hot Springs, Bear Butte, and Harney Peak to modern Lakotas, although some of it draws on ideas and quotes from other sources. Finally, Arvol Looking Horse (1987:67-68) contributed an article to a volume on Sioux religion edited by Raymond DeMallie and Douglas Parks that tells of the origin of the Lakotas’ sacred Buffalo Calf Pipe and Sun Dance at Bear Lodge Butte.54

There are several more recent sources that echo the idea of the Black Hills’ sacredness to the Lakotas, and they give additional interpretative evidence for the meaning of specific sites already identified in the literature as sacred. In 1994, the book, *Standing in the Light*, was published. Based on the joint collaboration of Severt Young Bear and Ronald Theisz, it also contains important insights on the spiritual significance of the Black Hills. Severt Young Bear (and Theisz 1994:33), a respected contemporary Lakota storyteller and a well-known member of the Porcupine Singers, revealed how the area’s landscape is spiritually interpreted:

Some of the elderly men that have died since also talked about the Black Hills as the center of the universe. They were born, raised, and became adventurous, nomadic warriors. They would always go from here to the next highest point and then go on to the next highest point they could see. They would go on to see what’s on the other side of that next point and keep going till they ended up someplace in a strange land and see the enemy and different animals. But they would always return to the Black Hills. There was always a center of the universe for them to return to. Many of our famous medicine men would go to Bear Butte or Harney Peak to seek their visions or dreams or their medicines. Even the movement of camps of the Lakota people always remained close, within eye vision from the Black Hills as much as possible, so they would always use them as a landscape they could identify. They could always find their way back to the He Sapa, the Black Hills.

Elsewhere, Young Bear (and Theisz 1994: 31-32) tells a story about the interior region of the Black Hills, probably the area the Lakotas call *Pe Sla*, that describes a vision and the origin place

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54 Historically, the territory north and west of the Black Hills was the area the *Itazipco* (Sans Arc or Bowless) band of Standing Walking Buffalo traveled, and these were the Lakotas who first received the pipe. To the present day, descendants of this band, including Arvol Looking Horse the pipe’s current keeper, have guarded and passed on the pipe through their family line. So it is not surprising that its origins would be attributed to this general region, even though the specific site might be disputed. Other Lakotas (Bird Horse in U.S. Senate 1986:168,207; Looking Horse 1987:67-68; Goodman 1992:2,12-13; Black Elk 1992a:50-51) also believe that Bear Lodge Butte is the origin site and/or a location for their early Sun Dances.
of a particular kind of vocalization in singing. It is a long narrative and worth presenting at some
length here because it is illustrative of the way locations in the Black Hills continue to be inno-
vatively incorporated into religious discourse. The story is about an old warrior of fifty who be-
comes ill and finds a medicine man to doctor him. Nothing works. As his sickness worsens, he
goes from one hilltop to another to find a place to rest. On one hill, he sees the Black Hills and
decides to go there to seek some peace. He takes out his pipe and prays to the Great Spirit asking
for guidance in finding a ‘suitable place where I will feel good.’ He travels to the center of the
Black Hills where he finds a stream in a meadow surrounded by pine trees. Here, he makes some
bedding with grass and fixes himself a resting place on a ledge. Then he lays down there and
prays, “This will be my resting place. I will stay here and let you take me.” When he awakes, he
finds the spirits left him some medicine that he takes. Just as he starts to fall asleep again, he
hears what sounds like singing. His first thought is that it might be an enemy but soon discovers
it was some wild chickens. He sees a rooster leading a bunch of hens to a spring. The rooster
turns his neck and makes a sound, and when his head started to shake, his comb would quiver.
Seeing this, the warrior feels good so he lays back and listens to the rooster while it croons a
song. He lies still and listens. The song has Lakota words in it, so he really listens, learns it, and
starts singing it himself. Then he hears another man singing the same song and starts singing
with him. Soon the man’s skin is healed, and he feels better. He returns home to the tipi iyokiye
(council lodge) and tells the elders what happened. ‘I went to the Black Mountains to die, but I
heard this rooster sing this song. By learning this song, I got well, so I brought it back and I want
to sing this song to my people.’ The camp crier tells everyone to come listen to this man sing.
According to Young Bear (Ibid:32-33) that “was the first song that was openly sung
to the
people. After that traditional singers all put their neck sideways in a certain rooster way, and they
would iyaki s’sa’a (give a high pitched yelp), crowing like a rooster, they’d start a song. It was
done in honor of that rooster who sang the first special song in the Black Hills” (Ibid:33).

Among its other lessons, this story clearly links the Black Hills and this area in particular
with healing as do so many other visionary stories associated with the region. In the process of
revelation, some visions, like the one reported in this story, lead to the origin of an idea or prac-
tice of considerable cultural significance to the Lakotas. The area around Gilette, Slate, and
Reynolds prairies is regarded as having a special position for the Lakotas, one which can be
linked directly to the sites on Amos Bad Heart Bull’s nineteenth century map and the abandoned
medicine lodge that Dodge reported in 1875. Knowing that this area also contains many unique
and diverse floral species with established medicinal uses among the Lakotas (see Appendix A),
it is not surprising that it would still hold spiritual significance for people today. Young Bear (and 
Theisz 1994:29) also alludes to other ideas about the Hills when he says: “There are even little
people, sort of small spirit people who are staying in the Black Hills who are believed to be
taking care of the Hills for the people.” This is consistent with stories told by Swift Bird and
LaPointe, decades earlier, as are Young Bear’s remarks (and Theisz 1994:29) about the Race
Track and the Buffalo Gap. Although newer voices are telling stories about the Hills, their basic
themes are much the same as the older ones.

There are a variety of other persisting ideas associated with the Black Hills in Lakota
traditions. The notion that the Hills are a home and place of origin has long-standing roots. As
Leonard Crow Dog (and Erdoes 1995:5) recently expressed it:

My father told me that after Ptesan Win (White Buffalo Calf Woman) came four chiefs—a
medicine man, a man of knowledge, a warrior, and a hunter. They dwelled together in the
Black Hills. The White Buffalo Woman had taught the people sacredness. The four chiefs
taught the people how to survive, how to live in this world, when to sleep and when to get up,
how to make bows and arrowheads, and the different ways to make a fire. They taught them
their language.

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The connection between the Black Hills and death is also old, and evidence of it appears in the writings of European Americans as early as the 1840s (De Giradin 1936:63; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:156-157; Rosen 1895:130-131). Some of the accounts of early correspondents in the 1870s, including William Curtis and Samuel Burrows (in Krause and Olson 1974:129, 149, 192), reveal the links between the Hills and ideas of immortality as well. Young Bear (and Theisz 1994:30) offers a modern view of this relation when he states:

A long time ago elderly warriors when they knew they were very sick would start to get very restless and keep moving around. They would call that owanka iyokipí sni (he doesn’t like the ground he is sitting on). They would be so restless they would move here and there and moving and finally say, “Well, I might as well go into the Black Hills and prepare myself to die within the Black Hills.” So after they were gone so many days, their relatives would go look for them in the Black Hills, and sometimes they would find them and sometimes they wouldn’t.

In the 1980s, Fools Crow also gave testimony on the Hills’ association with death and burial in the famous case Fools Crow v. Gullet as follows:

The Black Hills are sacred to the Lakota people. The Black Hills are our church, the place where we worship. The Black Hills are our burial ground. The bones of our grandfathers lie buried in those hills...(*quoted from Charging Eagle and Zeilinger, np).*

Rich Two Dogs (in Parlow 1983a:6) told about one of his ancestors being buried near Wind Cave, and more recently, Olivia Pourier (in Neihardt and Utrecht 2000:135) remembered her father, Ben Black Elk, traveling the Hills to follow the spirit of his son who died in the 1940s.

Even more emphatic words about the Hills’ holiness as a sanctuary in the afterlife and a source of regeneration in the present life come from an article Mario Gonzalez published in 1996. In this article Gonzalez quotes an important statement made by Pete Catches (presented in Chapter Nine), who describes the Hills as sacred because they contain seven spirits representing aspects or forces in nature, including, land fire, air, water, stone, animals, and plants. Taken together, these elements encapsulate the whole, the totality of all that is, the circle of life. Catches also explains the reasons why specific sites, including Wind Cave and the Hot Springs, are sacred. Elsewhere, Catches (Parlow 1983a:3-4) offers additional details about how the Hills encompass the universe in its entirety.

In the *Encyclopedia of American Indians*, Karen Lone Hill (1996:550-553) of Oglala Lakota College also described the significance of the entire region to the Lakota people as follows:

The entire Black Hills region has always been known to the *Oceti Sakowin* as "the heart of everything that is," because within the Black Hills lie the psychological and physical curing elements for the people. Other places within the Black Hills of religious significance are Harney Peak, Devil’s Tower, and Bear Butte. Stories tell of the creation of these particular formations. Religious ceremonies were conducted at these sites, beginning in the spring and continuing throughout the summer in accordance with the movement of the constellations. The *Oceti Sakowin* as a whole never resided in the Black Hills for long periods of time, but they did return annually for their religious and social gatherings.

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55 *Oceti Sakowin* refers to the seven council fires of the entire Sioux Nation, including the Teton, Yankton, Yanktonnai, Sisseton, Wahpeton, Wahpekute, and Mdewakanton.
The sacred relationship Lakotas hold to the Black Hills, according to Alexandra Lyn New Holy (1997), in her recent work *The Significance of Place: The Lakota and Paha Sapa*, must be seen in its totality and in the multiplicity and complexity of the symbols and metaphors that express its pivotal placement in Lakota cosmology. The Black Hills are the center of the universe, and as told to her by Little Dog, they are the only place on earth that has survived intact “four cataclysmic cleanings.” The Lakota people came from the Black Hills and returned to them to be reborn every time the earth was cleansed (New Holy 1997:4). Whether this process is expressed in the cycle of creation stories recorded by James Walker or the visionary narratives told by Black Elk, it reveals and embraces everything that constitutes and creates life, everything that makes up and builds the universe. In New Holy’s perspective, it is not specific sacred sites in the Black Hills that inspire awe per se. Each place, whether it is the Race Track, Bear Butte, Harney Peak, or Wind Cave, has its own distinctive character and position in Lakota cosmology and in their sacred geography of the Black Hills. Yet, each place draws its uniqueness from its relationship to other sites as part of a larger spiritual whole that is the Black Hills.

2. The Literature on the Cheyennes and Other Tribal Nations

There are many recent sources that demonstrate the continuing importance of the Black Hills to the religious beliefs of the Cheyennes. Karl Schlesier (1987) published one of the most detailed descriptions of what Bear Butte means to this tribal nation in his book *The Wolves of Heaven*. His work reaffirms its status as their most sacred *axis mundi*, but it also gives a clearer picture of where this site stands in relation to the Black Hills as a whole. Of special interest is the association of the Hills and Bear Butte in particular with *Ehyophstah* (Yellow Hair on Top Woman) as the master of the animals and the underground world (Ibid:82, 04-109). This matches Lakota ideas, which are not as well articulated in the published literature, that the Hills embody a female presence who stewards the underground homes or caves of the animals.


Also during this period, Wayne Leman (1987) recorded and transcribed texts in the Cheyenne language on many different topics. The monograph, *Naevahoo’ohtseme/ We are Going Back Home: Cheyenne History and Stories*, includes an important version of the Race Track story by James Ant (in Leman 1987:245-250) and a story with sacred implications of how the Cheyennes came to the Black Hills by James Shoulderblade (in Leman 1987:17-20). Father Peter Powell also published another two volume treatise, *People of the Sacred Mountain* (1981), which contains numerous references about the Cheyennes’ continuing sacred relationship to the Black Hills and especially its outlier, Bear Butte.

Two recent autobiographical accounts contain important references to the Black Hills in Cheyenne spirituality. One edited by Warren Schwartz (1988), *The Last Contrary: The Story of
Wesley Whiteman (Black Bear), refers not only to the modern importance of Noavos (Bear Butte) (Ibid:46-50) and Nakoeve (Bear Lodge Butte) (Ibid:51-52), but also the sacred nature of the Antelope Pit at Belle Fourche, South Dakota and the Race Track (Ibid:50-51 67). Wesley Whiteman (in Schwartz 1988:68-70), born in 1897 at Lame Deer Creek in Montana, narrates his remembrance of a Massaum [Animal Dance] that his aunt sponsored in the Black Hills sometime in the early twentieth century. Even more significantly, he explicitly identifies the Buffalo Gap as the origin site of the Sun Dance, the place where it was performed by the buffalo who taught the tribe how to perform it (Schwartz 1988:72). Renate Schukies (1993:129, 153-156,158) work, Red Hat: Cheyenne Blue Sky Maker and Keeper of the Sacred Arrows, includes important material about the Cheyennes’ connection to the Black Hills and the pivotal role that Bear Butte continues to play in their religion.

It is obvious from the literature published at this time and earlier that much of Cheyenne sacred knowledge is associated with Bear Butte, which serves metaphorically as a model and connecting point for the entire cosmos, bringing the sky, the earth’s interior, and the surface world together at one central location: an *axis mundi*. This stands in contrast to the Lakotas’ sacred landscape, which appears to have been much more diffuse, encompassing many more sites and covering a much wider area geographically. 56 Fools Crow implied as much when he told Thomas Mails (1972:154) that “Cheyenne and Arapahoe make much of Bear Butte.” This is not to say that other sites in the Black Hills do not hold any religious importance for the Cheyennes, for they certainly do. It only means that much of what has been published on Cheyenne spiritual orientations are more focused on Bear Butte, while the literature on the Lakotas takes in the entire Hills and its major outlier formations as well.

There are also a few recent sources (Fools Crow in Mails 1979:154; Catches in Parlow 1983a:6; Young Bear in Parlow 1983b:276; Parlow 1983b:xiv-xv) that suggest the Black Hills and its outliers, Bear Lodge Butte and Bear Butte, continue to hold importance to the Arapahos. Unfortunately, very little about the specific nature of the Arapahos’ relationship to these places appears in published sources.

Over the past three decades, Maurice Boyd (1983:88-93) added more to our understanding of Kiowa knowledge about Bear Lodge Butte and described how this remains an active and vital component of their sacred storytelling traditions. Red Hat, the Keeper of the Cheyennes’ Sacred Arrows, also told Rene Schukies (1993:287) that the Kiowas received some of their sacred knowledge from Bear Butte. Recently, Kay Parker, W. Schweinfurth (2002:60-66, 90, 150) published a book on the spiritual universe of the Plains Apaches, which contains important references to the origins of their *Manitidae* in the Black Hills and their horse medicine at Bear Butte. She also includes another version of their story about Bear Lodge Butte (Schweinfurth 2001:38-42). Many of the Apaches’ stories about the Black Hills region contained in Schweinfurth’s work were recorded in the 1960s by William Bittle from interviews with Rose Chalestin, Joe and Ray Black Bear, Connie Mae and Louise Saddleblanket, and Fred Bigman. Douglas Parks (1991:1-4:88, 179, 508, 511,733, 775) also recorded many narratives in the 1960s and 1970s about the Arikaras’ knowledge of Bear Lodge Butte and the Black Hills proper.

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56 At least from the standpoint of the published literature, it appears this way. However, there may be a vast repository of stories in Cheyenne oral traditions for other sites, including Wind Cave, that have not been made available in a public forum. Therefore, this assertion might easily be challenged
3. Other Recent Sources

In more recent times, a number of books published for tourists also include references to the sacredness of the Black Hills. One of the Sierra Club’s guides (1984:181) to national parks mentions the spiritual importance of the Hills and offers a brief description of the connection of Wind Cave to the bison. In 1989, Helen Rezatto published the book Tales of the Black Hills, which includes a compilation of many stories of different tribal origin that have been told about various landforms in the Hills (Ibid:175-176). None of the stories that she relates about Wind Cave, the Race Track (Ibid:20-26), and the Hot Springs (Ibid:51-54) is original. Taken from other sources, they are told as “legends,” implying, given the context of the other stories that appear in the book, that they need not be taken seriously as legitimate understandings of the Hills. Another tourist-oriented publication South Dakota’s Black Hills and Badlands, by Barbara Tomovick and Kimberly Metz (2000:364) includes a much abbreviated reference to the Lakota origin story connected to Wind Cave labeled again as “Legends and Lore.”

Over the past decade, several other studies have appeared based on research pursuant to the significance of sacred sites as “cultural properties” (Hanson and Chirinos 1991; Chirinos 1991; Forbes-Boyte 1996, 1999; Dorst 2000; White, D. 2002). These studies have focused on Bear Butte, Bear Lodge Butte, and the Badlands. Already mentioned are the numerous studies of Linea Sundstrom (1990, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2002), which combine archaeological studies and oral narratives with ethnographic and ethnohistorical information on the Black Hills and its many sacred sites.

So what can we conclude from the various historic, ethnographic, and narrative accounts? On the one hand it is fairly obvious that the Black Hills as a whole and specific sites within or adjoining this range have a special place in the sacred stories of many tribal nations who are known to have occupied the area, and some of these can be traced back to historic sources in the nineteenth century. It is also safe to say that the stories, by virtue of their associations, impute a sacred quality to the Hills or, at the very least, certain areas within (or geographically related to) them. On the other hand it is clear that at least three tribal nations, the Arapahos, Cheyennes and Lakotas, have maintained active spiritual relations to various regions in the Hills or to their outlier formations and that some of these stretch far back in time as well. The most prevalent and widely documented spiritual use of the Hills is associated with fasting, prayers, and vision seeking at places such as Bear Butte, Bear Lodge Butte, Harney Peak, and the Central Prairies. Unpublished evidence, described in the next chapter, also points to the use of Wind Cave National Park for ceremonial purposes, but much more has appeared on the sacred importance of the park’s landscape to the Lakotas and the Cheyennes. The performance of the Sun Dance by Lakotas and Cheyennes in or near the Hills has been documented for earlier times and in more recent decades as well. The ritual renewal of the Cheyennes’ Sacred Arrows continues to periodically take place at Bear Butte. Local tribal peoples still collect medicinal plants and learn of their application in sweatlodges and in pipe ceremonies performed in the Black Hills. Finally, tribal nations near and far still narrate stories with sacred meanings and lessons that link fundamental cosmological principles to the Black Hills as a whole or to sites within and immediately surrounding them.

II. THE CONTROVERSY

In the 1980s, a series of writings began to appear that questioned the legitimacy of American Indian, but particularly Lakota, spiritual connections to the Black Hills. Most of the critics do not doubt the strength of the beliefs or the sincerity of those who claim the Black Hills are sacred
and/or who hold spiritual attachments to specific places within the general region. What most of them question is the assertion that the Black Hills, as a whole or certain specific locales, Wind Cave among them, have always been sacred to the tribal nations who lived in the area. Instead, they argue in various ways and degrees that Lakota claims of an ancient connection to the Black Hills is actually of recent origin and integrally tied to their modern struggle to reclaim their proprietary interest in the Hills. Other writers have viewed this struggle in a less cynical light, and some have even amassed a considerable body of evidence to demonstrate that many Lakota ideas about the Black Hills have a much older legacy than many of the critics would lead us to believe.

A. The Critics

Richmond Clow (1983:315-324) wrote one of the first published articles to challenge the idea that the Black Hills has always been sacred to the Lakotas. Clow did not provide any evidence for his challenge, however. He contended that the Hills had become a “tribal symbol” in response to the Lakotas’ united interest in the Black Hills’ land claim and that their sacred attachment to them was recent in origin. He also argued that the Lakotas used the idea of the Hills’ sacredness to pursue their claims and to drive a wedge between themselves and non-Indians (Ibid:322).

In 1984, E. Steve Cassells, David B. Miller, and Paul V. Miller wrote a report for the National Forest Service entitled Paha Sapa: A Culture Resource Overview of the Black Hills National Forest, South Dakota and Wyoming, in which they maintain that there is little dispute among scholars regarding the sacred nature of sites on the Hills’ outer edge (Cassells, Miller, and Miller 1984:108). In terms of sites in the interiors, however, they assert there is little agreement (Ibid:112). When one of them went to Pine Ridge to take interviews in accord-ance with provisions of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, he acknowledged that “Lakota elders, medicine men, and other traditionalists” at Pine Ridge were reluctant to document the locations of sacred sites, although there was a general consensus that the “entire Hills were sacred” (Ibid:111). Following the historian, James Hansen, who expressed his ideas in interviews and court testimony in the early 1980s, Cassells, Miller, and Miller argue that there is little historical depth to the Lakotas’ sacred relationship to the Black Hills (Ibid:112-113).

Watson Parker (1985), a long time historian of the Black Hills, is perhaps the staunchest critic of Lakota claims that the Black Hills are sacred to them. In a 1985 article, he challenged the time depth of the spiritual significance Lakotas assign to the Hills. He claimed the Lakotas did not occupy lands near the Black Hills long enough to “sanctify” the landscape or “build it up into a legendary shrine.” Following remarks made by Colonel Richard Irving Dodge, he asserted that the Lakotas were afraid of the Black Hills and viewed them as a dangerous place to visit. As a consequence, they seldom entered the area. To defend his position, he also asserted that there was no discussion of the Hills’ sacredness by Red Cloud or other Lakotas when negotiations for their sale were taking place. He further argued that the notion of the Hills being sacred was probably sparked by Lakota participation in the region’s tourism after World War I (Ibid:588-591) and also an extension of the military, political, and legal conflicts between the Lakotas and the United States since the 1850s (Ibid:602). In many respects, Parker’s argument mirrors the position of an earlier commentator on the subject, James Hansen, who expressed his ideas in interviews and court testimony in the early 1980s (Cassells, Miller, and Miller 1984:112-113).

In 1990, Stephen Feraca (1990:68-69), a former Bureau of Indian Affairs administrator, took the position that the Black Hills were never sacred to the Lakotas and that modern Lakotas came to adopt as their own myths propagated by non-Indians for tourism. He claimed that the Black
Hills were regarded as neither sacred land nor an original and long-term homeland of the Lakota people until American Indian Movement followers allegedly fabricated this story in the 1970s. He argued the Lakotas “have their origins” in what is now the state of Minnesota. Recalling a common phrase of the 1960s, “Cousin, I’ll pay you back when I get my Black Hills money,” he asserted that the spiritual aspects of the claim have no historical foundation and that what the Lakota really wanted was the money. A different perspective on how this phrase was being used comes from Severt Young Bear (and Theisz 1994:103-04), who interpreted it to mean that the Lakotas had no hope of ever receiving any compensation for the seizure of the Hills, and so borrowing money from one’s cousin was likened to the taking of the Black Hills as an exchange transaction in which there was no expectation of any concrete or immediate return. 57

A year later, Sally Chirinos (1991) wrote a master’s thesis in which she asserted that the sacredness of the Black Hills is an idea the Lakotas constructed during the reservation era as an adaptive strategy to face poverty and powerlessness and to resist forced acculturation. Using Anthony Wallace’s theory of revitalization, she argued that the Lakotas altered their cultural beliefs as a response to the broader societal Diaspora they were experiencing (p. 2). More specifically, she focused her attention on Bear Lodge Butte and its neighboring outliers, Bear Butte and Inyan Kara, to show that there is no historic precedent for the spiritual beliefs Lakota people are now investing in these sites. Acknowledging Watson Parker contributions to this discussion, she reviewed the historical record to determine the time depth of the beliefs and concluded from the sources she studied that beliefs in the sacredness of these sites are modern. In this work and another (Hanson and Chirinos 1991), which were based on a cultural properties study conducted for the National Park Service, she dismisses many modern Lakota attachments to Bear Lodge Butte. Not only does she question the idea that their sacred Buffalo Calf Pipe was received at this site, but she also challenges the rationale behind the use of National Park Service lands for holding modern Sun Dances and sweatlodges run by Gerald Clifford and Charlotte Black Elk in the 1980s (Chirinos 1991:50-53,73-84). She did acknowledge, however, that there was earlier evidence, which White Bull shared with Dick Stone in the 1930s, on the importance of this site for fasting, prayer, and vision seeking (Ibid:52). Essentially, she argued that there are no historical precedents for holding Sun Dances here, when, in fact, there are a number of accounts dating back to the 1880s that record locations south of the butte near Sundance Mountain (see Sundstrom 1997:186, 193). Similarly, Chirinos (1991:86-88) questioned the validity of Lakota claims that another site, Inyan Kara, had any sacred value before the modern era, although she does admit that the accumulated lithic debris at the site indicates a use with some considerable time depth. What she was unable to find from a one day foot survey of the site and from an interview with a local rancher, who owns and leases lands around this site, was any evidence of contemporary use in the form of prayer bundles except, as she put it, “a Native American poem was found in a coffee tin atop the mountain, placed upon the carved name of George Armstrong Custer” (Ibid:88). She clearly missed the irony here, but she also mistakenly assumed that prayer bundles are always present when a site has sacred significance. Nevertheless, and in spite of the testimony of the Lakota people she interviewed who told her they used it, she retained her skepticism about the historical depth of the Lakotas’ sacred associations with this place.

Another advocate of the idea that the sacredness of the Black Hills is a recent phenomenon among the Lakotas is Donald Worster (1992:113, 135-136, 141). To support his argument, he took the position that neither Black Elk nor James Walker and his Lakota advisors ever mentioned anything about the spiritual importance of this area. He concluded that Lakotas

57 See also Edward Lazarus (1991:206) for a similar interpretation.
invested the Black Hills with spiritual significance solely to regain the Black Hills. As the Lakotas’ legal avenues for the return of the Hills were exhausted, Worster alleges, their spiritual attachment became more intense. He also argues that Lakotas created these notions out of a need for a nostalgic past to escape the grinding hardships they faced in the present. In a convoluted way, he maintained that the Lakotas’ modern claims are not less valid because of the recency of their origins, and therefore, these should not serve as an obstacle to returning the Hills to them (Ibid:153).

The most recent work to raise questions about the validity of Lakota claims is Fergus M. Bordewich’s *Killing the Whiteman’s Indian: Reinventing Native Americans at the End of the Twentieth Century* (1996). Bordewich also maintains that the Lakotas occupied the Black Hills in late historic times and that the various creation stories they assign to the Hills actually originated in an era when they still lived in the Great Lakes. He writes “scholars similarly believe that the story of the emergence of the Pte people from the earth is a portable myth that the Sioux brought with them from the East and that it never applied to the Black Hills at all” (p. 224). Like others, he asserts that the Lakotas never advanced their claim to the Hills on religious grounds until the 1980s. He quotes William Powers, who began working among the Lakotas in the 1940s, that “Forty or fifty years ago you didn’t hear people assert a spiritual connection to the Hills...You heard people talk about various vision quest sites as sacred but not the Black Hills. Monetary compensation is what people wanted” (pp. 229-230). In response, Bordewich (p. 234) later writes:

> It is hardly strange that many Sioux are ransacking both the real and the imagined past for values and practices that will give meaning to modern Indian life. Thus the Sioux campaign to reclaim the Black Hills has already succeeded in a quite unexpected way, transforming them from a shaming reminder of all that has been lost into a modern symbol of collective salvation. Although the Hills may not have been sacred in the past, that doesn’t mean they are not sacred to the Lakotas now...There is no doubt that the Black Hills are extremely important to Lakotas today and that they are the source of a whole lot of spirituality. Religious attitudes can legitimize a place as sacred almost overnight. It is a natural evolution...

Whether or not the critics question the authenticity of the Lakotas’ spiritual relationship to the Black Hills, critics uniformly agree that it is politically motivated and lacks temporal depth. They see the attachment as a modern creation, inspired by twentieth century challenges and circumstances.

### B. The Supporters

Over the past decade, a number of studies have appeared that offer a more supportive reading of the Lakotas’ spiritual ties to the Black Hills and their various outlier sites. Kari Forbes-Boyte (1996, 1999), a geographer, published two important articles in the 1990s based on cultural properties research she conducted at Bear Butte. She describes this butte as the Lakotas’ “most sacred altar” because it contains the seven sacred elements that *Wakan Tanka* gave them, which are land air, water, rocks, plants, animals, and fire (Forbes-Boyte 1996:104). She also points out that this site is strongly connected to the bear and its role in doctoring. Finally, she argues that the modern association of Bear Butte with medicine and the importance of this site for vision seeking or *hanbleceya* has a long historical legacy dating back to the late nineteenth century (Forbes-Boyte 1996:105-106). Even Stephen Fereca (1998:89n3), who otherwise questions the legitimacy of contemporary sacred attachments to the Black Hills, verifies the importance of Bear Butte in Lakota vision questing.
In her work, Forbes-Boyte does not tackle the question of the historical depth of Lakota beliefs surrounding this area, nor does she attempt to explain them away as a modern political phenomenon masquerading in traditionalist garb. Instead, she endeavors to show how their sense of this sacred place is embedded in a complex and integrated symbolic structure. As she puts it:

Symbolically, Bear Butte exhibits bear power. Bear Butte is a type of hierophany; it is a physical representation of spiritual power. Physical locales or objects throughout the world are believed by various cultures to be sacred because of their symbolic resonance. Geographer Robert Sacks describes the principle of mimetic sympathy in which objects sharing visible, spatial or geometric similarities can be considered representational of the whole. Bear Butte, for example, symbolizes the bear because it is shaped like one. The Lakota associate the bear with powerful medicinal properties. As a symbol, Bear Butte evokes this power; thus it has become associated with the medicine men of the society (Forbes-Boyte 1996:106-107).

She goes on to argue this is a place that powerfully and simultaneously expresses and interconnects many different levels of meaning, from primordial stories of origin to personal narratives of regeneration (Forbes-Boyte 1996:106). It is a site of power because it quintessentially embodies all the elements that signify life to the Lakotas (Forbes-Boyte 1996:104). It is a mirror of the cosmos, an **axis mundi** that brings the sky, earth, and underground together at one place (Forbes-Boyte 1999:28). It is a location where culturally situated knowledges face existential truths, where the time filled moment of experience meets and is transcended by the timelessness of mystical revelation (Forbes-Boyte 1999:26-27). Her writings offer a much fuller appreciation of contemporary Lakota spiritual attachments to Bear Butte and the wider religious worldviews in which they are embedded, and they do so in a way that makes it difficult to simply dismiss them as recently contrived imaginings to achieve political ends.

Linea Sundstrom is another scholar who views Lakota and also Cheyenne spiritual connections to the Black Hills area in a more sympathetic light. In recent years, she has published numerous works (1990, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2002) on the sacred importance of the Black Hills that are based on exhaustive studies of the prehistoric, ethnohistoric, and ethnographic record as well as tribal winter counts and oral traditions for all of the tribal nations known to have lived in the vicinity of the Black Hills. She presents a wide range of evidence to demonstrate that the Hills and its associated outlier sites have been sacred to many different American Indian tribal nations for hundreds of years. Although she does not tackle the question of the ultimate time-depth of the Lakotas’ sacred attachments to the Black Hills, she presents a considerable body of evidence that demonstrates that these connections existed well before the legal battles and political struggles of the 1970s and 1980s. In addressing the idea that the Lakota people did not live in the Black Hills long enough to be able to “sanctify” the landscape, Sundstrom (1997:203) discusses how American Indians moving into new areas “often adapted the sacred landscape of their predecessors to their own beliefs and traditions” She says that this phenomenon “may be viewed as a matter of perceiving an intrinsic sacredness of place that does not depend on beliefs specific to any one group for its definition” (Ibid:206). Sundstrom (Ibid:203-206) also writes that Lakota sacred stories of the Black Hills are closely related to Cheyenne traditions, and these in turn are linked to Arikara, Kiowa, and Plains Apache narratives. In other words, the region itself holds traditions that have been shared cross-culturally for centuries, and as groups moved through the area, they came to learn the “customs of the country,” so to speak.

religion and politics surrounding the Black Hills to a much more encompassing and holistic sense of Lakota identity and nationhood. More than that, she offers an in depth semiotic and interpretive analysis of Lakota religious symbolism, which expresses metaphorically the sacredness and centeredness of the Black Hills in Lakota cosmology. She argues that this cosmological positioning stands at the center of the way contemporary Lakotas see and create themselves as a people through their participation in Sun Dances, vision seeking, and other ceremonial observances.

Finally, John Dorst’s recently published article (2000:303-320), “Postcolonial Encounters: Narrative Constructions of Devil’s Tower National Monument,” discusses the contested nature of the stories that surround this unique geological formation. In particular, he shows how European American narratives have come to dominate our cultural understanding of this site, and how, in the process, they have served to trivialize and delegitimize American Indian interpretations. A similar deconstructionist approach is followed in Jesse Larner’s recent book, Mount Rushmore: An Icon Reconsidered (2002), which considers how American Indian cultural definitions of the Black Hills have become delegitimized in the shadow of European American myth-making.

C. The Question of Authenticity and Temporal Depth

It is not hard to refute the position of scholars who argue that the Black Hills and its various sites have not been sacred to the Lakotas and other tribal nations since the late 19th century (Giago 1999:10-11). There are ample ethnographic and historical documents to support the spiritual status of the Black Hills, and as Sundstrom (1990, 1996, 1997) argues, there is a great deal of archaeological evidence that suggests it had spiritual uses in prehistoric times as well. Nor is it difficult to challenge the idea that modern Lakota religious notions about the Black Hills are fabricated. There is simply too much continuity in their foundational premises, even in the particulars of their expression, to dismiss their traditional authenticity.

Worster’s argument and evidence, as one example, can be easily refuted. He makes two allegations: one that there is no mention of the Black Hills being spiritual in any of James Walker’s texts, and two that Nicholas Black Elk never used the word “sacred” in relation to the Black Hills in any of his narratives. In relation to Walker, the absence of any evidence in his texts to connections between spiritual beliefs/practices and the Black Hills neither confirms nor disconfirms their presence. As already noted, Walker and most of the other ethnographers who recorded native texts at the turn of the twentieth century made little effort to identify tribal geographic sites with spiritual significance. Even when they referred to a geographic feature, the association was generally vague and nothing more than a generic listing of a “mountain,” “spring,” or “cave.” We can see this in the text of Walker’s contemporary, George Dorsey (1905), who wrote much about the Cheyennes’ sacred mountain but never linked it to Bear Butte.

The same is true for many other texts from the same period, and this applies not only to the Lakotas but also to other tribal nations in the plains region at large (Parks and Wedel 1985:167). With respect to Nicholas Black Elk’s narratives, there is plenty of internal evidence in his writings that show he viewed the Black Hills in the kinds of awesome, respectful, and reverential ways that would, in modern English usage, be termed as “spiritual.”58 That he never employed the word “sacred” does not determinatively eliminate it from his sense of what the Hills meant to him and his people. As mentioned earlier, Black Elk made a number of statements about the Black Hills which imply, given how Lakotas use and think about the word wakan, a holy relationship to these mountains. In fact, many of his statements refer to the Black Hills through the use of

metaphorical allusions typically found in the sacred discourse known as *hanbloglaia* (Buechel 1970:165; Black Elk 1986a:192; Powers 1986:106-107).

It is also fairly easy to challenge Parker’s arguments (1985). With respect to his assertion that Lakotas never spoke of the Hills’ sacredness when they were negotiating an agreement over its sale in 1876, two counter arguments must be made. First, we must be mindful of the context of these negotiations. Not only did they take place outside the settings where liturgical discourse is properly expressed, but they also involved people who lacked the authority to use it in the first place. Red Cloud, for one, was not trained as a medicine man, and even if he had been, the Allison Commission proceedings were not a fitting place to speak of the Hills in sacred terms. In a speech delivered by Crow Feather (in Allison 1875:191), however, there are references to the Black Hills that allude to their spirituality. When he said: “Our Great Father has asked me to give up the heart of this land where I was born and raised, and the heart of this land is big and good, and I have camped all around it and watched and looked over it,” he was using “heart” as a metaphorical reference that has sacred moorings. When Red Cloud (in Allison 1875:189) described them as the “head chief of the land” he was referring to the stature of a place. Similar references are found in relation to animals as in the bison as “head chief of the animals” or the eagle as “head chief of the wingeds” (Brown 1992). In all cases, the use of this expression refers to something special, something that commands respect and reverence – something sacred. Certainly, a year later, when Running Antelope (in U. S. Senate 1876:48) was talking about the Hills as the “center of the land” he was using a metaphor charged with sacred meaning.

Secondly, we must consider the audience (see also, Sundstrom 1997:207). These were foreigners, most of whom had little respect for, much less an understanding of, Lakota culture. Appealing to them on the grounds of the area’s sanctity would have been futile in all likelihood. So instead, Lakota leaders addressed them in terms of the pecuniary language the commissioners understood. But even here, under considerable duress and pressure, it is clear that the Lakotas were trying to make the case that the Hills’ had a value far greater than any single monetary settlement. Its value was, in the words of many, including Crow Feather and Red Cloud, the very survival of the Lakota people for “seven generations to come,” a phrase which, when used in particular contexts, also has spiritual implications (in Allison 1875:191). All of the speeches of the tribal representatives whose people had familiarity with the Black Hills conveyed the vital importance of this place to their lives and livelihoods, a worth that could only be equaled by providing perpetual support for the people’s survival in this generation and all of those to come (Allison 1875:189-191; U.S. Senate 1876:33-89).

What is bewildering is why historians who took such great pains to attack the credibility of modern Lakota beliefs ignored many published and easily accessible historic sources that verify contemporary Lakota claims about the long-standing nature of their sacred attachments to the Black Hills. Neither Watson Parker nor Donald Worster examined the accounts from members of the Black Hills’ expedition, nor evidence contained in the kind of standard documentary source most historians rely upon, the *Annual Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*. Indeed, some of the historians’ interpretations appear to be guided by the same kind of politically inspired inventions they accuse the Lakotas of creating. The historians cannot be excused for their failure to examine and draw upon the full range of historical sources available to them, although they might be forgiven for their lapses in interpretation when reading cultural meaning from some of the ethnographic and historic document they did rely on. By failing to fully engage the historical record, much less the cultural contexts to which it refers, they end up giving a distorted picture of the history of Lakota cosmological beliefs and their sacred relation to the Black Hills.
Stephen Feraca (1990) and William Powers’ (as quoted in Bordewich 1996) comments, however, are not so easy to dismiss. Both worked for many years with the Lakotas, and so we might expect that either of them would have heard about the sacredness of the Black Hills, especially since religion was the focus of much of their research. Feraca’s words, on the one hand, need to be read cautiously because they are written in the context of a book that defends his own career with the BIA and that is highly critical of more contemporary American Indian political struggles including, but not restricted to, those of the Lakotas. William Powers’ words, on the other hand, need to be taken very seriously, not only because he has “no axe to grind,” but also because he is a fairly fluent Lakota speaker. Powers does not deny that Lakota people today hold a sacred attachment to the entire Black Hills, nor that they had spiritual associations with specific places connected to fasting and vision seeking in times past. What he questions is the historic depth of some of the Lakotas’ modern claims, especially the view that the entire Hills were held sacred before the 1970s. But then neither Powers nor Feraca ever tell us whether they actually queried Lakotas about the spirituality of the Black Hills as a whole or specific places in or outside their reach, and if they did, how people responded to their queries.

I am not particularly surprised by Powers’ observations because before the 1970s and the revitalization of traditional religious practice, Lakota people did not talk very much about spiritual matters in casual conversation and were reluctant to discuss them even when questioned. Based upon my own experiences since 1964 with Lakota and Dakota peoples, which, granted do not go as far back as Powers, I would also have to say that one never heard a lot of talk about the Black Hills as sacred or as spiritual much before the 1970s. But then, one did not hear these words uttered for most other places that nowadays are called sacred. The expression I often heard people use in relation to sites that are now considered spiritually significant is that they were “special,” which means they had an incomprehensible presence -- one of the definitions for wakan. When I traveled through the Black Hills in the summer of 1970 with two Dakota female elders, Veronica Dunn and Martha Left Bear, this is precisely what I heard about the Hills: they were “special.” The women did not know exactly why they were a subject of reverence because their community, Spirit Lake, was too far away. Yet, they knew this to be true from what they had heard from their parents, one of whose brothers joined ranks with the Oglalas after the Minnesota Conflict in 1862.

Forty years ago, places acknowledged as “special” were often accompanied by remarks such as, “If you respect that place, you won’t mess around with it.” This meant that people shouldn’t go near it unless they knew how to approach it properly. Since many Lakotas and Dakotas in the 1970s no longer knew what was proper, their best course of action was avoidance. My sense was that there was a great deal of ambivalence surrounding such places, and that interference with them posed a danger to those who did not respect their spiritual presence. In fact, I heard countless stories about real life incidents of what befell people when they failed to leave a place alone or ignored admonitions to pray and leave tobacco there. Severt Young Bear (and Theisz 1994:19-22) talks about this in relation to a site at Pine Ridge called Sio Paha (Prairie Chicken Hill). In former times, this was a site for vision questing and other religious observances, but, as he put it, “People lost interest in the place” (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:21).

Generally speaking, anthropologists, including Feraca and Powers, have not been particularly helpful in identifying sacred sites in the Black Hills or disentangling some of the meanings that have surrounded them over time. Sadly, many of the ethnographers who write about Lakota religion and cosmology have failed to follow the kind of direction Keith Basso pursued in his classic work (1996) Wisdom Sits in Places, in which he shows how the historical memories of the Cibecue Apache are tied to their landscapes. For the Lakotas and other tribes of the Black Hills as well, landscapes act in mnemonic ways, embodying, preserving, codifying, and immortalizing cosmological precepts, while simultaneously carrying memories of a lived past. They do both
because there is no clear line between what historians and anthropologists call history and cosmology in their epistemologies (Tyon in Walker 1980:119; Forbes-Boyte 1996, 1999; New Holy 1997). Although ethnographers might be forgiven for an excessive and often false presentism when trying to engage the cultural worlds of the Lakotas they consulted, they cannot be excused for failing to understand some of the grounds, no pun intended, on which Lakotas make their history. In the end, ethnographers who dismiss what the Lakotas and other tribes say about the Black Hills or who fail to appreciate the significance of this place in their world view are as remiss as the historians who fail to fully cover source materials that are their stock in trade.

When Charlotte Black Elk, Gerald Clifford, and other members of the Black Hills Steering Committee (1986) submitted stories of the Black Hills sacred significance in congressional hearings on the Sioux Nation Black Hills Act, they were not digging around the attic for the lost remnants of their nation’s past. Instead, they were conveying a body of knowledge with demonstrable historical depth and unmistakable integrity in relation to a much wider corpus of knowledge about Lakota cosmology, much of which was recorded before the 1970s, although not always in published form. There is no question that there has been a reawakening of Lakota spirituality since the 1970s. Much of its impetus came from younger generations seeking to regain a knowledge of their religious heritage that had been silenced for so many years. In this era, there were many elders who still retained an awareness of some of this knowledge but who refused to speak about it casually, and when they did, it was for a specific reason or purpose. And yes, some of the elders did speak out at treaty conferences and in court testimony on the sacredness of the Black Hills when they had not done so before. In doing this, they were not creating something anew; they were telling what they understood to be true because they had been called upon to do so. People with spiritual knowledge are not supposed to call attention to themselves or what they know. Lakota cultural conventions are very clear on this, so it is not surprising that no one, especially outsiders, ever learned much about the sacredness of the Black Hills, or for that matter, any other place known to be wakan.

It is also true, as several scholars (Walker 1917:78-79; DeMallie in Walker 1983:17, 1987:29; Powers, W. 1986:23-25) of Lakota religion have pointed out, that esoteric understandings of the sacred, whether expressed in relation to particular places or spirituality in general, were not widely known among the common people, or at least, this knowledge was not casually shared with outsiders. Among the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1910:574; Schlesier 1987:14), sacred knowledge was held and guarded by select religious specialists who not only possessed the requisite spiritual gifts and training to speak about it, but who were also endowed with the right to determine when, with whom, and under what conditions it would be shared. Much of the esoteric knowledge that persists today among the Lakotas and Cheyennes is still kept secret and not a subject for public discourse and debate. Moreover, much of this knowledge is conveyed in a special and highly metaphoric language, where the sacred is not addressed literally but, rather, figuratively through commonplace as well as esoteric allusions (Powers, W. 1986:11-41).

Nor is there any question that the modern regeneration of Lakota spirituality has been closely tied to the return of the Black Hills. Indeed, in many ways it has defined and expressed itself through its relationship to the Hills (New Holy 1997:9). As the center of the circle that is the totality of life, it stands as a concrete embodiment of the Lakota peoples’ own aspirations to regain a sense of the centeredness and wholeness that were lost in the cultural Diaspora of the reservation era. Something that is lost, however, can be recovered. Most contemporary efforts to revitalize tribal languages and cultures today are built on the premise that it is not only possible but also imperative to make this recovery. Insofar as the efforts to achieve these goals have involved litigation and legislation, they are political. But to describe them solely in political terms is to deny their ultimate intent, which is to recover the very cultural foundations of a
people’s identity and being. For most contemporary Lakotas, reclaiming the Black Hills and all the sacred wisdom attached to them is fundamental to this effort (New Holy 1997:9).

Even if one acknowledges that the Lakotas hold the Black Hills sacred and that they have done so throughout the twentieth century, the question still remains: how far back in time does their spiritual relationship to the area extend? Many Lakotas claim it reaches back to the beginnings of time. But how does one respond to their harshest critic, Watson Parker, who argues that their historical association is hardly more than two hundred years of age, a time span much too short to have imbued the area with any real “sanctity”?

One way some Lakota traditionalists respond is through stories of a Diaspora and return to the Black Hills. In one of the appendices attached to the testimony in the congressional hearings over the Sioux Nation Black Hills Act, is a story entitled “Ozuyeya Ig’lamna” or “Legends of the Counter Attacking Journeys.”

_Maka_ [earth] then sent a sign, instructions on how the journey would be undertaken. The _Ikce_ [common Lakota people] would call on _Heyoka_, the counter attacking power, to accompany with them on their journey. They would travel in a counter clock-wise direction [starting in the Black Hills], going back west, then south, east and north until finally they would be home. But this journey would take ages and would require that messengers periodically return home with any information on how the world was and the behavior of the nations living on her.

The _Ozuyeya Iglama_ became the principle task of the _Ikce_. Some of the travelers would return home, new ones would join the journey. At times, a few grew tired of traveling and remained in the lands they liked. At other times, some of the people from nations that were visited, would join the Ikce (Black Hills Steering Committee 1986:202).

This is consistent, at least in part, with Nicholas Black Elk’s story (in DeMallie 1984:307-316) of Red Thunder’s vision of the Race Track, which foreshadowed the Lakotas’ movement to the Black Hills. What is different is the presumption that the Lakotas originated in the Black Hills and returned after journeying to other places. It departs from Jake Herman’s various versions of the “Legend of the Seven Camp Fires” (1965a, 1965b:4-5, 1966), which tell how a medicine man told the Lakotas to migrate with their dogs to _Re Sapa_, the Black Hills, where they came in contact with their friends, the Cheyenne, and it contrasts with William Bordeaux’s version of Lakota history too (1929:16-19). So, how can the story of the _Ozuyeya Iglama_ be reconciled with the historical evidence that the Lakotas did not enter the Hills in any great numbers until after 1775?

Linea Sundstrom (1996:187-188; 1997:203-206) offers one way to resolve the dilemma, and that is to propose that there was a regionally based, cultural knowledge about the Black Hills and its various sites. This knowledge was widely shared and transmitted across cultural bounders and over time as one tribal nation entered the landscape and eventually replaced another (Sundstrom, L. 1996:177). She offers a wide variety of site-specific evidence to demonstrate the close parallels in the beliefs that various tribes held about the Black Hills, their relation to constellations, to origin stories, and to knowledge about the conduct of important ceremonial observances (Sundstrom, L. 1996:187). Her line of argument and the evidence she brings to bear on her case are very convincing, but these can be extended even further. There is also another argument that can be made for Lakota claims that their ancestors occupied the Hills for untold generations, and this rests on the strong relationships of marriage, alliance, and ceremonial collaboration that the Lakotas built with their neighbors during their movements to the Black Hills. Although much of this material is presented in the first two sections of the report, it is worthwhile to review some of the highlights as these bear upon the question being raised here.
D. Genealogical Connections

The Lakota people of today are not the same as the Lakotas four centuries ago. This is not intended to be either a trite or a self-evident statement. The Lakota nation of the twenty-first century represent a population whose ancestral roots extend back to the Lakota and Dakota speaking peoples of the western Great Lakes. But it also constitutes a population whose genealogical heritage can be traced to tribal nations known to have lived in the region of the Black Hills well before the late eighteenth century. In contrast to an older and simplifying view of tribal nations as discrete and well bounded units, there is another perspective that sees ethnic identity formation as much more complex and fluid (Moore 1987, 1996; Albers & Kay 1987; Albers 1993, 1996a; Hall 1997). In this perspective, American Indian cultures have always been dynamic and permeable, constantly changing and adapting their peoples and ideas to new circumstances. This has been accomplished through the borrowing of ideas and practices between tribes who were allies and who shared trading, hunting, military, and ceremonial partnerships. Even more fundamentally, it took place through extensive patterns of intermarriage and adoption that enabled people to make claims on the lands, cultural legacies, and social support systems of more than one tribal nation. The historic genealogies of today’s Lakotas connect them directly to the Cheyennes, Arapahos, Poncas, and Arikaras. All of these populations were known to have lived in the general region of the Black Hills before the main body of the Lakotas arrived and eventually dominated the area.

Starting with the Cheyennes, there has been a long history of intermarriage and alliance between them and the Lakotas. Notwithstanding intermittent conflicts, these ties can be traced back to Minnesota, when the Cheyennes still lived there at the end of the sixteenth century. The Cheyennes’ Mazikota, Wotapio, Omisis, and Totoimana bands, in particular, trace their ancestry to the Lakotas (Moore 1987:220-222,229-232), but the Dog Soldier bands also married Lakotas, especially Sicangus (Grinnell 1902:143, 1972:2:63; Powell 1981:1:247). According to Cheyenne and Lakota traditions, the Cheyennes introduced the Lakotas to the Hills and eventually became their allies (Grinnell 1956:36-37; Herman 1965b:4-5; Bent in Hyde 1968:25-26; Howard 1980:20-21; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:307-316). In the process, they created joint use and occupancy rights to the Black Hills. Much of this was accomplished through co-residency and intermarriage, so that by the reservation era, Cheyenne bands reckoned Lakotas in their midst and conversely many Lakota groups contained Cheyennes in their ranks (Hayden 1862:277; Warren 1875:51; Curtis 1907:6:139; Kindle in Beckwith 1930:351; Hyde in Beckwith 1930:351; Hyde 1937:89, 93, 1961:190-193; Grinnell 1956:165-262; Bent in Hyde 1968:137-222; Hurt 1974:125; Powell 1981:1:164-179, 375-390, 414-416; No Ears, Short Man, and Iron Crow in Walker 1982:125). As Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:121) described the relationship:

The Sioux tribes had ways closely resembling those of the Cheyennes. We traveled and visited much with them, particularly with the Ogallahs, sometimes with the Minneconjous. The Sioux tribal governments were almost the same as ours. Each of them had numerous tribal chiefs, each had various warrior societies and chiefs of them.

In fact, some Cheyenne were parties to Lakota treaties and were considered by local Indian Agents to be part of the Sioux Nation (Twiss 1855:82-83, 1856:96; Cree, 1871:25; Lawrence 1876:200). Later in testimony before Congress (U.S. Senate 1879), the right of the northern Cheyennes to be included under the terms of the two 1868 Fort Laramie treaties was affirmed by government officials. During an investigation into the Dull Knife tragedy, Wild Hog (U.S. Senate 1880:6), a northern Cheyenne, said:
Great numbers of Sioux have married our women; and some of our men have married Sioux women. This intermarrying has taken place principally with the Spotted Tail and Red Cloud bands of the Sioux. We used to live with Red Cloud and Spotted Tail and their bands just as if we were all one tribe; used to give each other our children in marriage, and mix with them in all ways as if we belonged to the same tribe.

Wild Hog and other Cheyennes who testified before Congress not only expressed the pain of removal to Oklahoma territory, but they also revealed their bands were not accepted by the Southern Cheyennes, who considered them “Sioux.” As Wild Hog (1880:6) put it:

No sooner had the Northern Cheyennes got down there than the Southern Cheyennes began to show dislike for them. They said: “What are you Sioux doing here?” Little Rogue pointed his finger at me and asked that. After there was quarreling between the Northern and Southern Cheyennes all the time.

Other northern Cheyennes, including Wooden Leg and Iron Teeth, described to Thomas Marquis (1931:308; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973) their intense emotional attachments to the Black Hills and their desire to remain in this country with their Lakota relatives and friends. Rev. Peter Powell (1982:2:1067-1070,1125-1131,1245-1261) also writes at some length about these strong ties. The famous book of Mari Sandoz, Cheyenne Autumn (1942), immortalized the story of the Cheyennes under Morning Star (a.k.a. Dull Knife) and Little Wolf returning to their home in the north among the Lakotas after their forced removal to Oklahoma in 1878.

In this light, one could argue that the incredible growth of the Oglala Lakotas in the mid-nineteenth century, even in the face of major epidemic disease outbreaks, was not simply the result of people being siphoned off from other Lakota divisions, as Kingsley Bray (1994) argues, but also a process where the Cheyennes were losing some of their members to the Oglalas and also the Sicangus. This would certainly make sense after 1868, when technically speaking, those who remained in the neighborhood of the Black Hills were considered part of the Sioux Nation. After 1877, many Cheyennes were still associated with the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail agencies. Even though most of them were eventually relocated to agencies in Oklahoma and on the Tongue River in Montana, some remained and eventually settled at Pine Ridge (Eastman in Graber 1978:28, 132-134; Starita 1995:74-75). Today, many Oglalas at Pine Ridge are descended from Cheyennes, and until recent times, some were able to speak and/or understand the Cheyenne language (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:119 n9; Schukies 1993:129; Striata 1995:74-75). As John Stands In Timber (and Liberty 1967:119) tells it,

They were allies for many years, and the Sioux are always mentioned in Cheyenne ceremonies when they call the names of four special friendly tribes. They mingled and intermarried, and today there are still quite a few Cheyennes over at Pine Ridge. That reservation even used to be called half Sioux and half Cheyenne.

It is not surprising, given the strength and intimacy of the alliances between these two populations that they came to share a great deal in common regarding the places they jointly occupied and traveled. Lakota beliefs about the Black Hills and specific sites in the region closely parallel the Cheyennes’ and in some instances, they are virtually identical.

Although these two tribal nations and others as well were closely connected to one another, they maintained separate identities and positions in intertribal camp circles. Each of them held distinct religious symbols as markers of their separate histories and identities. For the Cheyennes, it was the Sacred Arrows, for the Sutaiois the Sacred Hat, for the Arapahos the Sacred Flathead
Pipe, and for the Lakotas the Sacred Buffalo Calf Pipe. Yet, despite their differences, these tribal nations held a great deal in common. All of them shared a tradition of fasting, praying, and seeking visions in the Black Hills and their outlier formations, especially Bear Butte (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:89). All of them had stories of the emergence of humans and bison that were connected to underground cavern formations in the region. Some of the stories the Cheyennes and Lakotas shared, including the one of the Great Race and another of Falling Star’s adventures, are nearly identical. Finally, all three tribes participated in the Sun Dance and sometimes even held their Sun Dances together (Powell 1981:1:248-249; Feraca 1998:12-13).59

If we move further back in time, we know the Cheyennes had close relations with the Plains Apaches and Kiowas. In fact, the present Keeper of the Sacred Arrows is descended from a Red Hat who was born in 1780 and had three Apache wives (Schukies 1993:187). John Stands In Timber (and Margot Liberty 1974:244-245) also tells how the Cheyennes learned about a certain kind of horse medicine from the Apaches who acquired it at Bear Butte. Apaches were located in the Hills well before the Cheyennes; some even hypothesize their presence as far back as the Late Archaic period of prehistory. Also, some of the Cheyenne stories about sacred places in the Black Hills are shared with the Kiowas and Plains Apaches (Sundstrom, L. 1996:183-184). The stories of the Kiowas’ Sun-Boy are very much like some Cheyenne and Lakota culture heroes who are also the progeny of a falling star (Mooney 1979:238). Gadombitsonhit, Old Woman Under the Ground, who is envisioned as a member of a dwarf-like race living in the subterranean habitats of mountainous regions (Mooney 1979:239), is reminiscent of Cheyenne and Lakota ideas about an underground female figure sometimes associated with Little People in the Black Hills (Schlesier 1987:82,102-104; Herman 1974:149). Equally interesting in this regard is the Kiowa name for the Black Hills, Sa’dalkani k’op, which refers to the manifold or stomach rind of a bison cow (Mooney 1979:419) and the Lakota and Cheyenne image of the Hills embodying a female bison presence (Standing Bear 1978:43-45; Schlesier 1987:79).

The Cheyennes learned the Sun Dance from the Sutaios who, in turn, were taught the ceremony by the Arapahos (Mooney 1907:369-370; Schlesier 1990:18-19; Schukies 1993:214-215). One of the Kiowas’ sacred Sun Dance bundles contains a tainé image that originated with the Crow, who gave it to an Arapaho, who married into the Kiowa nation, and until the late 19th century, the keeper of this object had to be descended from an Arapaho (Mooney 1979:240-241). The Cheyennes learned the Night Dance from the Kiowas and taught it to the Lakotas (Wissler 1912:78-79). The Cheyennes also had close connections with the Arikaras and, at times, good relations with the Mandans and Hidatsas, and many of their ceremonies and cosmological traditions bear close resemblances to these tribes as well (Moore 1987:100-102; Sundstrom 1997:200-205).

The Lakotas also reached out to other tribal nations in their movements to the Black Hills. There were close ties of marriage and collaboration with the Arapahos, who probably come to the Hills around 1750 (Meekeer 1901b: 1; Curtis 1907-30:6:143; Fowler 1982:43). The Poncas, known to have used the southeastern Black Hills as a camping and hunting ground in the mid-seventeenth century, allied themselves with the Lakotas at certain times in their history. There is some evidence that Yankton Dakotas lived for a time in the villages of the Poncas (Howard 1980:21). In the early nineteenth century, some Poncas joined ranks with the Sicangus (Brules), intermarrying and jointly collaborating in ceremony, hunting, and trading (Howard 1965a:28;

59 Each tribe appears to have run their own Sun Dance; the dances were held at the same encampments but on consecutive days.
The Wazahi,\textsuperscript{60} originally a band of the Sicangus and then Oglalas, had Ponca roots, and their territorial range covered much of the southeastern corner of the Black Hills after the 1830s (Hyde 1961:56,59-61,70,218; De Mallie 1975:353-356, 1976:260-261). Notwithstanding periods of hostility between the Lakotas and the Arikaras, there were also strong trade ties, many of which were associated with intermarriages and adoptions (Vestal 1934:22-24; Young Bear and Thiesz 1994:110). Indeed, some of the Oglalas and Minneconjous were reported to have lived among the Arikaras at the turn of the nineteenth century (Tabeau in Abel 1939:104). Once again, there are remarkable similarities between certain Lakota and Cheyenne oral traditions and those of the village tribes. The Arikaras, for example, have a Great Race story (Parks 1996:127-130), and so do the Arapahos (Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:395-404). These stories are not explicitly about the Black Hills. What is curious about them is that they include themes commonly connected to the Black Hills in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions.\textsuperscript{61}

The kinship relations and intermarriages with Cheyennes, Arapahos, Poncas, and Arikaras, among others, indicate that the Lakotas did not just adopt certain beliefs from other tribes but could actually trace their ancestry, and thus their cultural origins, to a time prior to their occupation of the Black Hills as a distinct nation. One modern storyteller, Jake Herman, is a good example of this: his ancestry included Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arikara parentage (Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:34). Another case in point is the Lakota holy man, Pete Catches, who was descended from Arapaho, Cheyenne, Oglala, and Hunkpapa people (Catches and Catches, Jr. 1990:51). Thus, when today’s Lakotas say that their peoples have always lived in the Black Hills, and that they have always considered them sacred, there is a legitimate historical and genealogical truth to their reasoning.

Certainly, the Lakotas were aware of other occupants in the Black Hills and maintained knowledge of this before and after their arrival in the area. Calico (in Wissler 1912:78-79), Black Elk (in DeMallie, 1984:314), and James LaPointe (1976:17) acknowledged as much and told about the earlier occupation of the area by the Kiowas, or a people named Witapaha (Island Hill), which is the ethnic ascription the Lakotas use for the Kiowas and possibly at one time the Watapio division of the Cheyenne. But this does not contradict the fact that people who are now identified as Lakota are indeed descended from tribes with a longer history in the region and an older tradition of knowledge associated with its various sites.

Some of the critics of Lakota spiritual attachments to the Black Hills take a very one-dimensional view of their history, which traces their movements in the region at a particular point in history. They do not account for the fact that small groups may have broken away from the larger body of the Sioux nation and become incorporated into neighboring tribes in protohistoric and even prehistoric times, or vice versa. In historic times, the Lakota nation did pick up peoples from other nations and drop off some of their own as they made their way back to the Black Hills. This is revealed in their centuries of genealogical relationship with other tribes, but this side of their history is generally hidden in the event-based, chronologically ordered records of their history. Many scholars dismiss Lakota traditions about an early Lakota relationship to the Hills, as posited in their traditions of an ancient Diaspora and long journey of return because these lack concrete proof, that is, verification in the hard copy of the written record. Their traditions end up being cast as legends and read as speaking to other aspects of their experience. What is being suggested here is that we think about the histories of the Lakotas and other tribal nations in terms of:

\textsuperscript{60} Wazhaze is the Ponca and Omaha name for the Osages (Fletcher & La Flesche 1972:1:47, 49-50, 57-60,101) and for the gens of the two tribes related to the Osage.

\textsuperscript{61} There is also a Race Track story that the Dakotas once told about the area around Spirit Lake (a.k.a. Devil’s Lake) in North Dakota (Eastman, C. 1971:163-170). This also reveals that certain common storylines were widely shared among the tribal nations of the northern Plains but applied, often simultaneously, to different geographic sites.
of alternative historical paths. Along these trails, history is not marked by what historians identify as “events.” Instead, it is shaped around what Raymond Fogelson (1989) labels “nonevents.” These include things that happened but are not regarded as having saliency in conventional historic perspectives or that occurred but are represented by narratives that do not carry the kind of transparent meanings or “facts” upon which historians typically construct a peoples’ history. It can be argued that Lakota history, as told in their stories of the “Return Journey” or the “Buffalo Wife,” represent a tribal memory of movements associated with complex and diffuse webs of genealogical relationship. It is this kind of history that gives legitimacy to Lakota assertions of an ancient, “prehistoric” relationship to the Black Hills.

III. WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK AND ITS CHRONOLOGY

There is a strong body of evidence that supports the long-standing spiritual attachments of the Lakota people to the Black Hills and that predates by more than a century the political activism and legal struggles of the 1970s, when some historians and anthropologists claim the Black Hills became sacred to them. From 1851 to 1918, well before tourism developed and expanded in the region, there are several sources that describe the Lakotas’ spiritual reverence for the Black Hills as a whole. There are also many references on their sacred regard for a variety of specific sites in and around the Hills, including, among others, Inyan Kara Mountain, Bear Lodge Butte, Bear Butte, Harney Peak, Castle Rock, Rapid Creek, Craven Canyon, Hot Springs, the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and of course, Wind Cave. In truth, there is an uninterrupted line of documents to the present day that attest to the spiritual importance of these sites to the Lakotas. In general, the sources strongly concur not only on which sites have been significant but also what they have meant and what oral traditions and ceremonial observances have been associated with them over time. Moreover, the evidence suggests strong connections to the beliefs and practices of other tribal nations who preceded their coming or who co-occupied the region once the main body of the Lakota nation arrived in the Black Hills.

In recent interviews (Kittelson and Albers 2002) with tribal cultural preservation personnel, it is clear that the Black Hills and specific sites within their reach continue to have sacred significance to a wide range of tribes. The southeastern Hills, including the area of Wind Cave National Park, holds significance as a location of historic occupation and use for the Arapahos, the Arikaras, the Cheyennes, the Lakotas, and the Plains Apaches. For two of these tribes, the Cheyennes, and Lakotas, this is also an area for which there is a long and well-documented history of spiritual attachments.
Chapter Fourteen

THE SACRED SIGNIFICANCE
OF WIND CAVE AND ITS ENVIRONS

Probably no area speaks to the controversy over the sacredness of the Black Hills better than Wind Cave and its environs, which include the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and the Hot Springs. The identification of Wind Cave as a sacred site appears to be recent, at least from the vantage point of published sources, even though this is not the sense one gets from tribal elders White Bull, Left Hand Bear, Charlie Eagle Louse, Wounded Horse, Stella Swift Bird, Jake Herman, Edgar Red Cloud, Joseph Black Elk, and James LaPointe, who spoke or wrote about it from the 1930s to the 1970s. From their perspective, the stories they shared were part of the traditions of their ancestors, some extending back many generations. Still, we were unable to uncover any narratives about the cave’s spiritual significance published before 1951, although there are unpublished documents from 1937 that give evidence of the cave’s sacredness to the Lakotas and one article (Freeland 1938b) that alludes to its spiritual importance. Also, a couple of articles (Bohi 1962; Pilcher 1964) document some of the reverential ways the Lakotas approached the cave in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the same time period, a number of references can be found on the sacred nature of the cavern formations underneath the Black Hills and also the general spiritual meanings assigned to caves in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions (Bushotter in Dorsey, J. 1894:476-477; Walker 1917:82; Sage in Haflen and Haflen 1956:268-272; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:156-157; Boller 1972:327; Knappen in Krause and Olson 1974:19; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:129, 150; Burrows in Krause and Olson 1974:192; Little Wound in Walker 1980:67, 124; Short Bull in Walker 1980:144).

Knowledge about the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and the Hot Springs is associated with a long written legacy that stretches back to the late nineteenth century when they were mentioned in the writings of white settlers, government agents, and ethnographers. One Lakota, Amos Bad Heart Bull (and Blish 1967:89), marked them on a map of the Black Hills that he drew at the end of the nineteenth century. All of these sites are conceptually connected to Wind Cave and, in some cases, they are a part of the same story. Indeed, one might argue that the cave’s position in Lakota cosmology cannot be adequately understood without reference to these other sites. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to discuss the broader basis and unity of the spiritual ideas that are attached to this area of the Black Hills and, more specifically, to describe their relation to the various sacred stories associated with Wind Cave.

Much of the discussion that follows focuses on Lakota traditions because these are the best documented in published sources, but it also includes reference to the Cheyennes who hold a strong spiritual connection to the area as well. Other tribal nations known to have occupied and traveled this area, particularly the Arapahos, Arikaras, Kiowas, Poncas, and Plains Apaches are considered here only indirectly. Although these tribal nations may have some sort of religious attachment to this area, it has not been recorded in any of the published or unpublished materials reviewed for this report.
I. THE TEXTS

The region where Wind Cave National Park is located speaks very powerfully to four fundamental Lakota cultural precepts about the workings of the cosmos. Each of these precepts is distinct yet integrally related, and taken together, they form the foundation of much Lakota intellectual and religious thought. The first precept has to do with the origin and regeneration of life, as it is understood metaphorically in the image of the bison, an animal on whose existence the Lakotas and other tribal nations of the region depended for their livelihood and sense of identity. The second one is related to understandings of how the universe is given form and motion through the actions of the Four Winds, and how, in particular, the North Wind, Waziyata, is linked to regeneration and the breath of life. The third covers basic knowledge about how the celestial, earthly, and subterranean planes of the universe are interconnected, as revealed not only in the myth cycles of orphan boys, variously named Falling Star, Stone Boy, Blood Clot, and Ironhawk, but also in stories about nations of diminutive or gigantic stature who co-occupy spaces in the cosmos. The final has to do with the circular order of the universe and its expression in the topography of the Black Hills, in the conduct of religious ceremonies, and in the structure of sacred texts, most notably, the story of the Great Race.

A. The Origin and Home of the Bison

Every human culture has centralizing metaphors that serve as the foundation upon which they build their most fundamental ontological notions about what is reality, what it means to exist, and what are the origins of life. Centralizing metaphors act as condensation points around which manifold ideas get imagined, expressed, and acted upon. They are synergistic, weaving and integrating a common concept through different areas of experience. They not only underscore a culture’s dominant values but also help realize its greatest hopes and highest aspirations. In Lakota (and also in Arapaho and Cheyenne) traditions, the bison, the winds, the earth, and the circle all serve as centralizing metaphors or holy symbols which can be used to represent an aspect of the other and which, in turn, speak to the workings of the universe (Schlesier 1987:4-12; Moore, J. 1996:204-212; New Holy 1997:114-118; Anderson, J. 2000, 2001).

Without question, the buffalo is a dominant and centralizing metaphor in Lakota philosophy. Its appearance is ubiquitous in their sacred stories of creation and renewal. Its spiritual essence, ton, is called up in nearly every significant ceremonial event, and its presence is imagined over many landscapes that make up the Lakotas’ historic territorial range. The Black Hills is one of the geographic locations where this imagery stands out because they have long been understood as the birthplace and home of the buffalo.

Like Bear Butte, as described by Forbes-Boyte (1996:13), the Black Hills constitute a hierophany: they stand as the physical manifestation of the sacred that, in this particular space, is envisioned in the symbolic image of a buffalo. The Buffalo Gap, one of the gateways through which the bison historically left their home in the spring with newborn calves and returned in winter, is the opening to the birth canal. Today, its neighboring sites, Wind Cave and Hot Springs, are imagined as the womb (tatamani) and milk (asanpi) of the buffalo, respectively (Goodman 1992:61). Harney Peak and Pe Sla at the center of the Hills constitute the heart of the buffalo (Goodman 1992:12; New Holy 1997:154). Outlier sites in the northern reaches of the Hills, Bear Butte, Bear Lodge Butte, and Inyan Kara, comprise the buffalo’s head (Goodman 1992:13). Indeed, the entire Hills stand metaphorically for the body of the buffalo, which in some representations is envisioned as Pte (buffalo cow) and in others as Tatanka (bison bull). Some of this figurative imagining has appeared only recently in the published literature, but the
The general idea of the Black Hills as having an animate presence appears much earlier in Standing Bear’s writings (1978:43-45) and in Black Elk’s words (DeMallie 1984:296, 310). It is an idea that is also consistent with Cheyenne and Kiowa notions of a spiritual bison figure that guards the animals in the cavern formations underneath the Black Hills (Mooney 1979:239; Schlesier 1987:82, 102-104).\footnote{The Kiowa also envisioned the Black Hills and their surroundings in the image of a buffalo’s internal organs. According to Harrington (1939:168), they had four names for landforms in the region, which represented the parts of a buffalo, which sacrificed itself for seven children fleeing a mad bear. As they ran away from the bear, the children threw its parts to the bear, including the 1) Sadlka’e k’oup [leaftripe], 2) Aakya’e [honeycomb tripe], 3) Biimsadl [hairlike part of the tripe], and 4) tsoudlpakah [brain sack skin]. Each of these organs became landforms of similar appearance. The particular landforms to which they refer, however, remain unknown.}

The notion that the Buffalo Gap is a passageway connected to the bison’s place of origin is not only old but also consistent over time. In Lakota, this site is called Pte Tali Yapa (Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:280) or alternatively, Pte Ta Tiyopa [Doorway of the Bison Cow] and Tatanka Tiyope [Doorway of the Bison Bull] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:210). It is also known as He Okiksaha [The Ridge with a Cut or Wedge], and the land inside it is called Tatanka makalhpaya [The Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull]\footnote{The word, “makalhpaya” refers to a place where the earth has been compressed. Again, credit for the translation of this word and He Okiksaha is given to Yvonne Kelly with the assistance of Jerry Dearly.} (Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:95; Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:242). In 1915, Little Cloud (in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:95-97) told Father Eugene Buechel a story of a spiritual nature associated with the Buffalo Gap. It is translated from the Lakota as follows:

In this way they made buffalo medicine. They called the place the “stomping grounds of the buffalo.”

There was a village at the Buffalo Gap and they were rich in dried beef. Now, one day a man there stated, “On this day, the [buffalo will make something?] and from the tipi in the middle of this camp two horns will come straight out of it, so go to the tipi quickly, before anything happens.”

Now, a man saw a buffalo head with horns coming along the outside of the tent circle, snorting repeatedly for quite a ways, so before anything else happened, he went to where the people were gathered inside the tent circle. He had a rifle and came up to them on horseback showed them how to load the small leaden bullets in the rifle. Then he trotted over to the door of the tipi, and they gave him a branch in return and set it in the ground like a pole.

Now the buffalo came and began rubbing against the pole,\footnote{There are several significant images in this story, one of which is the allusion to the Sun Dance center pole and its power of rejuvenation. It may also allude to a common habit of bison to rub their bodies against trees and poles.} during which time a man on a horse came out of the right side of his body as one being born. Suddenly the buffalo fell and lay face down as though asleep. Then, he stood and began to stagger as he was bleeding from the nose and mouth\footnote{Bison are associated with the color red, in part because of the red mucus that exudes from a cow’s nose after she gives birth and that she licks on her newly born calf. This substance is symbolically important to the Lakotas, and Black Elk (in Brown 1971:134-135) specifically mentioned it in reference to the visionary origins of the Throwing the Ball Ceremony.} and then grunted and ran away. Shortly, he returned to where the pole was and began rubbing against it again. Then a yellow haired man came out of the left side of his body and again the buffalo fell down and was bleeding badly from the nose and mouth. He staggered to stand and went into the tipi. The people raised the walls of the tipi so they could see the back part of it. The buffalo was laying face downward so they set a big wood bowl filled with water in front of him. He began to drink and drink until he emptied it. They filled it again and again he emptied it. Then he stood, grunted, walked in a circle in the tipi, came back to the bowl, shook his shoulders and fell in front of it.
Then the first man took the bowl and the people stood up and continued to stand around the buffalo. Then they saw two flattened bullets, one small and one large. Then the man said, “Look, the first one went into the throat and the other one went into the back.” And then, there was a hole in the middle of this bone and on account of the amount of blood coming out of it, this last bullet must be the one that did him in.”

The wounds were still freshly bleeding and then the man said, “As I stand here, they are looking well! The wounds are closing up.” Now the buffalo snorted and ate a medicine that was lying by his hoof, then rolled around before standing up. Then the people all saw something that was very holy. In the doorway of the tipi stood a man just like you.

The meaning of this narrative, cloaked in the imagery of wounds and warfare, is actually a story about the continuity of life as an ongoing exchange between death and birth. The juxtaposition of death and birth is revealed in the close connection between the buffalo’s life-threatening injury, as symbolized in the blood flowing from its nose and mouth, and its ability to heal itself, allowing for its ultimate transformation into human form. Humanity and the bison are related as one because human materialization is embodied literally in the spiritual presence and the organic essence, the blood, of the bison. Universally, blood is a sign that stands for the principal of life in death. The death of one material form, the buffalo, gives rise to the birth of another, humans, but the two are not discrete because they are conjoined in the same life-perpetuating process. It is this immortal, perpetual cycle (motion) of life that mysteriously revealed itself in the story that took place at the Buffalo Gap, a canyon widely reputed to metaphorically stand for the birth canal.

Although nearby Wind Cave does not appear in Little Cloud’s story, its connection to this metaphysical event becomes obvious in other texts that link the two places together. As LaPointe writes (1976:85):

“.Lakota legends say, that at one time, there was no such gap there. But, through the ages, as countless herds of hungry and thirsty animals came out of the Wind Cave, they would make a wild dash eastward to get to the cool waters and lush grasses. Legends say, that after countless years the sharp hooves of the stampeding herds have cut down a high ridge into a narrow gorge. Thus it has become known as the Pte Tetiopa (doorway of the buffalo).

There is also a more recent source that confirms the connection of the Buffalo Gap to Wind Cave. In their 1987 book Black Hills: Sacred Hills published by Tipi Press of St. Joseph’s Indian School in Chamberlain, South Dakota, Tom Charging Eagle and Ron Zeilinger (n.p) connected the Buffalo Gap to Wind Cave when they wrote:

In another part of the hills, to the South, is a place called ‘Wind Cave.’ It is an opening large enough for a man to enter the earth below. On certain stormy days, this hole in the earth makes a breathing sound.

We have a legend that from here [Wind Cave] the buffalo came. It is said that they came forth from this cave no larger than ants, but grew to full size in a very short time.

They came forth in great numbers running down the valley to the plains beyond, making a path through the hills as they went. In this way, they created the place known as the ‘Buffalo Gap.’”

66 Story translated by Yvonne Kelly with the assistance of Jerry Dearly. This translation gives a different sense of this story than the one done by Paul Manhart. Manhart’s efforts to translate Buechel’s texts are sometimes awkward and at times misleading.
That the Buffalo Gap and other passageways through the Hogback were the exits through which animals moved after they were newly born to reach their grassland feeding grounds during the spring and the entrances through which they traveled to winter at locations along the Race Track is an old idea. As noted in previous chapters, early nineteenth-century white observers, such as Antoine Pierre Tabeau and Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, noted these annual movements. More recently, Linea Sundstrom (1990:322-325) suggests in her writings on rock art that these gateways probably represented transitional spaces, which metaphorically call forth images of fertility and birth, and which, in the process, reveal a possible connection to ritual observances associated with the life cycle.

Modern Lakotas clearly attach importance to the Buffalo Gap in their ceremonial observances. Historically, the movement of bison through this gap in the spring marked the beginning of a major ritual cycle (Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a: 42-43; Goodman 1992:7). It signaled the

FIGURE 25. The Black Hills as the Body of a Bison

67 Gilbert Walking Bull (1980:25) uses the term “Pte-tah ti-yo-pa (gateway of the buffalos)” to refer to the canyon at Deadwood, South Dakota.
time when Lakotas started to enter the Hills to conduct ceremonies near Harney Peak and at *Pe Sla* (Black Elk, C. 1992a:50). According to Arvol Looking Horse (in Parlow 1983a:42), the Lakotas entered the Black Hills at the Buffalo Gap en route to Harney Peak. Even though bison no longer pass through this gateway, the arrival of the vernal equinox is still celebrated with a special pipe ceremony that, according to one of the tribal cultural preservation officers with whom we spoke, is held at locations near the Buffalo Gap (Albers & Kittelson 2002).

In the past, this area was probably associated with the spiritual performances of the *Tatanka kagapi* [Buffalo Makers or Imitators] described earlier (Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:242-245), and it would not be surprising to learn that it had some association with certain kinds of sweatlodge performances connected to the Cheyennes’ *Isiwinhétániu* [Buffalo Men] (Grinnell 1914; Anderson 1956). The significance of the Buffalo Gap is something the Lakotas share with the Cheyennes, suggesting that its importance extends back to the documented presence of both the Cheyennes and Suhtaios in this area by the mid-eighteenth century. According to Wesley Whiteman who was in his eighties when he shared his knowledge of Cheyenne traditions with Warren Schwartz (1988:72), the Buffalo Gap is the sacred origin place of the Sun Dance, the site where the buffalo first performed this dance after the Great Race and taught its teachings and performance to humans. This link is also found in other sources on the Cheyennes (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:23; Powell 1969:2:472-478). The Cheyenne women’s quilling society is tied to this location as well because the buffalo wife’s husband, who is the central character in certain Race Track stories, founded it.

Also consistent over time is the idea that the buffalo’s place of origin is a cave, a hole (in Lakota this word can be used as a synonym for cave), a spring, or other subterranean location (Buechel 1970:331, 551; Moore, J. 1996:211, see also, Chapter Twelve for more details). Some of the earliest recorded stories of this association among the Lakotas come from tribal elders who worked with James Walker at the end of the nineteenth century. Indeed, Walker recorded several stories68 that describe a link between bison and caves. Left Heron, *Hokacatka* or *Makula*, whose mother was a member of the Oglala Gopher Band and whose father was a Minneconjou (Walker 1980:103 n1), told Walker one of these (Left Heron in Walker 1917:183-190, 1980:109-118).69 In this story a man marries a woman who is a buffalo. As Left Heron (in Walker 1983:113) puts it, “They traveled together and came to mountains where there was a cave. They went down through the cave and came to the regions under the world. There they saw a camp with many people.” These were the *Pte Oyate*, the Buffalo People, which the man freed from their oppressive rulers. The Buffalo People were very happy about this, and they offered to make the man their head chief. He agreed, but said he hunted for his family on the earth, and they needed a way to have food if he was not there to provide for them. The buffalo said they would go to the man’s family and offer themselves as food. According to Left Heron (in Walker 1983:117), this was how the buffalo came to the Lakota people.

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68 The version published in Elaine Jahner’s edited collection (Walker 1983) of James Walker’s manuscripts of Lakota myths is closer to the original version than the one Walker translated and edited for publication in 1917. Many important geographic references, including the buffalo living inside of a cave in the mountains, are absent in the 1917 version.

69 Left Heron narrated a number of different versions of this story to James Walker and Ella Deloria. All of the versions share a common narrative structure and similar themes, including references to the old man, *Waziya*, and the old woman, *Wakanka*, and the tension between the Buffalo Wife and the Corn Wife. Some scholars (Rice 1994) interpret the story in terms of the light it sheds on the dynamics of Lakota kinship. This is certainly one important way to approach it. However, embedded in this story and the tensions between the Corn Wife and the Buffalo Wife is a historical story about migrations and the role that marriages between nations play in these movements (see Chapter Fifteen). The stories, although sharing a common thematic structure, are played out in varied ways and lead to different sorts of ceremonial outcomes, including the origin of the Sun Dance, *Wiwanyan wacipi*. 

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In the years Left Heron was sharing different versions of the Buffalo wife story with James Walker and Ella Deloria (1978:86-89; in Rice 1994:67-126), Father Eugene Buechel recorded a variant of the story from Asa Bad Yellow Hair (in Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:66-68 [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:91-96]). In Asa Bad Yellow Hair’s version, recorded in 1915, the hero discovers that his mother-in-law lives in a cave in the hills where she has taken many men captive and killed them. The hero slays his mother-in-law and brings the men back to life. This particular version is very similar to a Cheyenne Sweet Medicine story that takes place at a cave in the southern Black Hills (Schlesier 1987:79).

What is important to emphasize about these stories is that the cave in question is located in the mountains or hills, which would have meant the Black Hills to most Lakotas of Left Heron and Yellow Hair’s generation. There are many caves in the Hills, so on what grounds, other than what they learned from prior generations, might storytellers Jake Herman, Joseph Black Elk, and James LaPointe connect a female bison theme to Wind Cave? One answer is its proximity to the Buffalo Gap. Of all the caves in the region, which, incidentally, are understood by the Lakotas to be interconnected, Wind Cave is not only the most unusual, but it is one that can be reached by a direct route of travel along Beaver Creek. Indeed, as pointed out in Chapter Six, early settlers in the region knew about an old Indian trail that followed the Buffalo Gap and passed near Wind Cave (Tallent 1899:647).

Jake Herman related two slightly different and much abridged versions of the story that Left Heron told Walker. One appears in Ehanni Ohunkanan: A Curriculum Resource Unit (in One Feather 1972:149) as follows:

The wind cave, where Wind Cave National Park is located, was a sacred cave where the buffalo lady dwelt. At first the Sioux feared the cave because they thought a giant lived in it. They thought that the wind, which blew in and out of the mouth of the cave was caused by a giant breathing. This giant invoked the providence of the Great Spirit to give him knowledge of the mysterious hidden powers of Mother Nature that lurked in the cave the Indians feared.

One day, a medicine man stood at the mouth of the cave pondering, and suddenly, a vision appeared to him. A young Indian maiden told him she was the immortal buffalo lady from below the earth.

The buffalo lady told the medicine man to tell his people that the cave was one of the sacred places of Paha Sapa. She said, “Tell your people to come to this cave and offer gifts and tokens by dropping them into the sacred cave. By your offerings the Great Spirit will provide your temporal wants by providing great herds of buffalo for your livelihood.

In an undated manuscript held at the Wind Cave National Park Library, probably written in the 1960s, Herman (n.d.: Wind Cave National Park) tells the same story but in a slightly different manner:

A medicine man of the Sioux tribe discovered the Wind Cave or Wa-shun Wakan. As he stood near the entrance of the cave a strong strange whistling sound came out of the cave by

70 In his Iron Hawk cycle, Left Heron (in Beckwith 1930:379-390; in Deloria, E. 1978) also includes an episode where the hero marries a bison woman and confronts his cannibalistic in-laws and their stone associates, including a Little Man.

the strong current of wind that blew alternately from the mouth of the cave. He thought a giant lived in the cave and it was caused from his breathing. He feared he would be sucked into the cave and fled. At first the Sioux people were afraid to go near this cave. One day a handsome brave warrior was sent to the cave to find out if the giant still occupied the cave. As he came near the cave a beautiful lady appeared out of the cave and told him that she was the buffalo lady who possessed the mysterious power from below the earth and that she would provide for the Sioux people with game if they would dedicate this cave and offer tokens to the Great Spirit. Herds of buffalo would come out of the cave and migrate through Buffalo Gap into the Great Plains. This is a legend of the Wind Cave as told to me by Sioux Indians.

Herman’s stories are noteworthy because they combine two different Lakota traditions about caves, one associated with a giant and the other a female bison figure (see Chapter Twelve).

The association of the Black Hills with a subterranean giant is an old idea recorded in the writings of several non-Indian observers in the last half of the nineteenth century (Denig in Ewers 1961:6; Boller 1972:327; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:129, 150). Herman suggests that the connection of Wind Cave to a giant is an older idea that no longer held currency among the Lakotas in the 1960s. This notion may well have been associated with the strong ties between the bison and Waziya, the Old Man, and/or his grandson, Waziyata, the North Wind, both of whom are commonly depicted as giant figures. It certainly corresponds with something James Owen Dorsey (1894:468) alluded to when he commented: “They used to pray to him, but when they found that he did not heed them they desisted.” James Walker (1917:91) also wrote about this too.

The Buffalo People are those who dwell in the regions under the world and are the people of the Sun. Waziya was their chief, but when he was deposed they chose the Buffalo God to be their chief and He is so.

Although the significance of Waziya and his control over the bison may have been deemphasized, it is clear from material presented elsewhere (see Chapter Twelve) that the close connection between the two never actually disappeared from Lakota stories and liturgical texts.

In the last half of the twentieth century, the association of Wind Cave with a female bison figure appeared in other stories as well. In 1973, Henry Black Elk (in Theisz 1975:16-18) told a story very similar to Herman’s. In his narrative, a large Lakota encampment, located at the edge of the Black Hills, is facing hunger. The leader of the camp instructs two young men to go out and look for food. They travel for many days and arrive at a hill where, as Black Elk continues the story:

The two warriors stopped dead in their tracks as they got on top of the hill and not far away there was a howling sound, a sound that would scare anybody. As they went closer it was a huge cave, and from this very cave this sound came. It was a howling wind. So the two warriors approached the cave and they sat by the cave constantly hearing that sound that came out of the mouth of the cave. And the two warriors were so tired they fell asleep. Then during the night they awoke by a noise. So as they opened their eyes. There stood a beautiful Buffalo Maiden. She had on the most beautiful buckskin dress decorated in the best ornaments that you could see. And she said to the two warriors, ‘You must go back to your people, to your encampment. Tell your chief and your medicine man to get some tokens and you will proceed back to this very cave with the tokens.’

The young men returned to their camp and told of their encounter. Tokens were collected for a gift, which the two young men and a medicine man brought back to the cave in the company of twenty warriors. When the medicine man approached the cave:
The beautiful Buffalo Maiden appeared again in her white buckskin regalia. And when the medicine man gave the token to the beautiful Buffalo Maiden she said ‘Your people will not hunger no more!’ In that instant she disappeared into this very cave with the token and that weird sound that came from this cave suddenly ceased. And from this very cave a herd of buffalos came out. So the warriors went and killed some of the buffalos, but did not waste. They killed enough for the whole Sioux encampment to eat. And up to this day, this very cave is in Paha Sapa in the Black Hills. To me and to all of us it is known as Wind Cave.

Black Elk goes on to say that he learned this story from his grandfather, Nicholas, and his father, Ben, and that he wanted to pass it on to the children so that when they visit the cave they will know of the buffalo there. He also claims that this is a true story in the historic memory of the tribe and not a legend from the time of myth. Nonetheless, it is still a story that speaks of the kind of mysterious, wakan experience that attaches sacred significance to the place where it happened.

Three years later, James LaPointe (1976:79-80) described the cave in some detail. As he wrote:

This place has been deep in the history of the original American for thousands of years before the advent of the white man. Like many other places in the Black Hills, this ‘hole that breathes cool air’ was a landmark.

Lakota history says that medicine men of ancient times journeyed from far away lands to worship at Washun Niya, and to offer sacrifice. It was their belief that buffalo and other game animals came out of this cave, the animals being bred and supplied by mysterious beings that inhabited the underground regions.

Singers of holy songs came here to capture the soft, sighing sounds that exuded from this great cavity of the earth. Legends say these were the whispering and the singing of those people who occupy underground lands. The Indian made flutes to imitate the pensive overtones of this hissing hole. Its breath was like a fall breeze. So say the Lakota.

Clearly LaPointe implies that knowledge of this cave and its whereabouts was held by the Lakotas and other American Indians for many millennia. He suggests that its spiritual status drew people from great distances to pray and learn sacred songs. This is precisely the kind of sacred communication or dream speech denoted by the word hanbloglagia described in an earlier chapter. Some of the Lakotas we spoke with told us that today some people could still hear the voices of the spirits who dwell in Wind Cave (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

LaPointe (1976:80-84) also tells a story in which a young man named Taopi Gli [Returns Home Wounded] is lured into the cave by a beautiful woman while he and a companion are hunting for deer. When Taopi Gli disappears, his companion senses that he has been seduced by the dreaded Winyan Nupapika [Double Woman] and races breathlessly back to their camp through a narrow canyon (quite possibly the Buffalo Gap) to alert others of Taopi Gli’s fate. The elders decide to search for the “mysterious hole” into which Taopi Gli has disappeared. After all the village’s ropes are gathered and assembled into long cables, they travel to Wind Cave and volunteers are repelled into the cave only to find “grotesque formations and eerie shadows.” Finding no evidence of Taopi Gli, his family and friends gather together to grieve over him. A medicine man advises his grieving father to fast and cry for a vision in which he might learn of

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72 This story is actually an amalgamation of themes from several different traditional narratives. Not only does it contain elements of the “Buffalo Wife” story recorded by James Walker and Ella Deloria, but it also incorporates aspects of narratives associated with the Blood-Clot Boy, Stone Boy, Iron Hawk, and Falling Star.
his son’s fate. The father, a chief in his village, travels to Hechinskayapi Paha [Bighorn or Sheep Mountain], now Mount Coolidge (located in Custer State Park), where after four days and four nights, Falling Star appears to him and shows him through a series of dreamlike images that his son is alive and a member of the underground nation Maka Mahe Oyate and a ruler of these people. He also tells him that this marriage is a good omen. Since the underground nation are the “keepers and breeders of all game animals,” Taopi Gli’s people on earth will never go hungry. In interpreting the story LaPointe writes:

For ages, according to Lakota legend, since the marriage of a surface man to a distinguished girl of the underground world, famines were unknown, because out of the mouth of the Wind Cave, never-ending hordes of buffalo and other game animals emerged as time went on. If its difficult to believe that large animals such as the buffalo are able to come out of such a small hole, legend explains that the animals came out like a string of tiny ants, but as they emerged and sucked in the invigorating surface air, in a very little time they expanded into their natural sizes. This indeed was true until the white man came, bringing along new conditions, disturbing ancient religious traditions, and burdening the natural world with entirely foreign ways of living (LaPointe 1976:84).

Here again, there is a strong connection between bison and other game animals with the subterranean world. Like Jake Herman and Henry Black Elk’s narratives, LaPointe’s version is noteworthy because of its obvious and very consistent links with Cheyenne stories of the Buffalo Gap and the Great Race as well as Left Heron’s early narrative of the man who married a buffalo woman, entered a cave in the mountains, and visited the nest of a Thunderbird on a mountain peak. The fact that this is not a story of human emergence makes it no less important from a spiritual standpoint. Its sacredness comes from its association with the replenishment of the bison and the other game animals the Lakotas depended upon for their survival. It is also important spiritually because of its links to stories in the Falling Star cycle that are related to other sacred sites in the region, and, as indicated momentarily, one of them might even be connected to the region of the Buffalo Gap and Wind Cave.

Stories of a marriage between a human man and a woman of the underworld, often personified as a buffalo, are found among tribes throughout the Great Plains (Walker 1983:104; Parks 1996:165). Many stories about human-bison relations, even among the Lakotas, do not speak of any marriage between the underground buffalo and a human; they simply refer to encounters between humans and bison in their subterranean homes (Bushotter in Dorsey, J. 1894:476-477; Judson 1913:53; Short Bull in Walker 1980:144). The story of a male figure, usually a hunter, coming upon the underground home of the bison is a fundamental theme in many Lakota stories. But there is another variation on this theme, and this is the one most commonly told today in relation to Wind Cave.

It is the story of Tokahe and the emergence of the Pte Oyate [Buffalo People] or humans from the underworld. The story was told by the Oglala intellectual Long Knife (George Sword) to James Walker as part of a larger genesis story, which begins with Inyan [rock or stone] differentiating itself into earth and sky and then goes on to tell how all the major figures in the Lakota pantheon came into being. It also includes the story of human genesis and the emergence of the Oceti Sakowin, the Seven Fires or divisions of the Sioux (Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota) peoples. In the segment of the story (Walker 1917:181-182) that covers the emergence of humans, Wazi [Old Man] and Wakanka [Old Woman] desire to gain more power and conspire with Iktomi [the spider or trickster] to have their beautiful daughter, Ite [Face], affiliated with one of the “gods.” This daughter ends up marrying Tate [Wind], but eventually has a liaison with Anpteu Wi [Sun]. The adulterous affair angers their leader, Skan [Sky/Motion], who transforms the daughter into Anog-Ite [Two-Face] and banishes her along with Iktomi to the edge of the
earth. Lonely for her people in the underworld, Anog-ite conspires with Iktomi to bring them to the earth’s surface. The story goes on to tell how Iktomi gathered up many soft, tanned skins and enlisted the help of the wolf to take these to the Pte Oyate [Buffalo people] who were still underground:

Iktomi gave the pack [of skins] to a wolf and went with it to the entrance of the cave that opens down through the world. He told it to go and watch the people under the world and when it saw a strong and brave young man to speak with him alone and to give him the pack and tell him that there were plenty of such things in the world. It went through the cave and saw the camp of people far away. Before it came to the camp it met a strong young man (Walker 1917:181).

This young man was Tokahe, “The First.” He showed the meat and skins to his people, and they wanted some for themselves. Tokahe chose some men to go on the surface of the earth and see if these things were really plentiful there. The wolf “led them through the cave and when they were on the earth, he led them to the lake where the double-woman had her tipi” (Walker 1917:182). She served them a feast, and the wolf gathered up a lot of game so it appeared plentiful. After returning to the cave’s entrance, the young man asked the wolf to take him back to his people. When the wolf returned, he told him “to wait and guide others who wished to come to the world, and when they had passed through the cave to lead them for food and water” (Walker 1917:182). The people of the underground debated if they should go and live on the earth.

Six brave men chose to go with Tokahe. They took their women and children and went from camp. The wolf met them and guided them through the cave, all day. At night they came to a strange place and the children cried for food and drink. Then Iktomi appeared and laughed at their misery and Tokahe was shamed...In the morning the people did not know where to go. They were hungry and thirsty. Then the old man and woman appeared and they gave them food and drink. The old man led the people so they traveled swiftly and came to the region of the pines. Then he and the old woman showed them how to hunt the game and how to care for the meat and the skins, and how to make clothing and tipis. Thus Tokahe and his friends were the first people on the world and their children are the Lakota (Walker 1917:182).

After its original publication in 1917, an abridged version of this story appeared in Royal B. Hassrick’s work (1964:205-217). In 1972, it was released in a body of curriculum material for use in Lakota schools. The story was not connected to Wind Cave, however, in either of these contexts. Instead, it was Jake Herman’s narrative about the encounter of a human man with a buffalo woman that became identified with Wind Cave in the curriculum material assembled by Vivian One Feather (1972).

The first published connection of the Tokahe story to Wind Cave that we could find is Marla Powers’ book Oglala Women (1986:42-43, 50), in which an encapsulated version of the Long Knife narrative was given and the cave in question identified as Wind Cave. This story was also included in one of the appendices (Black Hills Steering Committee 1986:203) that accompany the testimony for the Bradley Bill, but here it is linked to the entire cavern formation under-

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73 According to Fannie McAdam (1973:28), there once was a lake on the old Valentine ranch now inside park boundaries that was drained when the road to Custer State Park was built.
74 Earlier in 1953, it is curious that a delegation of Lakota who attended Wind Cave National Park’s fiftieth anniversary celebration adopted and named the park’s superintendent, Earl M. Semingson, Tatanka Tokahe, which can be translated as “First Born Bison Bull” (Bohi 1962:465). This suggests that the Tokahe story may have been associated with Wind Cave at least thirty years prior to any published reference to the association.
neath the Black Hills not just Wind Cave. More recently, Karen Lone Hill of Oglala Lakota College wrote about Wind Cave in the *Encyclopedia of North American Indians* (1996:590-593) as follows:

The Sioux contend that they have always lived in the northern Great Plains area. If there was a migration that occurred, they say, it was outward from the Black Hills into the outlying regions. The Black Hills have a strong religious significance for the *Oceti Sakowin* -- particularly the Lakotas, the chosen caretakers and protectors of the Black Hills -- because the Black Hills are the traditional birthplace of the Sioux Nation.

According to tribal tradition, the Sioux originated within the Black Hills themselves. The story goes back to a time in history when they lived underground beneath the Black Hills. Eventually they were enticed to the surface of the earth, emerging through Wind Cave, in the southern Black Hills. Once they had emerged, they were unable to return to the place that had been their home for thousands of years. Their leader, whom they had left behind underground, foresaw the fate of his people and the hardships they would encounter and, sacrificing his safe existence, came to the surface in the form of the buffalo. And it was the buffalo that sustained the people during that early period; it provided food, clothing, shelter, and tools—all the necessities of life.

How Long Knife’s genesis story became the defining narrative of Wind Cave rather than the one with a genealogy linked to Left Heron, Jake Herman (1974), Henry Black Elk (1975), and James LaPointe (1976) is unclear. Today, however, there is no question that Long Knife’s story and some of its close modern variants hold considerable sway among Lakotas/Dakotas living in reservation communities in Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota and among those who live in urban areas like the Twin Cities. As James Fenelon (1998:289) noted, this story was alluded to during a Sun Dance held at Prairie Island, Minnesota in 1994, when David Chief, a Lakota elder, remarked:

> We Lakota, and our relatives here the Dakota, originated from sacred places on earth, according to our scared traditional knowledge. The Pte Oyate, we as buffalo people, came out from the earth near the place where the holy winds blow out, very close to the Paha Sapa, the Black Hills, always known to us as the sacred “He Sapa.”

Although Wind Cave is not specifically mentioned in a story that the Standing Rock religious leader Joe Flying By (in Parlow 1983a:37-38, 39) narrated in the 1980s, it bears repeating here because it represents a modern variation of the *Tokahe* saga. It also conveys several fundamental themes that underlie Lakota understandings of the Black Hills and their relation to caves and bison. As he tells it:

> …The *Paha Sapa* was full of four-legged, and winged people, creeping people, small people and animals and there were no humans around. The Buffalo Nation, of brownish color, brown ones and red ones. And the King Buffalo are white ones. They are talking Buffalo People. One day they have a council and they ask one of the young buffalos, a brownish color one. In the Black Hills area, there are many caves. Some of them don’t find

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75 In the 1930s, Standing Bear (1978:44-45), quoted in the last chapter, also alludes to the fact that the Black Hills are the site of the Lakotas’ genesis as a people.

76 In her introduction to the collection of myths gathered by James Walker (1983), Elaine Jahner (in Walker 1983:15-24) discusses at some length Ella Deloria’s correspondence with Franz Boas regarding the origins of George Sword’s tales. In contrast to the stories attributed to Left Heron, which were recognized by the Lakotas she interviewed in the 1930s, those linked to George Sword appear to have had no precedent. They were unfamiliar to most of the people she interviewed, leading her to believe that they were the unique creation of this very gifted writer and storyteller. It is not surprising, therefore, that the more recent *ohnankakan* stories about Wind Cave, namely those of Jake Herman and James LaPointe, have more in common with Left Heron’s “Buffalo Wife” stories than with Sword’s “Tokahe” saga.
these. Some are caved in. There are many caves that are hidden beneath the Black Hills. And there are many channels that are hidden beneath the earth. Maybe this is why we know that there are people under the Black Hills, Paha Sapa. There is life under that hill. They asked the brownish buffalo to make a journey to one of these entrance ways of the cave and make a noise, a buffalo call through this hole. Not actually going in, but making noise how the buffalo are making noise. On the other side of the place there are people. Somehow a young man was going other places and he heard this voice. He came to the entrance way, to the cave. It was this hole, but they didn’t know about this. They came to this hole and it was dark in there but there was some kind of noise and he went in there but seemed like it was telling him to come. And he followed this voice until he came to an open place. And another world, another place of light. And all he saw was the shaggy people, the four-legged. They were standing looking at him. A strange person that come to this place. And the White Buffalo starts talking: Kola Mitakuyapi ‘That’s my relative, that’s my friend.’ They greet him. Tanyan Yahi Yelo, that means, ‘you come here, that we greet you.’ And the White Buffalo, the old one, said, ‘we depend on older people to tell us what is true.’

And that day on that time, that is what happened. The White Buffalo said, ‘look over this place. This area. If you think you can live with your relatives here, you can do so. But first you must look over the place good. If you’re satisfied you can go home, bring your family.’ So he stayed with the Buffalo People for quite a while and he said he was going back to bring his family. And before leaving, the White Buffalo said, ‘When you bring your family, we buffalos will feed you. They are going to offer themselves to you, that your peoples shall live. They’ll feed you.’ The young man went back to this hole. He went running—it was a distance—I don’t know how deep. That hole, that tunnel went to another place. So this body went back to his own home and it seemed like the people already knew where he went to. All looking at him. So he made a speech to his family. Talked a good while. And they said they wanted to go that that place. ‘Maybe a better place that we can live.’ So they got ready packed their stuff and another meeting was called and there were six families wanted to come—and so there were seven now. Seven families were now getting ready. They all carried their stuff and they went through this hole and they came to the Buffalo People. At that time there was direction but they see the Sun. Sure enough six Buffalo People were in this area, white ones. And they were looking over to the other ones. So the two-legged person was in the middle. That was the beginning of the life of the Indian person.

Indian people, when they came to this place, they looked for places to sleep when the sun goes down. The sun was moving and pretty soon it was on the other side. They don’t know the directions. And there was no direction—they didn’t say ‘Wimahel Iyaye’ or sundown. Or sunrise. They don’t know what this life is –that big ball of fire. And that white one is telling it to the people. So that’s where they’re taking the Sioux nation from this world. They’re beginning to understand each other. In the meantime the other families, the children, they have things in mind that sometimes it’s no good. Bad thoughts against somebody, against the shaggy buffalo. It’s time to kill the buffalo, but these people are in the way of stealing. They are going to kill that buffalo. With spears. They are close enough to get them because they are friends and relatives. But things are getting bad. When they came to be among the buffalo, the buffalo are talking back. ‘If you are fast enough that you can catch us, then you can eat. But you have to chase us and get us. Your mind is no good, we need to get away from you.’ That happened. The people are getting hungry and cold. They eat anything. But they have to chase them.

…This is the world that the Indian people came to. And when we’re dead we will go back through this hole. So these are the legends, of the Lakota people. They are our relatives. The Buffalo people.

This story represents yet another variation of the primal relationship between humans, bison, and caves, and it is interesting because it combines elements appearing in the buffalo wife stories of Left Hand and in the Tokahe saga of George Sword. In stories related to or descended from Left
Heron, humans already live on the earth’s surface, but, through a marriage (or an encounter) of one of their own with a bison person, they are insured a plentiful supply of bison whose home of origin is reached through a cave opening. In the versions whose genealogical ancestry is connected to the Long Knife story, humans live underground and are drawn to the earth’s surface. But the humans in this story are the Pte Oyate, the Buffalo Nation, who are transformed into their human form once they arrive on the earth’s surface. As in Little Cloud’s story associated with the Buffalo Gap, humans and buffalo are joined together as one. As reported earlier, in Chapter Nine, James Walker (1917:91) wrote about a common belief among the Lakotas that bison not only had the capacity to take on a human form, but they also had the power to “transmogrify” humans into bison and bring them to their underground homes. The different juxtapositionings of humans and bison in these stories probably does not matter in the larger scheme of things because all of the stories speak to the integral relatedness of the two. Nonetheless, it is clear that the Left Heron narrative is the one that is the most consistent with other Lakota and Cheyenne stories told about the general region of Wind Cave, which includes the Race Track and the Buffalo Gap.

There are many caves that dot the Black Hills and their surrounding environs. These caves are understood by modern Lakotas to be interconnected, as suggested in Joe Fly By’s story (1983a) and by Charlotte Black Elk (1986a:209) when she applies the sacred term Chantoyeya [Arteries of the Heart] to the underground regions of the Black Hills. Some Lakotas and Dakotas believe that all the caves in the Black Hills are interconnected and also linked to the ones in the Cave Hills. Theoretically, all of these caves are entrances to the spiritualized underworld that is the home of the buffalos, and also other game animals (Sioux Ranger District 2003:3.3.60-65). Therefore, all of them might be implicated in Lakota origin stories. But, once again, the fact that a cave, Wind Cave no less, is located upstream directly in the path of the Buffalo Gap, their sacred passageway into and out of the Black Hills, makes it easy to imagine how Lakotas and other tribal nations might have come to make a connection between the two, and how they linked them to stories of the Race Track as well.

There is also the relation of the bison to the home of Inyan or Stone, commonly associated with mountains, and their placement in rock structures under the earth (Walker 1917:82, 183). In fact, in the story of the Buffalo Wife that Walker published in 1917, the bison’s tipi is made of stone (Walker 1917:183), and in the one published in 1983, it is identified even more specifically as a cave inside the mountains (Walker 1983:113). In the nineteenth century, the Black Hills were the mountains with which the Lakotas were most familiar. Since bison originated in stone formations under the earth, it is not surprising that Lakotas traditionally used stones to locate and summon them (Densmore 1918:210). Although Rufus J. Pilcher (1964), a former superintendent of Wind Cave National Park, does not tell us why a group of Lakotas came to him in the early twentieth century to secure stones from the cave for healing, their motivation undoubtedly had to do with ubiquitous Lakota traditions linking bison with healing, stone, and the subterranean world. It may have also been related to the idea that the crystalline formations in caves were the material out of which Taku Skanskan formed the first man and woman of the Pte Oyate [Buffalo Nation] (Walker 1983:227-228), or to the mysterious white, ice-like stones George Bushotter (in Dorsey, J. 1889:153-154) describes.

Given its unique geophysical properties, it is also not coincidental that Wind Cave has been singled out as the primordial and quintessential place of Lakota origin stories about bison and

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77 As described earlier, the Lakota and Arikara scouts told journalists on the Custer Expedition of a cave formation that ran under the Hills from one end to the other (Power in Krause and Olson 1974:87-88; Krause and Olson 1974:129, 150).
78 This appears to have been a common practice among the tribal nations of the Plains. In the northwestern Plains of Canada, the Stoney and Cree used the fossilized shell, ammonite, to attract bison (Geist 1996:88).
humans. It appears to breathe, both taking in and releasing air. It mimics a life-sustaining function in humans and animals that is necessary to and definitive of life itself, something that Pete Catches (in Gonzalez 1996:67) explicitly linked in his statement (quoted in Chapter Nine) about how the Hills contain all of the fundamental spiritual forces necessary to life, and how Wind Cave is associated with the spirit that created breath. Lakota names for Wind Cave are many, but one is descriptive of this breath like quality, Washun Niya [Breathing Cave] (LaPointe 1976:79; Black Elk, C. 1986a:209). Another name, Washun Wakan [Holy Cave] (Herman n.d.; Swift Bird in Kadleccek 1981:148), simply marks the sacred nature of the place.

Both the breath-like quality of the cave and its association with bison is a significant theme of another genre of stories told about Wind Cave. Wind Cave was described in a story Stella Swift Bird narrated in the 1960s about her grandfather (in Kadleccek and Kadleccek 1981:147-148). It reads:

Fast Thunder was a traveler. He and another man were coming back from the hills on the other side of Hot Springs. A buffalo was chasing them. There was no place to hide, for they were in a little draw with few pines. Grandfather prayed for his holy bear. As grandfather was leading, a short, little man with long hair came. He led them to a cave -- a spirit hole -- then he said, ‘Just squeeze in, but don’t come any farther.’ They could feel the wind raw and blow. The little man disappeared. At that time they called it spirit hole, but now it is Wind Cave. When they went in Grandfather’s heart was jumpy and the other man was crying. ‘Don’t be scared, pray,’ Grandfather said. Grandfather took his bow to feel around, but it was a drop-off. The buffalo stuck in his head, but couldn’t come in. All afternoon and all night they stayed as they were afraid to go out. But the buffalo had gone.

Unlike other accounts about Wind Cave, which take place in mythic times and are what the Lakota identify as ohunkakan stories, this is a woyakapi story of something that happened as a real historic experience. There is no implication that this is the cave from which either humans or bison originated. Like other narratives, however, it is connected with the appearance of a buffalo. This buffalo appears in the guise of Gnaskinyan [Crazy Buffalo], who is the hunter rather than the prey and conforms to the image of the killer bison that are the parents of the Buffalo Wife in the stories of Left Heron and Yellow Bad Hair. This figure also has a connection to Lakota and Cheyenne ideas about the giant “Two-Faces,” including Anog-Ite, who eat humans and are sometimes linked to caves and Wind Cave in particular (Grinnell 1926, Ivan Stars in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:374-378 [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:644-658]; Schlesier 1987:79).

A decade earlier on March 11, 1951, an article entitled “37 Years Haven’t Dimmed the Memory of Being Lost in Wind Cave” was written by Joe Koller and published in the Rapid City Journal. Reprinted in 1970 in the Wi-lyohi, Bulletin of the South Dakota Historical Society, this is the earliest published reference we were able to find that explicitly links Wind Cave to a Lakota story with spiritual significance. In this story (Wounded Horse in Koller 1970:1-2), which was told by Wounded Horse to R. J. Smith, a school superintendent at Pine Ridge, a group of hunters entered the Buffalo Gap in the Black Hills in search of buffalo. They found a herd being watched over by a white buffalo bull. The hunters held a council and decided to hunt down this bull and appointed two young men to make the kill. The old men held a Buffalo dance, and then the hunters isolated the white bull and led him to a place where the two hunters on horseback were waiting. The story goes on:

It was a long chase. When the white bull tried to cut across a snow filled gully he was trapped. The two hunters closed in and bristled his back with shafts. Blood reddened the snow as he turned and charged his tormentors. The hunters retreated. The bull paused on a
hilltop and stood there with head roped in exhaustion. He moved on again as the hunters approached.

Their next chance came when the bull hid in a gulch. In the shelter of a rock, he was down and licking his wounds. The hunters came up on him on foot. Now they discovered a black hole beyond the rock that looked like a tunnel. Each man had one arrow left for the kill.

As they crept up, the bull scented danger. He arose, blood dripping from his wounds and glared toward the hunters. As they were putting arrows on bow strings, the white buffalo tottered on a few yards and disappeared in the black tunnel.

The hunters had no desire to corner a wounded buffalo in the dark. They stood peering into the hole when suddenly a blast of cold wind came out of it half freezing them with fear. They piled rocks over the cave and returned to their party. When told of the buffalo’s strange action the Indians moved camp to the cave site and there kept vigil. The bull never came out.

They closed up the hole, leaving only a little opening to permit the buffalo to breathe. They had felt the wind blow out, they had felt the wind return and blow into the cave so they named it “White Buffalo Cave, Home of the Wind God.”

Wounded Horse’s narrative is also not related to any of the stories that claim Wind Cave is the origin place of humans or bison. Instead, like Stella Swift Bird’s account, it is a story about a mysterious event that took place at some point in historic time. What ties this story with others and makes it sacred is its reference to a white buffalo -- highly revered by the Lakotas, and an important figure in their historic mortuary practices (Curtis 1907-1930:3:110; Densmore 1918:446).

The idea that the cave was discovered is the theme of another story about Wind Cave, published in 1972, in Emerson Matson’s Legends of the Great Chiefs and narrated by Edgar Red Cloud. This version, collected in the late 1960s, tells how two Lakotas, White Antelope and Red Wolf, discovered Wind Cave while chasing a white buffalo into the Black Hills (Red Cloud in Matson 1972:39-42). As the story goes, the hunters shoot it, but it disappears. The buffalo’s tracks, however, lead to the entrance of what appears to be to a large cave with a strong wind coming from its opening. Red Wolf and his companion presume that the white buffalo fell into the cave, and decide to go down and look for it. Their rope, however, is not long enough to reach the bottom, so they return home and tell everyone what they found. Later, their chiefs return with them to find the cave. After a two-day journey, they locate it.

Using longer and sturdier ropes, they lowered some men down through the hole and into the cavern. Deep in the cave, the party found the bones of many buffaloes. But they could find no trace of the great white buffalo.

Later, a scout located the huge animal’s unmistakable tracks leading from another entrance. Near the tracks were the four bloodstained arrows the hunters had used during the chase. The elusive white buffalo had escaped once again. But because the hunters had come so close to making a prize of him, he had left them a gift of a cave that could blow strong winds.

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79 As noted earlier, albino animals were commonly identified as the ‘chiefs’ of their species (Howard 1979:3). A white buffalo is the leader of the bison who bring humans to their land as revealed in Joe Flying By’s story presented earlier. Tatanka, a member of the Tobtob and the spiritual leader or “chief” of the animals is often represented as a white buffalo (see Chapter Ten).
The chiefs decided that the great white buffalo had earned his freedom. To hunt him now would bring bad medicine to their people. Instead, they would accept the gift of Wind Cave in the sacred Black Hills.

Here, too, is the implication that the Lakotas discovered, although some might be more inclined to say rediscovered, Wind Cave and apparently had not known of its existence since time immemorial, raising the question of whether this is the cave of the Lakota emergence story. Insofar as this narrative carries the wider cultural theme of a connection between caves and bison, particularly a white buffalo (often the form the spirit figure, Tatanka, assumes), it is consistent with a larger and older genre of stories that surround Wind Cave.

In contrast to some of the stories connected to Left Heron and Long Knife, which take place in a timeless mythical past, the narratives of Wounded Horse, Stella Swift Bird, and Edgar Red Cloud occur in lived experience as incidents remembered and connected to known historical figures. Two involve a white buffalo, a highly revered figure in Lakota culture, who is hunted but eludes capture by descending into the cave. Metaphorically speaking, in escaping death, the immortal buffalo releases life as signified by the breath-like action of the cave. In a broader sense, these stories are connected to the Long Knife and Left Heron narratives because all of them involve hunters, the act of hunting, and the food of the bison that is the fundamental source and origin of Lakota life, survival, and regeneration. Again, these are intrinsically linked to the Buffalo Gap and the Race Track story which is about how the universe gets ordered in such a way that humans are fed by the buffalo rather than being the buffalo’s food.

The Swift Bird story involves yet another interesting twist on the overall theme of Wind Cave and the region of which it is a part. Here we have a buffalo that is not the prey but the one who stalks humans. This is an image of Gnaskinyan, a much reviled and feared spiritual figure because he inverts the “natural” order of things established by the primordial race of the animals, which began and ended at the Buffalo Gap. On the surface, this figure appears to represent a departure from the theme of buffalo offering life rather than bringing death. But it really isn’t because many narratives about bison and humans, including those commonly associated with the Race Track, begin with antagonistic relationships between the two nations. Indeed, Gnaskinyan and his kind appear in two of Left Hand’s versions of the Buffalo Wife story and also in Yellow Bad Hair’s rendition.

Buffalo have the power to both give and withhold life, and the ambivalence that this evokes is a common motif in many Plains Indian stories. Raymond DeMallie (1982; 1994), Shepard Krech (1999:146-150), and John Moore (1996a:267) have written about how several tribal nations in the plains presumed that humans could never destroy the bison no matter what they did. It was the bison themselves or the spiritual guardian of the bison, a female person like the Yellow-Haired woman and the water spirits of Cheyenne stories, or Waziya, the old man and his grandson, Waziyata, the North Wind, of the Lakotas that will their appearance or disappearance. From an American Indian perspective, drought or overkilling was never sufficient reason for the absence of bison. Bison were immortal, mysteriously giving and withholding their lives. They never died, they simply returned to their underground homes waiting for a propitious time to reappear on the earth’s surface. Thus, at the end of the nineteenth century, after bison had nearly been exterminated on the Plains, some American Indians believed the bison were not extinct but had simply returned to their underground homes where someday they would be reborn and return to the earth’s surface. It is perhaps ironic but certainly not fortuitous, at least from a Lakota perspective, that when the bison first reappeared in the Black Hills in 1913, it was at Wind Cave.

Jeffery Ostler (1999) examines the range of explanations, both spiritual and practical, that the Lakotas advanced to explain the bison’s sudden disappearance in the 1860s and 1870s.
National Park, the very location where historically the bison returned to their home each winter awaiting rebirth and the movement to their grassland feeding grounds in the spring.

The Cheyennes also have a tradition about a cave in the southern Black Hills. Karl Schlesier (1987:79) writes about this cave as the place where the Cheyennes first experienced resistance in their movements to the Black Hills under the leadership of Sweet Medicine or Motseyoef:

According to Tsistsistas tradition, they encountered the first resistance in the grasslands after they had moved to the Black Hills. These enemies are still called haztova hotexceo (from haztova, 'both,' in the sense of 'on either side different,' and hotexceo 'stars')—two face star people. They preyed on Tsistsistas camps, killed people, and ate their flesh. They appeared invincible until Motseyoef, using shaman power, and acting under the grant of the spirits of the region, found their hideout in a cave in the southern part of the Black Hills and entirely destroyed them. He restored the remains of slaughtered Tsistsistas to life in a sweatlodge which he conducted at the cave.

This story contains several themes that are associated in Lakota traditions with Wind Cave. The first is the link to underground spirits, the second to double figures, and the third to some form of reincarnation or regeneration. In fact, like Motseyoef, the Lakota’s culture hero Tokahe is associated with using a sweatlodge for healing (Walker 1983:375). This theme is also closely linked to some of the Cheyenne and Lakota Stone Boy stories, where the hero brings his uncles back to life in a sweatlodge and kills the double-teeth bison in the Cheyenne version (Grinnell 1926:180) or Iya [a fabled gluttonous monster figure] in some Lakota renditions (Walker 1917:193-202, 1983:140-154; Red Shirt 2002:79-82).

In this context, it should be noted that there are interesting parallels between the stories of Tokahe (Long Knife’s narrative) or Taopi Gli (LaPointe’s story) and Cheyenne and Suhtaio narratives of their culture heroes, Sweet Medicine and Stands On The Ground. In the various stories associated with these two culture heroes, they encounter an Old Man and an Old Woman in an underground cave and one marries their daughter. This daughter plays a critical role in keeping the Cheyennes supplied with bison and other game. An old man and old woman appear in Long Knife’s origin story of Tokahe’s emergence from a cave, as does the double-woman figure who is also present (or at least implied) in Left Heron and LaPointe’s stories. While a marriage to an underground woman is absent in Long Knife’s story of Tokahe, it is present in LaPointe’s Taopi Gli narrative and in Left Heron’s Buffalo Wife stories.

While there are similarities, there are differences too. For the Cheyennes, the cave where most of their sacred stories of animal emergence unfold is located at Bear Butte.81 This is also the place where Motseyoef [Sweet Medicine] learned the seven rituals associated with the stars of the Big Dipper. One of these was the Massaum, a ceremony that marked game regions and insured the fecundity of game; it was observed historically in the Black Hills (Schlesier 1987:88-109; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:68-70).82 For the Lakotas, the cave of origin for bison and humans is Wind Cave just west of the Race Track and the Buffalo Gap. Seven sacred Lakota ceremonies are also attached to seven stars in the Big Dipper, but these encompass the entire Hills and their two outlier formations, Bear Butte and Bear Lodge Butte. Also different from the Cheyennes, who concentrate many of their stories of origin and regeneration at one place and in relation to a unified set of figures, the Lakotas separate their stories of genesis and renewal. Wind Cave and its

81 Some of the narratives associated with another Cheyenne culture hero, Stands On The Ground, however, take place at the Suhtaio’s Black Mountain, the identity of which has not been specified in the literature.

82 The Arapahos acquired their sacred bags and the spiritual knowledge associated with them when a man of their tribe came upon a cave, although its identity is not specified (Trenholm 1970:80).
environ connects an underground female or male bison figure with primordial stories of animal and human origins. By contrast, the story of Lakota revitalization is associated with the White Buffalo Calf Woman, *Pte San Winjan*, a reincarnation of the celestial figure *Wohpe*. She is the one who brings the sacred pipe and its associated seven ceremonies to the Lakotas at Bear Lodge Butte.

**B. The Lodge of the Winds and Waziya**

Another common household term for Wind Cave is *Tate Waxun* [Cave of the Wind] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:209), while *Tatoye Oyurlokapi* [The Opening of the Four Winds] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:209) is a sacred name used only in the context of religious discourse, and it is the same one given in English but without a Lakota gloss by W.S. Campbell in his 1937 letter to the National Park Service (see Chapter Thirteen). Wounded Horse gave one other name in 1951 in a story published by Joe Koller (1970:2) as “White Buffalo Cave, Home of the Wind God.” *Washun Pte San* would be the Lakota translation for first part of this name, while the second part, *Tate Tipi*, is clearly a synonym for the sacred ascription. The term ‘White Buffalo Cave’ is completely unique, although some of the stories associated with Wind Cave deal with a white buffalo. The connection of bison to breath, *ni* or *niya*, and to the Wind, *Tate*, and his four sons, but especially with *Waziya*, *Waziyata*, or *Yata*, the North Wind, is a pervasive theme in Lakota sacred stories and liturgical texts (see Chapter Nine).

As previously noted, the name *Tate* is closely linked to the verb *tate* meaning “to hunt” or “to chase.” Two sons of *Tate*, the North Wind and the West Wind, are associated with *Taku Skanskan*, the spiritual figure that presides over movement, hunts, and war (Walker 1917:84; 1980:272). “Ta” is a generic term for food animals that is prefixed to three species of special importance to the Lakotas, *tatanka*, the buffalo, *tatoka*, the antelope, and *tahca*, the deer (Buechel 1970:472). All three of these species were known to seek shelter and winter along the Red Valley, entering the area by way of the Buffalo Gap. All three were also known to leave this gateway when they returned to the grasslands in the spring. As reported in Chapter Ten, the Lakotas drove antelope into a pit along the White River at Cache Butte less than fifty miles from the Buffalo Gap, and the buffalo herds who wintered in the Black Hills near Wind Cave moved in the spring to the grasslands on the upper reaches of the White and Niobrara rivers (Crow Dog in Kadlecek and Kadlecek 1981:96).

In Lakota cosmology, as Joseph E. Brown (1992:111-115) argues, there are complex sets of metaphorical relationships that connect the winds *qua* directions to specific animals. According to Clark Wissler (1905:258), the Lakotas viewed the wind as a “great mystery” because “it was intangible and only visible in its effects.” In answering the question why dragonflies, moths, a spider’s web, the buffalo, and the elk have an essential relation to each other, Brown (1992:113-114) wrote:

> The unifying power underlying these disparate forms was seen to be the wind or whirlwind represented as *Umi*. That the moth had access to this power was evident in its wind-creating wings, and the cocoon was the container of this potential wind-power. The spider had access to this power because his ensnaring net stretches out to the four directions, which are conceived as the home of the four winds. The bison had the wind-power that he employed for

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83 New Holy (1997:119-128) also shows their connections to the Lakota kinship order as it unfolds in their story of creation.
his own purposes, while the elk’s particular utilization of this wind-power was witnessed in his ability to ‘whistle’ in such a manner that cows were attracted to him.

Even more specifically, the Lakotas believed that a chrysalis, wamniyomni, caused whirlwinds, and these were located on the backbone of certain bison (Bushotter in Dorsey, J. 1889b:137). Essential to this cosmology is the idea that the winds are a central integrating and ordering principal in the universe, an idea that the Cheyennes and Arapahos also share. Wind is breath is life; it is the foundation of all movement, especially that which is associated with hunting and racing. Wind is embodied by its offspring, each with a direction and a duty. As discussed in previous chapters, different species of mammals, birds, and plants, are linked metaphorically and systematically to different winds in Lakota cosmology. Indeed, it might be said that some of their basic taxonomic principles are organized around their conceptualization of the Four Winds.

The Four Winds are considered highly wakan among the pantheon of the most influential spiritual beings, and, as such, they are appealed to in most every major ceremonial observance from Hanbleceya [vision seeking] (Black Elk in Brown 1971:44-66; Thunder Bear in Walker 1980:131; Walker 1980:133) to the Hunkapi [Making Relatives] (Black Elk in Brown 1971:101-116; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:124-127; Walker 1980:210, 221). Their stories brought order, direction, and movement to the world, but they also represent some of the characteristics and contradictions in human behavior. Through their actions, the world is renewed, plants are created, and birds and animals are assigned their places in the world. So much about Lakota cosmology is collapsed in their notions of Tate and his sons, the Four Winds, and the fifth, the Whirlwind (Jahner in Walker 1983:200-203).

Of the Four Winds, Waziyata, the North Wind, is the one most often linked to Wind Cave. Except for one anomalous story found in the archives at the Wind Cave National Park Library entitled “The Cave of Waziya,” which bears only a remote resemblance to Lakota traditions and was probably written by a non-Indian, most of the other stories about the Four Winds are not connected, at least explicitly, to Wind Cave. Nonetheless, they share certain fundamental motifs in common that are consistent with a broader spectrum of Lakota beliefs about the relationship between caves, bison, the winds, and breath as life-giving forces. We can presume that these stories apply in one way or another to the cave since it is specifically identified in some sources as the home of the Wind (Campbell 1937. Wounded Horse in Koller 1970:2; Black Elk, C. 1986a:209). There are two groups of stories relevant here, one is part of the Four Winds cycle in the Lakota genesis narrative recorded by James Walker, and another, discussed in the next section, is associated with Falling Star and other orphan boy figures.

The story of Tokahe’s emergence from a cave, which many Lakotas identify today as Wind Cave, and another about how the four directions were established as part of a sequence of creation stories that Long Knife (George Sword) shared with James Walker (1917:171-179; 1983:58-89, 157-162, 183-187, 200-205, 300-369; Dooling 2000). Since many of the figures who appear in the stories of the Four Winds are connected to, and, indeed, lead up to the Lakota genesis story, it is not surprising that Tate and his sons are linked to the cave too. The creation stories collected by Walker were probably once restricted to the narrative repertoire of the wicasa wakan and not part of the general populace’s storytelling traditions (Dooling 2000: ix). This may explain why they were not widely known or told in Lakota communities in the early twentieth century, and why they differ from other stories associated with this cave. Again, the very fact that a Lakota name for Wind Cave was identified as early as 1937 with the Winds suggests that at some point in time, the myth cycle of Tate and his sons, which begins with Inyan’s creation of the world and ends with Tokahe’s emergence on earth, was associated with this cave.
In the Lakota story of creation, as told by George Sword or Long Knife, Waziyata, or simply Yata in sacred discourse, is the first-born son of Tate and Ite (later Anog-Ite or Two Face), daughter of Waziya (the old man, the wizard) and Wakanka (the old woman, the witch). The last three figures play important roles in the Tokahe story too. Tate bestows on his firstborn son, Waziyata, the right to establish the first direction, but he ultimately fails because of his meanness and cowardliness. In challenging Waziya and ordering the magpie to befoul his grandfather, he loses his birthright (Walker 1917:172-173). After his younger brother, the West Wind, marks the first direction, he establishes his direction in the north. His name, Waziyata, has several levels of meaning. The direct translation is “toward the pine,” but it can also mean on the side of Wazí, the old man with whom he is forever associated and from whom he gets his name (Walker 1917:157, 1983:84; Herman 1965a, 1965b; Powers, W. 1977:191-192). Indeed, his home is the dwelling place of his grandfather, although he never stays there (Walker 1983:89). He is the quintessential symbol of winter and is sometimes represented as a giant who hordes the buffalo and kills humans that try to approach them. He is identified with cold, snow, ice, and wareccayuhagila [hail from the north] (Bushotter in Dorsey, J. 1889:155; Dorsey, J. 1894:468; Beckwith, M. 1930:407; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:126). He also knows when the weather is going to change (Dorsey, J. 1894:468), which, incidentally, is something shared in common with Wind Cave’s barometric features.

In many different sacred stories, Waziyata represents symbolically that part of the life cycle that is death, cold, winter, and rest, which bring forth and are necessary to ni [breath], new life, regeneration, and rebirth. He is associated with life that comes through death, and it is along his path that spirits travel after death from the south to the north in order to be reborn (see Chapter Twelve). In the Lakota creation story, his father, Tate, is the one who blocks the entrance to the spirit world so Tokahe and the other original people, the Pte Oyate, cannot return directly. This suggests Wind Cave, the place from which Tokahe comes (Walker 1983:373). In one of his prayers, Black Elk (in Brown 1971:19-20) locates the home of Waziya in geographic proximity to the Thunders, who were widely known to frequent the area of Harney Peak. This prayer, which is said during a Spirit Releasing Ceremony, contains the following lines:

O You, Thunder-being, there where Waziah has his lodge who comes with the purifying winds and who guards the health of the people; O baldheaded eagle of the north. Your wings never tire! There is a place for You too in this pipe, which will be offered to Wakan-Tanka. Help us, and give to us one of Your two sacred days (Black Elk in Brown 1971:20).

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84 Again, Wakanka and Waziya also appear in the Buffalo Wife stories.
85 This idea also appears in Joe Flying By’s story (in Parlow 1983a:39), quoted earlier, in which the hole or cave leading to the bison’s underworld home is also the portal through which the deceased return to the spirit world.
Figure 26. Kinship Relations of Lakota Deities

*Adapted from Walker (1983)*
As revealed in other chapters, *Waziyata*’s direction is linked not only with the bison but also with magpies, crows,86 white owls, geese, bald eagles, coyotes, wolves, foxes, and tobacco (Dorsey, J. 1894:127, 232; Curtis 1907-30:77; Wissler 1912:19-20, 91; Walker 1917:172-173; Densmore 1918:67-68; Beckwith, M. 1930:412n2; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear and Sword in Walker 1980:101; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:125; Walker 1980:222, 231-232, 249, 1983:340, 344-345; Powers 1977:191, 1986:139-140; Brown 1992:35). Wolves, who followed the same movements as the buffalo, were also believed to produce wind *qua* breath [*ni*] in the form of fog when they howled, and so a time of dense mist and fog was known as a “wolf’s day” (Wissler 1912:54, 91). In fact, the wolf served as an accomplice to *Inktomi* when he enticed *Tokahe* and the other *Pte Oyate* to move from their subterranean home at Wind Cave to the surface of the earth (Walker 1917:181-182).

*Waziyata*’s color is red, but sometimes the color with which he is associated is reversed with that of the South Wind and becomes white (Black Elk in Neihardt 1961:26-27, 179; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:108-109). He is also reputed to do things in a contrary manner, going naked in the winter and wearing furs when it is hot, and as a result, the *Heyoka* sometimes imitated his actions (Dorsey, J. 1894:468). Indeed, *Heyoka* are believed to embrace the North Wind because both are known to do things backwards (Beckwith, M. 1930:416n1).87

*Waziyata* is identified as a superhuman man of “uncertain moods who may do harm or good according to his humor” (Walker 1980:222). He is always at war with his younger brother, the South Wind, *Itokagata*, but sometimes he assists his other two brothers, the West and East Winds (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:108-109). He is the one who withholds and releases [*ni*] breath, which is life to the buffalo and to the people, and therefore, he can be viewed as stingy, selfish, and morose (Walker 1983:182, 313, 322, 330). He is characterized as a life-taker, filled with avarice and always killing things (Walker 1983:183). Yet, as many Lakota liturgical texts reveal, he is paradoxically a life-giver as well, the one who by taking life, purifies the earth over the winter months and guards the health of the people (Black Elk in Neihardt 1961:27; Black Elk in Brown 1971: 20, 119-120, 132). In this context, it is hard to avoid making an analogy to the north-south migrational movements of bison, which, according to Brown (1992:59), symbolized to the Lakotas “a coherent and integrated totality.” As Edward Curtis (1907-30:3:77) put it, “Waziya” is the one “who sends the biting north wind and blinding snow and who also controls some of the mysterious movements of the buffalo.” The travels of bison and other animals through the Buffalo Gap mirrored the movements of the seasons and the winds, which in the form of breath emanate from Wind Cave. By further analogy, these movements replicate the movements of spirits, who after death travel south towards the Milky Way but eventually return to the north in the underworld awaiting rebirth.

It can be argued that the Black Hills stand for the homes of the Four Winds. This is clearly implied by Leonard Crow Dog (and Erdoes 1995:5) when he said that four chiefs reside in the Hills, “a medicine man, a man of knowledge, a warrior, and a hunter.” I would propose that the hunter represents the North Wind, the warrior the West Wind, the man of wisdom the East Wind, and the medicine man, the South Wind. If this association is correct, then the Black Hills may be

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86 As revealed later, the crow and magpie are primary players in the famous story of the Great Race that, in some versions, begins and ends at the Buffalo Gap.

87 Usually *Heyoka* are linked to the West Wind, since it is the Thunders who cause them to act in a contrary fashion.

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FIGURE 27. The Order of the Four Winds

seen in yet another way as a hierophany, a physical metaphor for the establishment of order and motion in the universe by Tate and his five sons. It can be hypothesized even further that specific sites in the Black Hills metaphorically mark the homes of the Four Winds. New Holy (1997:125-128) describes and diagrams the spatial relationships between the Winds in terms of two intersecting circles, one representing the lodge of their father, Tate, and the other marked by the trail their grandfather, Wazi, blazes in his endless wanderings on the edge of the earth. In connecting the positions of the Winds to specific landscape features, we must bear in mind that these shift depending on their point of reference. In some cases, they appear inverted, and this is because, as Robert Hall (1997:133) explains, the directional coordinates of the sky and the underworld are often opposite those on the earth’s surface.

In Long Knife’s story, the Winds come to a great mountain with a trail around it and a fire on the highest mountain peak, and it is from this place that they mark their directional positions in the world (Sword in Walker 1983:81). During his wanderings while awaiting a star message from Taku Skanskan, Wazi creates the circular trail at the world’s edge on which the brothers travel. Waziyata gives up his birthright to mark the first direction to his younger brother, the West Wind. Wiyohpeyata [toward the place where the sun falls off] or Eya. (Powers, W. 1977:192). The West Wind establishes his home at a flat spot on top of a mountain near the nest of the Thunders (Sword in Walker 1983:83), an area widely associated with Harney Peak in Lakota traditions. Although Harney Peak is actually on the east side of the Black Hills from the perspective of the directional coordinates on the earth’s surface, these are reversed in the celestial and subterranean worlds. A common cosmological notion throughout North America is that when night comes to the earth’s surface, the Sun travels to the subterranean world where it is daylight (Hall 1997:133-134). In Lakota traditions, the Sun stays in the underworld at night with his friends, the buffalo (Bushotter in Dorsey, J. 1889:154; Little Wound in Walker 1987:67). In the subterranean world, the order of the universe is reversed, and thus, it makes sense that Wind Cave, the home of Waziyata, is located on the southeastern edge of the Hills and that Harney Peak, the Home of Wiyohpeyata, the West Wind, is on the eastern side of the Hills. Also, the West Wind (the Thunders) and the North Wind commonly act in opposite, contrary, or inverted ways, and as a result, both are associated with the Heyoka.

Waziyata or Okaga, the South Wind’s home, is not explicitly associated with any specific locale in the Black Hills. His home is located generically at the center of the world near meadows and springs. He made the seeds, flowers, and fruits, he is connected to warm weather, and his season is summer (Powers 1977:193, 1986:139; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:127; Sword in Walker 1983:71,72; Little Wound in Walker 1980:159; Walker 1980:162, 183, 184, 301, 309, 313). One possible location for his home is the region of Pe Sla, which is also called Heraka blaye [Elk flats] (Black Elk, C. 1986a:208). Elk are often identified as the helpers of the South Wind (Densmore 1918:176-178; Hassrick 1964:116, 146; Powers 1986:139). In fact, the ceremony that modern Lakotas associate with this location, Okslataya Wowahwala [Peace at Bare Spot], is certainly consistent with the symbolism associated with Waziyata, especially the offerings to the plants and birds (Goodman 1992:8, 13, 16). The home of the East Wind, Wiyiyanpa or Yanpa [The Place Where the Sun Rises], has no obvious geographic referents in the Black

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88 Pete Catches (in Parlow 1983a:2-4; in Gonzalez 1996:67) also talks about the Hills in reference to important spiritual figures, which he identifies as seven in number rather than four.
89 As William Powers (1986:36) and Martha Beckwith (1930:407-408) write, the Lakotas believe in the existence of Thunders who come from the left or east and who produce the fiercest storms.
90 Another possible location for the South Wind is the Buffalo Gap, and Hot Springs area, which, as hypothesized in the next Chapter, may be linked to the Cheyennes’ Southeast Wind. Instead of a semi-annual struggle between the Old Man of Winter and the Sun of Cheyenne cosmology, the Lakotas often allude to this conflict as a battle between Waziyata and Wakiyata.
Hills either. In some texts he dwells in the mountains (Walker 1983:161), but in others his abode is an island in a lake or river (Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:126).91 Yamni, the Whirlwind, has no set location but is frequently linked to Wohpe, who becomes the companion of Itokagata at the center of the world.

Curiously, when Black Elk (in Brown 1971:134-135) describes the Throwing of the Ball Ceremony, he changes the directional coordinates of Waziyata to the East. He says that when the girl tosses the ball in the Four Directions, she first throws it “towards the place where the giant lives, towards the place where the sun comes up.”92 In another context, however, he talks about the giant’s home in the north. At first glance, this appears to be an inconsistency, but it is not if one understands two things: one that the directional coordinates change depending on the point of reference, and two, that they are sometimes expressed, as they often are in Cheyenne texts, as the medial positions between the cardinal points on the compass (e.g., NW, SW, SE, NE). This would locate Waziyata’s domicile in the direction of the southeast on the earth’s surface.

In Cheyenne traditions, the old man of winter is known as Homiaha. The old woman of the North or Nadir, suggesting the figure of Esceheman or Grandmother Earth, controls his actions (Grinnell 1926:189-190). As with the Lakotas, the north and the nadir of the earth are interchangeable. When Ma’heo created the cosmos, he made this woman and also a man who guarded the south zenith and directed the actions of the Thunders. The female and male poles of the cosmos stand in perpetual conflict, as evidenced in the continual cycle of movement between the fall/winter and spring/summer seasons which each of these figures respectively controls (Grinnell 1907:171-172; 1926:243-244; Moore, J. 1996:207-208).

C. The Portals Between the Underworld and the Sky World

In Cheyenne and Lakota cosmologies, the universe can be understood to exist in a constant state of motion, revolving around the axis of a horizontal elliptical plane and a vertical one. The intersections of the planes, the points where they cross or connect, are powerful positions charged with energy and movement. As day turns to night and as one season gives way to another, the planes come together, bringing celestial and subterranean spaces into contact and, in the process, releasing powerful forces (Goodman 1992; Moore, J. 1996). The Sky and other celestial figures, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, in Lakota cosmology have counterparts and companions in the underworld and on earth (Schlesier 1987; Goodman 1992; Sundstrom 1996). In Lakota traditions, there are a number of important mediating figures who link sky spaces with the tiers of the earth and the underworld. Besides the Winds, the most famous of these is Wohpe [Meteor], who appears as a central figure in the stories of the Four Winds, who reappears as the Pte San Winyan, the White Buffalo Calf Woman, and who is considered one of the Lakotas’ primary spiritual benefactors through her gift of the sacred pipe. Another figure is the orphan boy, who appears among the Lakota as Wicahpi Hinhpaya [Falling Star], and who, like Inyan Hoksila [Stone Boy], Cetan Maza [Iron Hawk], or Weota Hoksila [Blood Clot Boy], has miraculous origins. Falling Star and Stone Boy are the subject of several story cycles among the Lakotas, some of which are nearly identical to those of the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1926:178-199, 206-211). These are recorded for tribes throughout the Plains, and sometimes, they are told in relation to specific geographic features in tribal environments. The Lakota and the Cheyennes situate several of their stories in the Black Hills.

91 Another possibility is Castle Rock because of its association with owls, one of the East Winds’ helpers.
92 This is significant in terms of the association of the Buffalo Gap with the sun.
In the Falling Star cycle, the orphan boy is descended from an earth woman who marries a star. In the Lakota version told by Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:401-408), his mother is admonished not to dig too deeply for turnips lest she open a hole in the sky. She does so anyways and falls through the hole to the earth and dies. Her son miraculously survives and is raised by the meadowlarks. When he reaches adulthood, the orphan is sent on a quest where he encounters dangers and saves the people of various villages. One of the places on his journey is identified as Rapid Creek (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:406), and another can be easily read as the interiors of the Hills near Pe Sla (Sundstrom 1997:195). The first location he arrives at is not identified by name or location, but its characters and topographical features unmistakably situate it in the neighborhood of the Buffalo Gap and Wind Cave (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:401-402). Here, Falling Star helps a village whose people are starving and being killed by Waziya whenever they go in search of buffalo. Falling Star eventually disables and slays the giant so that the people are able to hunt without fear of death from his bow and arrow. One of the giant’s children remains alive, escaping into a crack in the earth’s surface where he remains visible by his “frost” or breath, niya Even though winter still remains alive, it now retreats, allowing humans to approach the buffalo. This is confirmed by a nearly identical Falling Star story told by Iron Shell in 1904 of an encounter with Waziya, who is hoarding the buffalo (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buchel 1978:24-36 [also in Buchel and Manhart 1998:45-63]). In this version, the children disappear into a “cave.” Each of the villages Falling Star saves represents the stars on the Big Dipper constellation. The first village is connected to the story of the buffalo and Waziya. Interestingly, it represents the star called Tokahe, the First Buffalo Man, who emerged from the underworld at Wind Cave (Black Elk, C. 1992a:58). The Lakota have a very similar story about Waziya and his offspring associated with another hero figure, Blood Clot Boy (Curtis 1907-30: 3:111-118).

In the Cheyenne Falling Star cycles recorded by George Bird Grinnell (1921, 1926:182-193) and Richard Randolph (1937:37-42), the hero also slays the Winter Man, Homiaha, whose children survive in a crack in the earth’s surface where they appear as frost, possibly an allusion to the gypsum formations in the Hills. He saves another village from a water monster that

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93 Other versions of the same story exist, for example, among the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1926:182-193) and the Dakotas of Minnesota (Riggs 1893:83-94). What is different about Black Elk’s story is the particular way in which he describes the geography of the area through which Falling Star travels. In one episode, he specifically identifies one of the places in Falling Star’s journey as Rapid Creek but other locations can be inferred from the descriptions too.

94 The origin of the bow and arrow is tied to the Race Track in a tradition that Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:307-316) tells.

95 Note the similarity here to more recent stories, described earlier in this chapter, about Wind Cave where a slain white buffalo retreats to the cave and releases its breath.

96 Arvol Looking Horse (in Parlow 1983a: 42-43), the Keeper of the Sacred Buffalo Calf Pipe, talked about the importance of Falling Star to the Lakotas as follows:

What we’re seeing is Wicakiyuha [to have trust or faith in something] everywhere. North Star, Wicahpiononjiyla – Falling Star’s father, in some stories, fixed in one place in the sky-why? Sorrow of the death of his wife first. Second, because he’s faithful and steadfast to the Lakota people and continues to send power and love to them. The Falling Star story is dignity to the Lakota people because it says you have a human mother but you have a divine father. Your father was a star, woniya— and your mother was of earth. And when we say, we’re part spirit and part matter – the story of Falling Star tells the same story [translation ours].

Stars are known as the woniya [breath of life] of Wakan Tanka [The Creator], and Falling Star symbolizes this. His birth is connected to another significant life-giving symbol in Lakota traditions, the tipsila or prairie turnip [Psorelea esculants], a plant with intriguing symbolic connections to celestial and subterranean spaces.

97 In Cheyenne stories, the mother of Falling Star reaches the stars while climbing a tree in pursuit of a porcupine, an animal whose quills also represent the breath of life and the power of the sun.

98 The Cheyenne identify one of their ceremonial objects made of gypsum as frost (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:54).
inhabits a lake, which in a similar Sweet Medicine story is Bear Butte Lake, and he confronts an owl monster, commonly tied in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions to the high elevation interiors of the Black Hills. Finally, he encounters the Double Eyes and returns people to life in a sweatlodge. A similar event is recorded in a Sweet Medicine story associated with the Two Faces who lived in a cave in the southern Black Hills (Schlesier 1987:79).

Another orphan boy figure of earthly origins is Stone Boy. In Lakota traditions, he is connected to the Buffalo Gap and other gateways into the Hills. Severt Young Bear (and Theisz 1994:29) describes the association as follows:

Tohan inyan Hoksi takpapi na mahipyay sabya hahwoke.’ That means that whenever buffalos started chasing the Stone Boy and the dark clouds are flying by, buffalo herds start to migrate into the Black Hills because they know winter is coming. The clouds they talk about are winter clouds; towards the end of fall, dark clouds blow real fast. They call them mahpiya sabya kahwoke.

This same idea was also expressed by one of Raymond Bucko’s Lakota advisors who said:

Then I go towards the north, the thathaka oyate [‘buffalo people’]. I see these whenever the winter storm-clouds are like buffalo. I learned this through the elders: Wana thathaka oyate kichiksa [‘now the buffalo people play around’], ukiye [‘come back’]. They bring back the white blanket of snow for uci maha [‘grandmother earth’] (Bucko 1999:208).

George Sword or Long Knife (in Walker 1983:89-99) recounts a Stone Boy story that explains the connection. After recounting Stone Boy’s origins and some of his miraculous feats, Sword tells how Stone Boy kills four white buffalo girls one winter. Their grandfather seeks revenge for their death and retaliates when the “brown clouds” start to arrive over his territory. In the confrontation, Stone boy slays the old bull. He returns home and tells his uncles to build enclosures, and after they do so, the brown clouds drift in and with them come buffalo from all directions. Stone Boy and his people drive the buffalo into pounds and slay them. In her version of the Stone Boy story, Kate Blue Thunder (in Theisz 1975:58-59) describes the old bull as “mean,” implying gnaskiyan. She also tells about the brown clouds, “Sicangu mahpiya.” Although the clouds are not mentioned in Old Walker’s text (in Buechel 1978:53-78 [also Buechel and Manhart 1998:5-20]), he tells of a bull warning the buffalo to come back home to the hills, “Heyata ko po,” in order to avoid Stone Boy’s fence [cunkaske].

In another Lakota Stone Boy story, narrated by Bad Wound (in Walker 1917:193-202, 1983:140-154), the hero conquers Iya, a gluttonous monster. As in the Sword text, the story cycle

99 A similar confrontation between a water monster and a hero figure at Bear Butte Lake is recorded for the Plains Apaches (McAllister 1965).
100 In the Falling Star cycle collected by Richard Randolph (1937:27) from Oneha, a Cheyenne woman in her nineties, she tells of the hero going north into the Black Hills to find his mother’s people, and it is in this area that most of his heroic encounters with various monsters unfold.
101 Old Walker told one version of the story where the bison chase Stone Boy in 1904 to Father Eugene Buechel (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:53-62; also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:5-20). The Buffalo Gap, however, is not specifically identified in this rendition. In the same time period, Naopi-sica told James Walker (1917:193-203) a Stone Boy story in which some events also take place in a mountainous environment similar to the area of the Buffalo Gap (cf. Wissler 1907:199 for another version of this tale).
begins with four brothers who live alone and carry on the work of women. One of the brothers gives birth to a girl from his big toe. When this woman grows into adulthood, she refuses to marry. The brothers tell her that they will keep her as their sister and provide for her forever. Each of the brothers goes out hunting but never returns. The woman, grief stricken by the loss of her brothers, climbs to the top of a hill where she mourns and discovers a white, crystal pebble. She swallows the stone, and it grows inside her as a boy child. When her son reaches adulthood, she holds a feast at which she announces her own and her son’s miraculous origins. She tells the people her son is going on a long journey to find his uncles, and four of the guests give him special gifts to protect him in his travels. He journeys far to the West where he finds a valley filled with animals of many kinds and behind them mountains with a barren valley containing only a stone, a tree, and a small brown hill. Stone Boy challenges them and the stone and the tree that try to kill him. He then enters the lodge where he finds an old woman who tries to deceive him. Suspicious of her “forked tongue,” he protects himself. She attempts to kill him but to no avail. Finally, she informs him that she is Iya and that she is beholden to only one master, the “living stone.” Singing his death song, she tells him he will die from her poison. Stone Boy responds with his own song, in which he proclaims that he is the only living relative of the stone, that he is descended from the stone she threw away, and that he is her master. When the two struggle, Stone Boy discovers that the old woman is really a man. Taking control of Iya, he forces him to reveal the whereabouts of his uncles who the monster cannibalized. In order to bring the bones of his uncles back to life, Iya instructs him how to make a sweatlodge with the skins of the bear and coyote and a fire with limbs from the tree that tried to slay Stone Boy. After his uncles are reborn, Iya continues to threaten but Stone Boy prevails, stomping on his stomach until he vomits cherry pits which represent all the people Iya had sucked in with his breath. Throwing the cherry stones into the fire, he is able to revive the people. He then goes on to destroy Iya by stomping on his chest from which a great whirlwind is released and attacked by the Thunderbirds. Through all of this, Iya still survives and grows into a giant again, becoming so large that he covers the entire valley. Now Stone Boy tramples him on the head and forces the breath out of his mouth. Although Iya takes hold of Stone Boy’s feet, he is not strong enough to hold him. Henry Crow Dog tells a similar version, in which Stone Boy travels to the mountains and confronts the giant (in Erdoes 1976:108-116). Stone Boy’s ability to conquer Iya appears to be a variation on the theme of Falling Star slaying Waziya. Indeed, Waziya and Iya often play parallel roles in Lakota stories, making it difficult to separate them. This particular Stone Boy story has been described at some length because Iya is a central character in an anonymous text entitled, “The Cave of Waziya,” located in the Wind Cave National Park Library.

The Cheyenne story of Stone Boy has many of the same characters and plots as some of the Lakota texts, except in their tale the hero has seven uncles (Grinnell 1926:178-182). All of the brothers go out to hunt for their sister, and an old woman kills all of them. While mourning their loss, the sister finds a “Sun Arrow,” a piece of gypsum and swallows it. From this stone, the Stone Boy is conceived. As in the Lakota narratives, Stone Boy goes in pursuit of his uncles, confronts the old cannibalistic woman, erects a sweatlodge, and brings his uncles back to life.

102 The number of brothers and the origin of their sister vary from one story to another and also some of the details of Stone Boy’s journeys and encounters with dangerous spirit figures, but all share in common his miraculous stone origin.
103 Marie McLaughlin’s version (1916:179-196) of the Stone Boy story is very similar to Left Heron’s rendition. Curiously, it contains references to two geographic place names. One is the Smoky Hills or Paha Sota and another to a waterway called Stone Boy Creek, Wakpala Inyan Hoksila. If Smoky Hills is an alternative name for the Black Hills, which is possible given the reports of huge billows of smoke issuing from their peaks in the 1830s, then Stone Boy Creek might have been a Lakota name for Beaver Creek. If it denotes other hills, such as the Cave Hills or the Slim Buttes area, it illustrates yet another example of how the same story can be placed in different but topographically similar geographic settings.
After his uncles are reborn, Stone Boy accompanies them on a hunt where they kill two white buffalo, the sons of the double-toothed buffalo that Stone Boy slays. 104

The attacks of cannibalistic figures either in the form of bison, an old woman, or the winter man, who may also stand for the North Wind, reveal the paradoxical nature of life and its dependence on death for survival. Here again, these figures are both life-givers and life-takers; winter brings death yet it is necessary for the renewal of life that is triggered by the Thunders and the Sun (fire). The earth, in the guise of an old woman, controls the bison, winter, and the cycles that bring about life through death. Stone Boy, Blood Clot Boy, and Falling Star mediate the elemental forces through which life is both destroyed and regenerated. The first two hero figures are most commonly tied to the origins of the sweatlodge, at least in Lakota traditions (Bucko 1999:147-154), and in some stories to the creation of pounds for hunting bison. Some of the texts, suggest the region of Wind Cave National Park; if not here, they unfold in topographic settings that appear like the Buffalo Gap or the Hot Springs. In fact, there’s a location at Wind Cave National Park, identified on old GSL maps, as the “Giant’s Thumb.” Whether the origin of the name for this landform has any connection to local tribal traditions is unknown, but it is certainly consistent with tribal stories of the area.

These locations are also associated with other culture heroes, who appear later in cosmic time, notably Tokahe for the Lakotas and Motseyeef [Sweet Medicine] and possibly Tomosivisi [Stands on the Ground] for the Cheyennes. Thus, they are highly sacred earth centers where life is perpetuated in the cosmic struggles of the north/nadir and south/zenith that take place twice every year as the seasons change from summer to fall and from winter to spring. The forces that generate these cosmic transitions are often envisioned as figures of gigantic proportions, greater than life characters with the capacity to bring about life’s ultimate destruction unless combated by countervailing powers and forces. 105 Falling Star, Blood Clot Boy, and Stone Boy, all of whom have miraculous origins, gain some of the knowledge and power to mediate or balance the dangers of these forces so that humans can overcome and survive their destructive powers.

Another cast of spiritual characters linked to the Wind Cave area are diminutive figures commonly called “Little People” in English. 106 Three stories about the cave refer to their presence. Since the Lakota names for these figures are not given in the texts, it is difficult to know what diminutive figures they represent. The different varieties of Little People, while potentially dangerous to humans, can be benefactors too. One of the Little People saved Swift Bird’s grandfather, Fast Thunder, from a Crazy Buffalo at Wind Cave (in Kadlecek and Kadlecek 1981:148). In LaPointe’s stories (1976:84), they breed the game animals in their underworld homes, and in a story whose attribution is unknown one directs a Lakota hunter to Wind Cave from the Hot Springs and drives Waziya from his home (Anonymous, n.d.: Wind Cave National Park Archives). In one of the stories, the Little People are also associated with the neighboring Hot Springs. As La Pointe (1976:45) writes:

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104 Many of Stone Boy’s exploits, including making pounds, are associated in Arapaho texts with their culture hero, Found in the Grass (Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:341-387).

105 There are many dangerous giant and/or cannibalistic figures in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions that represent the antithesis of the life-giving properties of the natural world. There are monster-like figures connected to water, caves, mountain peaks, and forests. In general, most of the locations that are conceptualized as earth-centers, places where powerful cosmic forces come together, have transformative possibilities that are both beneficial and dangerous to humans (Moore, J. 1974:165).

106 These figures are described in greater depth in Chapter Eleven under the section that deals with spiritual beings linked to water and springs. They appear in Left Heron’s Iron Hawk texts (in Beckwith 1930: 382-383:388-389), where they are associated with the Uke’gila (the petrified water monsters of the Badlands). Of interest, the place in Left Heron’s text where Iron Hawk meets a little man is in the context of the story where he marries a buffalo woman. Young Bear (and Theisz 1994:29) also talks about Little People in the Black Hills.
The Little People bred game animals for human consumption and kept perpetual fires ablaze to heat the waters that flow up to the surface, thus keeping the flowers in bloom and the medicinal shrubs growing year around.

He goes on to describe the springs further:

The lands nourished by the warm waters were fertile places of great value. Sweet smelling peppermint plants and pulpy rosebuds for tea abounded here. A profuse growth of medicinal herbs and leafy green for soups, and many kinds of edible tubers thrived around those areas. The open warm water streams attracted waterfowl and other game animals the year round. The Lakota say these oasis-like places were gifts of Taku Wakan, and they cleansed themselves in the mineral pools and drank the saline waters to maintain their health. They gave the name Mini awoblu mokoche (land of bubbling waters) to this part of the Black Hills, and they cared for it well...(LaPointe 1976:46).

Stella Swift Bird (Kadlacek and Kadlacek 1981:149) also claimed the Hot Springs had healing powers, although she did not associate them with Little People. She said:

Hot Springs was called holy water or holy place. When people got sick they went there to drink the holy water. They drank four times and each time it had a different taste. They drank four mouthfuls and prayed.

Nor did Jake Herman (in One Feather 1974:149) identify the springs with Little People. In one story (Herman n.d.: Wind Cave National Park Archives), he wrote:

A small band of Sioux buffalo hunters discovered the Hot Springs. This group came near the Hot Springs beneath a high rocky mountain wall and as they dismounted their ponies to rest they heard a laughing voice that echoes from the rocky walls. Then out from the rocky walls appeared two beautiful twin sisters. The sisters informed the hunters that they were mortal creatures that lived in the Black Hills and asked the hunters to follow them and they would lead them to the sacred place called Mini-Kata where the water was hot and had curative powers. When the twins led them to the springs they proceeded to tell and show the hunters how to use the springs and told them this. ‘You tell your people to offer up tokens and never reveal this place to anyone but your people.’ The twin sisters then disappeared back into the rocky walls into the mysterious hidden powers of Mother Earth.

Herman goes on to tell how, in later years, a young warrior recklessly told a white man the whereabouts of the springs whose location the Lakotas kept secret. In exchange for a gray horse, he took the white man to the springs. After he returned to his camp, a thunderstorm approached and lightning killed his gray horse. The story concludes with the statement: “The Thunderbird had taken its toll.” (A portion of this story also appears in One Feather 1972:149).

The Twin Sisters of this story are remarkably similar in their features to the Double-Woman, who also appears in LaPointe’s story (1976:80-81) of Wind Cave. The Double-Woman, Winyan Nunpapika, was an important spiritual figure, often represented as a blacktail deer that took on the appearance of tall twin women (Dorsey, J. 1894:480; Tyon in Walker 1980:165-166). She was a patroness of Lakota quill workers, and images associated with her have been linked to some of the rock art on the walls of nearby canyons in the Black Hills (Sundstrom 2002). Another figure, which is often conflated with her but is different, is Anog-Ite (Double Face), who plays an important role in the story of Tokahe and the emergence of the Pte Oyate from their

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107 See also the discussions on deer in Chapter Ten and in Appendix A.

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home at Wind Cave. This figure, usually portrayed as a female, is widely reported to harm pregnant women and lure lone hunters astray (Tyon, Garnett, Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:107), but there are also male two-faces in Lakota/Dakota traditions (Dorsey, J. 1894:473-475; Bushotter in Dorsey 1889:151-153; Ivan Stars in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:374-378, [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:644-658]). In Cheyenne stories, some of the two-faces are associated with a cave in the southern Black Hills (Schlesier 1987:79). Like Waziya, the Two-Faces and the Double-Woman are often characterized as giants (Bushotter in Dorsey 1889:153).

In Lakota traditions, bluffs and springs that emerge out of rock outcroppings are commonly associated with the homes of Little People, the Double-Woman, and the first Pte Oyate woman, Wakanka. Any site of this order is bound to have some spiritual significance and use. It would not be surprising to learn, for example, that areas near Cold Spring Creek and the Twin Sisters Range [a name the Lakota sometimes use in English to refer to the Double-Woman] have sites of cultural significance. Indeed, just south of this range, outside park properties, is a place called “Witch Springs.” In Cheyenne traditions, springs and water holes have connections to Little People and blacktail deer as well, and they are highly respected (Moore, J. 1974:164).

In the traditions of the Lakotas and other tribal peoples of the Great Plains, the proportions of spiritual figures often change across different planes of the universe. The spirits of the Buffalo Nation or Pte Oyate, for example, are tiny in their underworld home before they emerge on the earth’s surface where they grow to their normal stature (Campbell 1937; LaPointe 1976:87; Charging Eagle and Zeilinger 1987). Spirits of the underworld and the sky world are often miniaturized or inflated to non-human sizes, perhaps as a rhetorical device to emphasize their mysterious, non-ordinary, or out-of-this-world status and power. Whatever the reason, the spirits associated with Wind Cave exist in miniaturized form, sometimes appearing as blue lights, although the sacred figures that govern their appearance and materialization are sometimes envisioned as gigantic in stature.

As discussed elsewhere, any place that connects the underground with the surface of the earth or anything that transverses these planes is sacred to the Lakotas (Powers, W. 1986:113). When the two stand in proximity, that is when plants, minerals, or animals inhabit locations near caves and springs, the effect of their ton is intensified. The area of Wind Cave is especially significant in this regard because bison, gypsum, and certain plants converge at this location in wondrous, powerful, and life-generating ways (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:128; Catches in Gonzalez 1996:67). Earth centers are the places that give rise to life in its materialized form, or to put it differently, give physical form to the spirit. Their association with death and rebirth, their circular form, and their extension across multiple tiers of the universe all come together in complex, symbolic ways to articulate a sense of great mystery. All of these things tie Wind Cave, the Buffalo Gap, and the Hot Springs together and to the area that is the Black Hills. What weaves them all together are the sacred stories about the genesis of bison and their relations with humans, the stories of the Four Winds, especially Waziyata, the North Wind, and his grandfather, Waziya, the various Orphan Boy narratives, and finally, the Great Race.

D. The Great Race and the Race Track

In Alexandra New Holy’s analysis of the Black Hills (1997:128), the cangleska, the circle or hoop, is another centralizing metaphor within which time and space are unified in Lakota cosmology. It is the figurative geometric expression of life in all of its forms (DeMallie 1987:27,
80). Drawing on the words of Nicholas Black Elk, New Holy shows how the Black Hills stand for this circle of life and become Og’naka I’Cante, “the heart of everything that is.” For her, the circular Race Track is a synergistic symbol inside of which Paha Sapa, [Black Hills], the Wiwanyang Wacipi [Sun Dance], and the Cangleska Oyate [Hoop of the Nation] become indivisible and part of an essential oneness (New Holy 1997:133-137). She goes on to argue that the circle’s sacred center, the hocoka, is understood as the “seventh direction,” the place where the heart [cante] of a people, their land, and the universe come together with the use of the pipe [cannupa]. Through the prayers that are conveyed in the action of a pipe and its smoke, all time-spaces of the universe are connected, enfolded, and concentrated at a single point that is the center of life and its creations (New Holy 1997:138-143). Similarly, the performance of the Sun Dance draws all that is to its center, the can wakan [sacred tree], through prayer and ritual, thereby renewing the world (New Holy 1997:143-151). The center or altar, hocoka, the pipe, and the Sun Dance are also synergistically connected to the land and its heart. For the Lakotas, this heart is the Black Hills whose innermost center is located at their geologic core -- basically, the area that encompasses the three central prairies, Gilette, Reynolds, and Slate, known as Pe Sla [Bare Place] in Lakota and their surrounding peaks, Harney Peak and Castle Butte (New Holy 1987:151-156). This was the region to which the Lakotas traveled on a religious pilgrimage every seven years to perform a renewal ceremony known as Okisataya Wowahwala [Peace at Bare Spot], a journey that started when the bison left their winter home along the Race Track and returned to the grasslands with their newborn calves through the opening at the Buffalo Gap (Goodman 1992: 50).

The landscape of the Black Hills can be envisioned as a series of four circles with the outermost circle bounded by the two branches of the Cheyenne River that nearly surround them. The next circle is formed by the Hogback with its many canyon gateways, which the animals typically used in their annual movements to and from the adjoining grasslands. The third circle is the Race Track where the animals wintered. The innermost circle is marked by the Hills’ limestone and granite interiors, the place where forces of the cosmic nadir and zenith meet, begetting new life through the release of ni [breath]. Once life is reborn within the depths of the Hills and arrives on the earth’s surface through the various cave openings which dot the Hills, its various manifestations need to be ordered to insure its survivance. The process of its ordering is what the famous story of the Race Track is about. There are many different versions of this story among the Cheyennes and Lakotas. Most Cheyenne and Lakota renditions focus on how the race ordered the relationships between different animals and humans, thereby establishing certain basic categorical and cosmological distinctions in the universe.

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108 This spot must have been highly significant to the Lakotas. In contrast to their heavily forested surroundings, these open, treeless prairies must have appeared like hocoka, altars, which, in most Lakota and Cheyenne ceremonies, are areas inside a ceremonial circle where the vegetation has been stripped away and the ground unearthed and pulverized before the altar is constructed.

109 The details surrounding the performance of this ceremony are not given. Its purpose is remarkably similar, however, to the Cheyennes’ practice of the Massaum (Schlesier 1987), which was a ceremony dedicated to the renewal of plants and animals that also took place in the Black Hills.

110 Early reports of the volumes of smoke issuing from the interior Hills in the 1830s may very well have made the Hills interiors appear as a colossal recharging of the universe, so powerful that, like a thunderstorm, it was capable of destroying everything in its path. This is reminiscent of John Moore’s characterization (1996:225-226) of the Sun Dance as replicating the fertility structure of a thunderstorm, in which the thunders and their whirlwinds act as primal phallic forces impregnating the earth, so it can bring forth its plants and animals. Since the thunders dwell in the region of Harney Peak, the Black Hills can be imagined as a fertility structure as well, a place where life returns to be regenerated, reborn, and renewed.
Two versions of a Cheyenne-Suhtaio story begin with a marriage between a human man and a buffalo woman (Stands In Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24; Powell 1969:2:472-475). \textsuperscript{111} For four nights, the man dreams of shooting a certain buffalo. After the fourth dream, he decides to find out what it means and goes out hunting. Just as he dreamed, he shoots a buffalo cow, and although wounded, she escapes him. He follows her tracks and finds her living in a lone tipi where she now appears to him as a beautiful woman. He marries her, and they have a son, but she leaves him. Once again, he follows her tracks, which lead to a high ridge where the man is able to see a herd of buffalo grazing below. His son, who is now a young yellow calf, approaches him and warns that the buffalo are going to kill him unless he can identify which of the young calves is his son. The son devises different signals so his father can recognize him. The father succeeds in singling out his son, but the buffalo persist in their efforts to get rid of him. They charge him and put him through more tests, but his human power is too strong for them. Finally, the buffalo decide to run a race against him, the outcome of which determines who is able to eat whom. The man is given a choice of running with either a black or red stick. On the advice of his son, he chooses the black one so he can follow the track along the inside of the Hogback. The buffalo select their fastest runner, Slim Walking Woman, to represent them. All the animals and birds arrive at this momentous race and paint themselves with different colors. They take sides, and the birds band together with humans. The animals race around the Black Hills, many collapsing from exhaustion. Slim Walking Woman maintains the lead throughout the race until the very end when Magpie flies past her and wins the race for humans. Before conceding, the buffalo perform one last act. They organize a Medicine Lodge (Sun Dance) that recreates the Great Race and then turn its knowledge over to humans (Powell 1969:2:477). As John Stands In Timber (and Liberty 1967:24) interprets it:

That race gave mankind the right to use animal flesh for food and to be the master like the buffalo told him. If the animals had won they would have lived on his flesh instead. Man was thankful that he won. The Cheyennes have offered the Sun Dance every year since that time, remembering the Great Race and giving thanks to the Almighty for the way it turned out. They used to put little clay figures of all the animals around the center pole to represent them, but that part is not done anymore, although much of the ceremony is the same as in the earliest days.

In other Cheyenne versions (Kroeber 1900:161-162; Grinnell 1926:252-254; Randolph 1937:189-192), the Great Race narrative is not preceded by any special human-bison relationship. Grinnell (1926, 241) identifies “The Race” as one of the earliest Cheyenne stories, and he places it under a different heading than the “Buffalo Wife” narrative. Similarly, John Ant’s version (in Leman 1987:245-250) and one narrated by an unnamed Cheyenne (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:30-31) do not include the story of the “Buffalo Wife,” nor does the one recorded by Richard Erdoes (and Ortiz 1984:390-392) from another unidentified Cheyenne person in 1968. As recorded and published by George Bird Grinnell in 1926 (252-254), the story reads:

In the beginning the creator made first the earth, then the trees and the grass, and afterward he made the animals and the people and put them on earth. At that time the animals and people lived together as friends.

Yet after this, as you all know, the buffalo used to eat us people, and the animals as well. The Great Power thought that it would be a good thing to have a race of all the animals, to decide whether the buffalo should eat the people, or they the buffalo.

\textsuperscript{111} The Arapahos have a race story, published by George Dorsey and Alfred Kroeber (1903:395-418), that involves a marriage between a human man and a bison woman. It is not identified with the Race Track of the Black Hills, however. Another story is related to Bear Lodge Butte, but the connection is not made in their texts (Ibid:152-153).
So at that time all creatures living upon the earth, Indians, buffalo, birds, and all animals were called together at a place east of the Black Hills, which we call the Race Track. It is near what white men now call the Buffalo Gap.

The story goes on to tell how the Magpie won the race for the people, giving them the right to eat the buffalo rather than become the buffalo’s food.

Another early version, as told by an elderly Cheyenne to Thomas Marquis (and Limbaugh 1973:30-31), describes in some detail how the animals variously painted themselves, and it reads as follows:

In the Black Hills is a certain place where the Indians say, a long time ago all of the birds and animals had a race. Buffalo, deer, elk, antelope, bears, wolves, mountain sheep, crows, magpies, and other creatures entered the contest. In preparation, all of them painted themselves, each with its favorite colors. The meadow lark said: “I shall have the moon on my breast.’ Ever since then the moon has given this bird’s breast its color. The magpie and the crow were the last to put on their paints. The others had taken the bright hues, so these two had only the black and white. The magpie used white earth and charcoal. The crow blackened itself with only the charcoal. A slender and spirited deer pranced so lightly that all observers predicted, ‘Surely this deer will win.’

The race continued throughout a whole day, from sunrise to sunset. The catbird stopped, alighted upon a bush, and said: ‘It will be better if I stay here and sing for them.” The buffalo slowed down to a walk, and from its mouth came so much froth that there are yet many places in that region where the ground is white and frothy. The lively deer became so tired that the blood flowing from its nose made red stains through the rocks and over the soil all over that country. The magpie and the crow kept flying all day and they won the race. Since then, the Cheyennes honor them by not eating their flesh.

The version collected by Alice Marriott (and Rachlin 1968:120-123) from two Southern Cheyennes, Mary Little Bear Inkanish and John Fletcher, clearly joins the ungulate species, elk, deer, and antelope, with the bison, and aligns raptors and carnivores with humans. As John Moore (1984:296-297) points out in reference to the Cheyenne, although some elements found in the story vary from one narrator to another, the game animals and birds that appear are basically identical in all versions. In addition, the overall description and meaning of the race is the same. Generally speaking, the animals that painted themselves stood on the side of human beings, while those who did not were the opponents who ultimately lost the race and became the prey of humans.

John Ant’s version (in Leman 1987:245-250) of the story, which is published in Cheyenne with a line-by-line English translation, has three interesting features. First, it tells how the man raced with the birds by “floating” with an eagle plume attached to the back of his head. Second, it explains how, before the race began, various animals ran out of the hollow log of a large cottonwood tree to find human meat. Lastly, as in all other Race Track stories, it establishes the right of humans to consume bison and other game, and it also creates the prohibition against eating the

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112 This version also links the Sun Dance to the Race Track story, but unlike the one told by the Northern Cheyenne, the race takes place after the performance of a Sun Dance.
113 This is also a significant feature of a Lakota race story told by Left Heron (in Walker 1917:219-221) that appears to take place in the Black Hills too, and it is also associated with the magical abilities of a Lakota orphan hero (Beckwith 1930).
114 This parallels certain Kiowa stories (Mooney 1979) that link human and animal origins to hollow cottonwood logs. These logs might be seen as metaphoric equivalents to caves, and this is especially significant in relation to the Sun Dance where the center pole is a young cottonwood tree.
animals that sided with humans. In this particular version, the allies of humans were a magpie, a crow, a blackbird, a sparrow, and a gopher.

Lakota versions of the Race Track story do not begin with the account of the man who marries a buffalo woman. As discussed earlier, the Buffalo woman tale as told by Left Heron and others at the beginning of the twentieth century is linked in later Lakota storytelling traditions to Wind Cave, which sits on a mountain a short distance to the west of the Race Track. Among the Lakotas, the Race Track story, which Charlotte Black Elk (1986c:200) calls *Otkuyaye Topa Wamaka Og’naka l’Cante Oki inyankes* (Run of the Four Relations Around the Heart of Everything That Is), involves the same general message and many of the same animals found in Cheyenne stories. There are some interesting variations, however. For one, Lakota stories often start with the existence of a universal disharmony or chaos between humans and all of the animals, which the race seeks to redress. As LaPointe (1976:18-19) tells it, a council was held to confer on the matter:

> It was a memorable event because, in order to bring peace and order to the world, it was agreed that a race of immense magnitude was to be the solution. The race was to decide many things. It would result in sorting and separating the animals into their proper species by the smell of their bodies. It was to be a grand, epic feat of the ages.

Thus, to all the *tatuya tona* (wind flows or directions), messengers were sent, in order to announce the great event. These messengers were chosen from among the swiftest birds, and from among animals that could run like the flight of a strong arrow. Meantime, other animals were detailed to find suitable ground for a circular racetrack, and lay out a course wide enough and long enough so that the many animals who were expected could take part in the race. There were strict rules established, to insure a fair and orderly event. Every animal would have a chance, whether small or clumsy, weak or strong.

Joseph White Bull, however, told Thomas Odell (1942:168) that the race took place because “the animals in the Black Hills became too numerous, and it was decided to eliminate some by having them run a race around the Black Hills.” In one version, Magpie calls the council after overhearing the buffalos’ plans to exterminate all the humans (Black Elk, C. 1986c:200-201). In another, it is a man who convenes the great meeting (LaPointe 1976:18-19). And in Nicholas Black Elk’s rendition (in DeMallie 1984:309), the thunder-beings are the ones who instigate it.

In LaPointe’s narrative (1976:17-20), there are also unique references to giant reptilian land animals closely related to the *Unktehi* of the waters, who get destroyed in the Great Race.\(^\text{115}\) La Pointe (1976:19) writes:

> The Lakota say, that even to this day the remains of this ancient race track are still plainly visible, and there are many large bones still lying around along the historic track. The huge bones of the *Unkeche Ghila*, which, once upon a time, roamed these prairie lands, can be found in the badlands to the east and south of the Black Hills.

Their destruction came about as the Black Hills spewed rock and ashes into the air, killing many of the animals (LaPointe 1976:18-19).

\(^{115}\) Archie Fire (a.k.a Lame Deer) told Richard Erdoes another story in 1969 about the Black Hills that involves the *Unktehi* (Erdoes and Ortiz 1984:94-96). In this story, the water monsters were turned into stone, and a great flood drowned the people. One young girl survived, however, because an eagle took her to the highest stone pinnacle in the Black Hills and made her his wife. The association of fossilized animals, from dinasours to mastadoons, with ancient water spirits is widespread in L/Dakota traditions (Dorsey, J. 1894: 438-440.)
In most of the published Lakota stories of the Great Race (Odell 1942:168; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:309), as with the Cheyenne, Magpie wins the race for humans, but in some Lakota versions, only the birds race with each other. As Little Cloud told one version of the story in Lakota to Father Eugene Buechel (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:94-96),

Now, all the little birds and all their relatives will finish a race. Now, a crow announced it all over the world and returned home saying, “They are coming.”

Then when they arrived, they all said: “Where is your Leader?” The others replied “Spotted Eagle is our leader,” but they looked and they said, “Is he the one who will win?”

We will go together but it is a long and difficult route.”
Then the leader said: “The winners will have many good winters because they will get the best home, strong enough so snow can’t get in and it will be good for many winters.”

Then everyone was happy. Then a magpie stood and said: “Friends, I am slow, but because I am in need of a home, I will take part in this race.” The leader responded saying: “Because all of you have come a long way, you will leave in two days.”

Then he said, “At that time, you will leave Mato Tipila (Devil’s Tower) and circle around the Hills, and return by the way through He Okiksahne (Buffalo Gap). Those of you who can go a long distance, wave your wings.” He said this as they were leaving, but the best three to go the distance were the Big Hawk, the Eagle, and the Prairie Chicken and the slowest was the Magpie.

But, whoever wanted to win did not turn away and kept flapping his wings. First Big Hawk was sweating to death just sitting there. Then, after that time, eagle sat down and after that Prairie Chicken sat down. After that, all the little birds were sweating to death and one after the other, they say down. The Magpie went, and they each said:

“Turn back. As for me, because it is truly a long distance, I can not do it. The Magpie said; “I am slow, but I can fly through my country.” Now, he was thinking that all the relatives would be indisposed, and he really called out while flying and was very happy at heart. Now a few were close to returning home and were half way. The Magpie was alone and the first to get home and now reached his goal.

At that time, all his relatives reached the finish line one right after the other. Then the leader called the Magpie and he went. The leader said: “Now you have won a home, but where do you want to make it?” Then he said, “I would want to be in the dense woods. Yes that is where I will be.”

So that is how the Magpie won his race and acquired his nest, and for all his days lived in that home.

The Magpie was strong for flying alone. It is so. The end.\footnote{Yvonne Kelly translated this story with the assistance of Jerry Dearly. Again, this translation differs somewhat from Manhart’s.} 116

A more recent rendition of this version of the story is given by Gilbert Walking Bull (1980:6-8), and like Little Cloud’s narrative, the race begins and ends at Bear Lodge Butte instead of the Buffalo Gap in Cheyenne traditions and in some of the Lakotas’ as well.

The vast majority of the stories imply that only one race took place, although Eagle Shield’s narrative (Densmore 1918:319) suggests that the animals gathered to race at this spot on more than one occasion. As he interpreted the story:
The reason why the Black Hills were so long unknown to the white man was that Wakantanka [Great Spirit or Great Mystery] created them as a meeting place for the animals. The Indians had always known this and regarded the law of Wakantanka concerning it. By this law they were forbidden to kill any of the animals during the great gatherings. In the Black Hills there is a ridge of land around which is a smooth, grassy place called the ‘race-course.’ This is where the animals have the races, during their gatherings. Even small animals like the turtle are there. The crow is always first to arrive, and the other birds come before the animals, while insects and creatures like the frog travel slowly and arrive last. Sometimes it takes 10 years for all the animals to arrive, as they come from long distances and camp whenever winter overtakes them.

Lakota and Cheyenne stories similarly account for the Race Track’s red soil as a vestige of the blood spilled by the animals in the heat of the race. The soil is called neoma [red earth] in Cheyenne (Randolph 1937:191; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:51; Walking Bull 1980:9). While the Cheyennes symbolically mark and separate the Hogback from the Red Valley in their stories, Lakotas sometimes go beyond this and explain how the depression and some of its surrounding topographic features were formed as a result of the race. Indeed, in one story, the movement of the racers creates the Black Hills (LaPointe 1976:19). 117

In some of the earlier Cheyenne and Lakota versions (Grinnell 1926:254; DeMallie 1984:310), humans learn of the bow and arrow after winning the Great Race. It is interesting to note here that the Bow Society of the Lakotas was associated with a sacred race too, although there is nothing in the literature that explicitly connects the origins of this society to the story of the Great Race or the Race Track in the Black Hills (Blish 1934). In several Cheyenne stories, but not in any of the Lakota versions, the Great Race is associated with the beginnings of the Sun Dance. This ceremony was first performed by the buffalos, and after losing to humans, they turned it over to humans. Some say this happened at the Buffalo Gap (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:72). A few writers have pointed out that many aspects of the Cheyennes’ Sun Dance recreate elements of the Great Race (see Chapter Twelve) (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:24; Powell 1969:2:473 n4, 475 n5, 476 n6; 477-478).

Curiously, the Lakotas also have a story (Walker 1917:212-215; Red Shirt 2002:212) of how the buffalos taught human beings the Sun Dance, but this one took place in a cave at the home of the Pte Oyate, where a young man cohabits with a buffalo woman and learns the dance from her people. Later, he and his wife take this knowledge to his people, who, at first, refuse to accept it, even though they are starving. They finally approach the couple for help and learn the dance that brings the buffalo to their camp. Like the story of Tokahe, which is associated by many Lakotas with Wind Cave, Wazi and Wakanka are central characters in this narrative. Also, like the other stories of Wind Cave descended from Left Heron, this one involves a marriage between a hunter and a buffalo woman. Wind Cave is not explicitly identified in this story, nor was it ever mentioned in any of the other stories in the Walker collection, but its themes certainly match those that are now connected to Wind Cave. This location is also consistent with Cheyenne stories of the origin of the Sun Dance at the Buffalo Gap. In fact, Olivia Pourier (in Neihardt and Utecht 2000:135), the granddaughter of Nichols Black Elk, reported that the Lakotas used to hold Sun Dances in the southeastern region of the Black Hills.

117 In Dakota and Lakota traditions, a similar theme of bison shedding their blood accounts for the red pipestone formations in Minnesota (Nicolett in Bray and Bray 1976:76).
Another story collected by Edward and Mabel Kadlec (1981:118) from Frank Kicking Bear in 1969 makes a similar connection between the Sun Dance and the Black Hills, although the animals involved are deer and elk instead of the bison:

I will tell a short story about the Sun Dance. My grandfather, his name was Chagla, was the founder of the Sun Dance. He went to the Black Hills one time. As he went about the hills, he heard a dream and he followed the dream sound. As he went around, he saw all kinds of deer and elk dancing in a circle, and after the dance they paired up and went back in the hills. This was where he learned all the Sun dance songs. He saw that in the form of humans. This was the beginning of the Sun Dance. Through this Sun Dance they worship the Great Spirit, and it is the greatest religious gathering the Indians ever had.

Jake Herman (1965b:21) also connects the origins of the Sun Dance to the Black Hills. Indeed, most Lakotas and Cheyennes locate the original Sun Dance in the Black Hills, either at the Buffalo Gap or in the area of Bear Lodge Butte.

Several other Lakota and Cheyenne ceremonial observances are connected with caves too. In one story Little Wound told James Walker (1980:196) of the origins of the Hunka as follows:

A shaman sought a vision. His vision was a ghost like cloud. He followed this ghost and it led him into a great hole in the earth. When they came into this hole it was like a great council tipi, and there were many people there. All were feasting and singing and giving presents. Tate and Okaga were there. They taught the shaman the songs and the ceremony. Then Tate carried him through the air back to his people and told him that when one chooses a Hunka or an Ate, then this ceremony and these songs should be performed.

Although there is nothing to specifically identify the cave in this story with Wind Cave, Tate, after whom Wind Cave is named, is a central character in the story. Also, Tokahe, the first human to come from Wind Cave, is linked to the Hunka (Walker 1983:378-379).

There is yet another Left Heron story recorded by James Walker (1917:219-221) that tells about the origins of foot racing. This narrative is quite different from the vast majority of stories related to the Race Track because it doesn’t involve a race among the animals. Instead, it involves a race between a wakan runner and Wakanka, The Old Woman, identified in this story as the “Witch.” Both are able to transform themselves into animals and both enlist the help of two Winds to win the race. Even though this isn’t the story of the Great Race, it describes topographic features that appear remarkably like the Race Track. In the story the Witch tells everyone that “they would run once around a deep gully, then on level ground to the hills, and once around the hills and back through a gap in the hills to the place where they started” (Walker 1917:220). Nevertheless, it is one more example of the importance of foot racing, which in Lakota traditions often took place before hunts to ensure their success, suggesting that races were not simply recreational but spiritual in their outcome (Walker 1917:278-283, 1982:89). Today, a strong connection is still being made between the Great Race and racing traditions in general and the identity of the Lakota peoples. As Young Bear (and Theisz 1994:29) tells it:

It was brought up by some of these elderly (referring to Moses Two Bulls, Bunk Left Hand, Luke Weasel Bear, Franks Fools Crow and Dave Badger) that at one time long ago the birds and the two-leggeds had a race against the four-leggeds around the Black Hills. It was a natural track all around the Hills. The animals did this because of the sacredness of the Black Hills and also to show their stamina and endurance, to show how animals could endure

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118 A variety of different competitive games were played by the Lakotas to insure a successful outcome in hunting (Meeker 1901b; Walker 1905; 1906).
hardship, run without water and food for a number of days, how some of the birds could float
through the air and some have to fight hard flapping their own wings, and some animals have
to crawl. But no matter how slow or how fast they went, the endurance was there. As they
ran and hopped and flew and crawled, they wore a valley all around the Hills we now call the
Race Track. Today there are marathon runs held by Lakota young people to honor the Black
Hills and that the first great race all the way around the Hills. I think that’s a great thing and a
way of expressing identity.

Most of the published versions of the Race Track story represent only fragments of the
original narratives whose conventional telling probably involved more elaborate story lines and a
much richer body of detail. Despite variations in some of their characters, storylines, and
outcomes, most of the narrators who tell the story agree that it laid down some of the fundamental
characteristics of the animals, their species identification, and the nature of their relationships
with each other, particularly who would become the hunter and the hunted. It is a story of epic
stature, one that was narrated by the most accomplished storytellers (LaPointe 1976:17) and one
whose recitation may have taken up to four nights to tell (Powell 1969:2:472 n1). It is also a story
that alludes to one of the most powerful spiritual beings in the Lakota pantheon, Taku Skansk, who
guides all forms of motion. He is the one who invented races and who supervises their
outcome; he presides over the movements of animals, war parties, and camps (Tyon, Garnett,
Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:107), and he is the guardian of Tate, the Wind.

All of the stories, however, support the view, widely held by the Lakotas and the Cheyennes,
that the Black Hills stand within a sacred enclosure or circle, which is mirrored in the heavens by
a great circle of stars, also known as the Race Track, Ki inyanka ocanku or the Sacred Hoop,
Cangleska wakan (Goodman 1992:7). Whether on earth inside the Black Hills or in the
heavens inside a circle of seven stars, new life is created and re-born. Inside this circle is another
constellation known as Tayamm, which includes Tayammipa [The Head] in Pleiades; Tayam-
尼斯inho [The Tail] or Sirius; Tayammitucuhu [The Ribs], representing two stars, Rigel and Betle-
guese; and Tayammicankahu [The Backbone], the stars in Orion’s belt (Buechel 1970:486). The
name Tayamm can be translated in several ways, one derived from the number three [yamni]
and perhaps referring to three kinds of game [ta], or it can refer to a circular action [yunmi] which
is associated with the act of creation (Buechel 1970:674) and the Whirlwind, the Fifth son of Tate
[Wind]. The last translation would best fit the idea that this region constitutes an area where game
animals are conceived. The three stars forming the belt are associated with the region of Pe Sla,
while the head represents one of the seven peaks in the Harney Range. Rigel at the eastern side
of the Race Track marks the backbone, while Betleguese represents the trail leading to Inyan
Kara Mountain at Procyon in the west. The tail, Sirius, represents an exit in the southern Hills at
the point where the Cheyenne River is believed to move in Four Directions; this exit follows a
trail that moves south from the Central Prairies along Hells Canyon near Jewel Cave National

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119 Cheyennes know a circular constellation whose identifying stars are not described, nor have they been associated in
the published literature with the Race Track (Petter 1913-15:1009; Moore, J. 1996:204).
120 In one rendition of the Great Race story (Goble 1985), the Milky Way was created from the dust the animals raised
in their race. In the 1980s, Paul Goble, a non-Indian, wrote many children’s books based on tribal myths. His book The
Great Race of the Birds and Animals (1985) was written for children, and represents a synthesis of the storylines found
in different Cheyenne and Lakota versions of this story. He also published a version of the Buffalo Woman story
(1984). We have not been able to find a connection to the Milky Way in any of the published stories we have studied,
hower.
121 The sweat lodge is often described as the womb and ribs of mother earth (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:48;
Bucko 1999:76, 85, 148-149). Here, again, we find an example of the interchangeability of symbols, with the interiors
of the Black Hills being conceived in the image of a sweatlodge qua animal womb that gives birth to ni, or the breath
of life.
Monument (Black Elk, C. 1992:50-51). There are two other stars that mark the circle, Pollux in the west at Bear Lodge Butte a.k.a. Devil’s Tower and Capella\(^\text{122}\) in the north that Charlotte Black Elk (1992:50, 53) identifies with the Buffalo Gap. All of these stars are marked by a double vortex image on Lakota star maps, indicating points of intersection between the sky and the earth (Goodman 1992:16), and all of them can be seen together during the winter months in the northern sky. Capella\(^\text{123}\) is an especially interesting star whose highest position in the sky corresponds with mid-winter. In spring it moves southeast towards the horizon where it stops in mid-

\(^{122}\) Curiously, the positioning of the Buffalo Gap star, Capella, on Black Elk’s star map does not correspond with the location of this site in the Black Hills. It is the only site whose location on the earth’s surface does not match. There is no explanation why this should be the case unless it represents the kind of inversion previously discussed in relation to the Four Winds.

\(^{123}\) Capella is an important star for other tribes as well, including the Crow and Pawnee. Curiously, the Pawnee believed that Capella, the Yellow Star, was one of their “Four Quarter” or “Four Wind” stars. These stars represented the “pillars” of heaven (Chamberlain 1982:94-96, 101, 103, 113, 178). The heliacal risings of other stars, including Aldebaran, Sirius, and Rigel, are important in Cheyenne ceremonialism (Schlesier 1987:83-87), and these are also aligned with some of the stone cairns, alignments, and medicine wheels in the northern Plains (Kehoe and Kehoe 1977:85-86).
summer and returns in a northwesterly direction towards the zenith. It is one of the stars, along with Polaris, the North Star, that, according to Joachim Ekrutt (1990:133), “never sets in the higher latitudes of the Northern Hemisphere.”

Another metaphoric allusion is the connection of the Race Track to the edge of a corral, in which the Black Hills is imagined as one huge hunting enclosure, where the Buffalo Gap forms the chute into which the animals are driven. Linea Sundstrom (2000) shows, quite convincingly, how this representation fits not only with the Cheyenne stories of the Race Track but also their Massaum [Animal Dance] ceremony. One can argue that the enclosure represented by the stories of the Buffalo Gap and Race Track is also connected to the tradition of the Sun Dance in Cheyenne traditions, not only because there are explicit references to this association in Cheyenne stories but also because of many other symbolic connections to their New Life Lodge or Sun Oxehehem (cf.: Chapter Twelve). Although many of the most famous stories about the first performance of the Sun Dance take place at sites on the northern end of the Hills, notably Sundance Mountain and Bear Lodge Butte, the fact remains that several traditions point to the Buffalo Gap and the Race Track as the setting for the Sun Dance’s origins among the bison and the site of its transfer to humans.

The association of these two locations with the Sun Dance in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions does not appear to be coincidental. From the descriptions of Henry Newton and Walter Jenney (1880), the areas of the Buffalo Gap and Sundance Mountain hold peculiar gypsum/red clay formations. Recalling the discussion in Chapter Twelve, a line is traced around the Lakotas’ Sun Dance altar and filled with red paint and then gypsum, mirroring how red clay and gypsum coexist in the geology of the Red Valley. Where present day Beaver Creek (then known as Amphibious Creek) passes the Race Track, the gypsum stratum are exceptionally wide and prominent (Newton and Jenney 1880:141-142), and in this area and the Sun Dance Hills, the seams of gypsum dissolve into sink holes and crevices (Newton and Jenney 1880:135, 146). It is not hard to imagine how these might have been thought of as openings to the underworld, places where the bison returned and emerged following the crystalline formations that led to and from their subterranean homes (Walker 1983:220-221, 222-223, 227-228). This is the stone, which the Cheyenne call a “Sun Arrow,” that gave birth to Stone Boy (Grinnell 1926:179). There is also the allusion to these formations in one of the Cheyenne Great Race stories, which explains gypsum as the remnant of the froth that flowed from the mouth of the lead bison as she ran around the track (Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:30-31). The culture preservation staffs of Cheyenne and Lakota tribes have singled out the Race Track as a highly significant sacred site and one where all of the areas that follow its path require protection (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

II. UNITY IN DIVERSITY

At this point, it is important to ask why there is so much diversity in the stories that surround Wind Cave, the Race Track, and the neighboring Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs. One simple answer is that the variation reflects the diverse backgrounds, experiences, knowledge, and narrating skills of their storytellers. Among the Lakotas, for example, differences in the way stories were told had to do with whether the storyteller was ikce, an ordinary person using everyday language, or someone with spiritual gifts, a wicasa wakan. Holy people were the ones who kept and told the most powerful spiritual stories because they were the ones who knew the sacred names and how to speak in a spiritual way (Jahner in Walker 1983:108). This sort of distinction was not unique to the Lakotas but typical of many American Indian storytelling traditions (Fogelson 1981:134; DeMallie 1984:401).
Another and more complex reason for this variation has to do with the differing cultural influences and genealogical histories of the groups in which particular stories were passed down from one generation to the next. As indicated before, the Lakotas have been an internally diverse peoples throughout their history. They lived in different locations, followed diverse kinds of adaptive strategies, and maintained varied relationships with other tribal nations. Some of the Oglalas, for example, were closely linked through intermarriage with the Cheyennes and Arapahos, others with the Poncas or Arikaras, while many had little connection with outside tribes at all. Variations such as these must have influenced their local cultural traditions and the ways different bands or families understood and related to the geographic landscapes they traveled and lived in. Indeed, Ella Deloria (in Rice 1993:11) wrote about the variations in the narrative traditions of the Lakota storytellers she consulted, and how she needed to accept this diversity as part of their distinctive interpretations and styles of narration.

Importantly, there has never been any single or “right” story associated with any of the places in the Black Hills that the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribes hold sacred. There have always been, and probably always will be, different and competing stories. This variation not only reflects the fluidity and improvisational character of the kin-based social formations that made up their tribal ways of life for centuries but also the very nature of transmitting knowledge and tradition in oral rather than written form (Fowler 1987:19; DeMallie in Walker 1982:7; DeMallie 1984:82).

The varied stories about Wind Cave and the Race Track are no exception. There are significant differences in these stories that reveal the diverse threads of cultural influence under which local storytellers learned the narratives of these places or which reflect whether the storyteller was a common or holy person. Notwithstanding the variation, there are certain common themes that tie the stories together, that link them to other locations in the surrounding region, and that reveal a more encompassing and shared sense of meaning about the relationships between the land, its animals, plants, minerals, and the sky, its birds, winds, and stars. What the Lakotas and Cheyennes shared were certain cultural assumptions about caves, springs, breath as a life-giving force, animals, and humans that were woven together in a range of tapestry-like storytelling that made sense in relation to the unique topography of the Black Hills. Nearly fifty years ago, Robert Anderson (1956:99), when discussing the Buffalo Ceremony, wrote:

Presently, all Cheyenne ceremonies share some elements with this one; perhaps none shares them all. But each ceremony represents a selection from a common fund of elements, and it is this selection and their distinctive ordering that makes any ceremony a recognizable and separate entity, standing apart from the total ceremonial and religious structure of which it is only an aspect…

More recently, Raymond DeMallie (; in Walker 1982:7, 1988:17) made a similar point in relation to the Lakotas when he argued that while Lakota culture carries a common set of ideas and principles, these are represented, interpreted, and actualized in varied ways according to individual experience (see also, Bucko 1999:101, 104, 109, 111). The idea of a foundational and shared corpus of symbolic images and practices reworked in myriad ways to create new religious forms applies very well to the ways in which the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribes in the region thought about and related to various sanctified landscapes in and around the Black Hills (New Holy 1997:27-28). A common body of ideas was transmitted and applied to specific kinds of landforms (see Chapter Twelve), and wherever people moved, they carried and reshaped this wisdom to the places they encountered that conformed to their ideas about certain topographic features. Caves, for example, were widely connected to the sanctity of breath, the bison, the North Wind, and regeneration.
Cultural assumptions of this order were known and understood well before the 1950s when stories about the sacred significance of Wind Cave made their first published appearance. For at least two hundred years, the Black Hills have been written about as the winter home of the animals, the place where new generations were reborn to repopulate the surrounding grasslands in the spring. For over a century, Cheyennes and Lakotas told or wrote stories about the association of the Hills with animal origins, regeneration and, by extension, the source of human life. Because these are quintessential stories about the great mystery, the Lakotas’ *Wakan Tanka* or the Cheyennes’ *Ma’heo*, they are sacred. Given the fact that they address basic questions about the ontological status of life itself, they are constituted in, constituted for, and constituted by a realm that is by definition spiritual. The idea of the Black Hills as a meeting place and home to the animals was widely known in the Plains; it was, as Sundstrom (1997:206) argues, a shared piece of knowledge that went with the landscape.

No matter how their details unfold, all of the stories associated with sites at Wind Cave National Park or in its vicinity are about “naming” and giving meaning to the world, placing it in order. As William Powers (1986:153) writes:

> Although the creation of the universe is seen by most people as a theological statement about firstcauses, one may look at the same stories profitably from the point of view of classification. The creation story in any culture is an attempt to put the chaotic universe that surrounds humans into some kind of order, and part of the mechanism used to accomplish this is the simple act of naming everything...The creation of culture including the Lakota, then, is tantamount to the classification of nature, and that act is what makes humans a special kind of animal. But for the Lakota, humans are perhaps not so distinctly separated from the animals, birds, reptiles, and other life forms that make up their universe.

Thus it is not surprising that the Lakota genesis and Race Track stories unfold at proximate locations, and as noted earlier, these locations share a fundamental connection to ideas of primal origin that in many ways distinguish them from landscapes at the northern end of the Black Hills that appear more connected to renewal and revitalization in more recent times.

### III. IMPLICATIONS

It is true that many of the stories associated with the Black Hills are transportable, and that they can be, and probably have been, laid out in relation to other geographic landscapes. But it is also true that the Black Hills are exceptionally unique. They constitute a place that powerfully calls forth cosmological images that resonate with a particular intensity at this location. Once again, Linea Sundstrom (1996) is correct when she asserts that there are cultural ideas of this place that have gone with its territory irrespective of the identities of the tribal nations who hold them.

In its basic contours, some of the sacred knowledge associated with the Black Hills probably stretches back to prehistoric times. Yet, it is also clear that this knowledge has been refashioned over the centuries as new people have lived and new circumstances have unfolded within their shadows. Religious knowledge and practice are rarely static. Even though certain basic tenets and assumptions persist over time, these are changed in keeping with the cultures and conditions of the people who adopt them. To expect the Lakotas, Cheyennes, or the peoples of any other tribal nation to have harbored a geographically fixed and temporally static set of religious beliefs is not only naive, but it also denies these beliefs the very vitalism that gives people faith in them.
So what does all of this suggest for Wind Cave National Park? First of all, whether or not Wind Cave is the cave of the Lakota genesis story is not necessary for understanding the meaning and cultural significance of the region in which the park is located. All caves in the region connect to the underworld, and by definition, these subterranean sites are the homes of the bison wherever they are found. Many of the Lakota stories about Wind Cave could easily apply to other locations, but again, it is not coincidental that at some point in time they became attached to this particular cave. There is no question that the Lakotas, and probably before them the Cheyennes, Arapahos, Poncas, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Comanches, and Arikaras, knew about this cave before Jesse and Tom Bingham “discovered” it in 1881. The cave is simply too close to a major access route for bison and humans in and out of the Black Hills to have escaped notice before the arrival of European Americans. It also stands in close proximity to a major hot springs and quarrying site, both of which certainly drew attention from the tribal nations who were known to live in this area.

Indeed, according to Rufus Pilcher, (1964) who served as a ranger at Wind Cave National Park in the early 20th century, there were tipi rings and other surface remains of human habitation at the cave entrance and near the elevator, proving that some tribal peoples knew of the cave.

Over time, the Lakotas have associated a variety of sacred stories with this unusual site, some of which include the very origin of humankind. But whatever the story, all share a common theme: their association to the bison, the all-encompassing metaphor of life and cosmic awareness for the Lakotas. It is this theme that links the cave very directly to other sites in its immediate vicinity, the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and Hot Springs, which have sacred significance to the Cheyennes as well. While the cave is clearly important to the national park that bears its name, the park occupies a much larger area that includes the Race Track too. The stories of the Race Track are among the most sacred for both the Lakotas and the Cheyennes. In many versions, the Great Race begins and ends at the Buffalo Gap, which is located just outside the boundaries of the park. Although Wind Cave is explicitly connected to this site in some stories, it stands apart in others. Nonetheless, the two are linked implicitly to the idea that the lands on which the park stands are associated with sites of animal origin and places where the cosmic nature of relations between animals and humankind unfolded. There is no question that these stories hold great power for the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and probably other tribes known to have used the area as well, and there is also no question that, as a result, the places they refer to are held in reverence as well.

In an article entitled “Sacred Lands and Religious Freedom”, originally published in 1991, Vine Deloria (1999:203-217) argues that there are two ways lands can be sanctified. One way is for something of momentous significance in human history to have taken place at a particular place. Deloria uses the Gettysburg National Cemetery as representative of this type of sacred space, and he argues that such places bring social cohesion to people and “remind them of the passage of the generations that have brought them to the present” (Deloria 1999:207). The second way a site is made sacred is by its association with a religious happening; it is a place where the holiest of holies is revealed to humans. Mount Horeb, where Moses received the ten commandments, is such a place. In reference to the second type of sacred land, Deloria (1999: 107) writes:

Some of the sites that traditional religious leaders visit are of a similar nature. Thus, the Buffalo Gap is at the southeastern edge of the Black Hills of South Dakota and marks the location where the buffalo emerged each spring to begin the ceremonial year of the Plains Indians. It may indeed be the starting point of the Great Race which determined the primacy between the two-leggeds and four-leggeds at the beginning of the world. Several mountains in New Mexico and Arizona mark places where the Pueblo, Hopi, and Navajo peoples completed their migrations, were told to settle, or where they first established their spiritual relationships with bear, deer, eagle and other forms of life who participate in ceremonials...
And then he goes on to say:

This tradition tells us that there are, on this earth, some places of inherent sacredness, sites that are holy in and of themselves. Human societies come and go on this earth and any prolonged occupation of a geographical region will produce shrines and sacred sites discerned by the occupying people. One only need look at the shrines of present-day Europe and read the archaeology of the site to understand that before Catholic or Protestant churches were built in certain places other religions had established their shrines and temples on that spot. These Holy Places are locations where human beings have always gone to communicate and be with higher spiritual powers. This phenomenon is worldwide and all religions find that these places regenerate people and fill them with spiritual powers...

Among the duties which must be performed at these Holy Places are ceremonies which the people have been commanded to perform in order that the earth itself and all its forms of life might survive. Some evidence of this sacred dimension, and of other sacred places, has come through in the testimony of traditional people at various times in this century when they have explained to non-Indians, in and out of court, that they must perform certain kinds of ceremonies at certain times and places in order that the sun may continue to shine, the earth prosper, and the stars remain in the heavens (Deloria, V. 1999:208-209).

In the Black Hills, there are a number of places of this order, including Bear Butte, Bear Lodge Butte, Wind Cave, the Race Track, and the Buffalo Gap. It is not surprising that traditional people among the Lakotas and Cheyenne nations have at various times and in different ways made requests to hold their religious observances at these and other sacred sites in the Hills. The strong spiritual connections that these groups have to the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and/or Wind Cave recommend Wind Cave National Park as a site for many different kinds of religious observance (see Chapter Twelve).

Beyond the specific character of places like Wind Cave National Park, we must be mindful of their relationships to the overall area that is the Black Hills. It is the more holistic sense of this entire area as the source of the universe’s order and its animal/human beginnings that makes it such a culturally significant and emotionally powerful landscape. Raymond Fogelson (1981:133) states: “Traditional Native American notions about sacred space tend to be more transvaluative and flexible with respect to placement and boundaries. Rather than a fixed point, or set of fixed points, Native American rituals often emphasize movement between relative locations.” Clearly, the Lakotas and Cheyennes’ sense of the Black Hills is embedded in tightly integrated webs of relationship, often described through a language of kinship, where it is impossible to separate specific sites as divisible “points” in a landscape. Each place in the Black Hills flows into another through the actions and movements of the spiritual figures whose own relationships created the very designs or “charters” within which the symbiotic connections of tribal peoples to the area are expressed and experienced in their own life-generating passages through this sacred land.

The geography of the Black Hills is sanctified because it reveals and mirrors fundamental precepts underlying the sacred cosmology of the Lakotas and Cheyennes. The Black Hills and many other sacred places within their reaches express a basic principle of cosmic unity that, in the sacred terminology of the Lakotas, make the Black Hills “the heart of everything that is.” Their highest point, Harney Peak, is the heart, altar, and center of the larger consecrated circle, the Race Track that surrounds them. The Buffalo Gap is a sacred gateway into this sanctified space, while Wind Cave is the opening to the sacred womb and to the larger cavern structure that represents the arteries of the heart or circle. Through the sacred stories and texts enacted in the course of important ceremonial observances, Lakotas and Cheyennes recreate their own genesis by coming
into direct contact with the material manifestations of the spiritual as these appear at significant sites or centers in the Black Hills, which simultaneously serve as an expression of game animals, the four directions, the relations between the celestial, earthly, and subterranean tiers of the universe, and, above all, the circular motion of the divine and everything that is.
Chapter Fifteen

WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK
IN COSMOLOGY AND HISTORY

Whether or not one chooses to acknowledge the sacred meanings the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribal nations attach to the Black Hills, it is impossible to ignore their cultural importance as metaphors and even representations of practical observations. One persistent theme stretching back to written accounts from the early half of the nineteenth century is the notion that the Black Hills was a place where tribal nations gathered from all directions to winter, to hunt, to procure plants, to collect minerals, to trade, and to conduct their religious observances. Another consistent theme is the Black Hills’ landscape, their game animals, plant life, and mineral deposits had interchangeable and interconnected meanings. The complex web of metaphors that surround this region and Wind Cave National Park in particular, not only speak to some of the broader cosmological concepts described in earlier chapters, but they also relate to the lived experiences and history of the peoples who made this region their home.

The purpose of this chapter is to bring together the vast amount material that has been presented so far. It attempts to show how the complex history of the area articulates with tribal cosmologies, and also how it relates to certain European American understandings about the area. Most importantly, it showcases Wind Cave National Park. It demonstrates how its environs, landforms, animal, plant, and mineral resources occupy a significant place in Lakota and Cheyenne cultural knowledge and practice, and it shows how these traditions are affiliated with their contemporary relationship to the park and its environs.

I. THE MOVEMENTS OF ANIMALS, THE SUN, AND THE WINDS

John Ant, William Bordeaux, Nicholas Black Elk, Henry Standing Bear, Jake Herman, John Stands In Timber, James LaPointe, Pete Catches, Rich Two Dogs, Arvol Looking Horse, Wesley Whiteman, and Sievert Young Bear are among many Lakotas and Cheyennes who have spoken or written about tribal understandings of the relationship between the Black Hills and the animals. Pete Catches (and Catches 1990:139), the much revered Oglala spiritual leader, spoke about the Black Hills very specifically in relation to the bison. As he put it:

You see, our people are nomadic, we traveled around the Ka Sapa (Black Hills). Being that the buffalo sacrifices his whole life to help his younger brother, the Lakota, the Lakota people stayed close to a buffalo herd. The number of buffalo was into millions and millions. You did not have to look for them. All you had to do was go over the hill and you could run into a bunch.

The metaphoric interchangeability of the bison and the Black Hills is obvious here. People stayed in reach of the Hills, just as they kept in close touch with a herd of bison. “The bison,” according to Nicholas Black Elk (Brown 1992:23), “is the chief of all the animals and represents the earth,

124 Since much of what is covered in this chapter has been presented elsewhere, references are only given for new bodies of information. The reader is advised to consult previous chapters for details and sources.
the totality of all that is.” Just as bison stood as a metaphor for the universe, so by extension did the Black Hills exist as a sacred manifestation of the cosmos. Indeed, Red Cloud (in Allison 1875:191) spoke about the Black Hills as the “Head Chief of the Land.”

Historically, the close relation of the Black Hills to the bison and other game animals was not simply a figurative imagining; it was also a matter of practical observation. The Lakotas euphemistically called the Black Hills their “meat pack,” oiylpeye talo (Hassrick 1964:75, 165). They knew them as the location where certain bison herds overwintered before returning to the surrounding grasslands in the spring to graze with their newborn calves. They also knew the gateways the animals passed through to reach their wintering grounds, and the most famous of these was the Buffalo Gap, which is known as Pte Ta Tiopa [the Door of the Bison Cow], Tatanka Ta Tiopa [The Door of the Bison Bull], or He Okiksahe [the Ridge with a Gap] (Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:94-96; Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:242-245; Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289; Black Elk, C. 1986a:210). Luther Standing Bear (1975:17) described this gateway as one of the most accessible for both animals and humans to enter and leave the Black Hills, and as a result, he indicated that this was a highly desirable camping location for the Lakotas. Henry Crow Dog (Kadlecek and Kadlecek 1981:96) also described it as a gateway where the buffalo left their winter home to reach their feeding grounds around Alliance, Nebraska. As Severt Young Bear (and Theisz 1994:29) said:

All around the Black Hills there is a barrier or rim the non-Indians call Hogback Ridge. There are certain gates around the Black Hills where the buffalo used to enter into the Hills. They would go into those canyons for shelter and remain in the Black Hills until the snow started melting and green grass started showing. Then they would migrate out of the Hills again.

The Lakotas and other tribal nations in the region were astute observers of animal behavior. They knew the habits and rhythms of the animals on whose meat they so heavily depended for their own health and livelihood, and they closely synchronized their year-round travels to follow these movements.

Lakota observations are supported by scores of naturalists who traveled in the Hills before many native species were extirpated and then reintroduced at places like Wind Cave National Park. While local tribespeople saw the movements of the animals as mysterious or wakan, European Americans simply interpreted it as a common practice for animals to take shelter during the winter months in areas with access to good forage. Many locations in the Hills, especially along the southern stretches of the Race Track, were ideal because they typically had less snowfall, storms were not as severe, and there were plenty of canyons, overhangs, dens, and caves for animals to find shelter during inclement weather. A common place for game animals to winter was the Race Track, a landform that occupies much of the eastern half of Wind Cave National Park, and this is true even today. In Lakota, the name Wamaka Ki’inyanke Ocanku translates as “The Running Path of the Animals” (Wawoslata in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:264; Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:289; Black Elk, C. 1992a:208). The area where the Race Track is approached from the Buffalo Gap is called Tatanka makalhpaya [the Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull] (Little Cloud in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:94-96; Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell and Buechel 1978:242-245).

Many Lakota stories about this region of the Black Hills take place during the late fall and winter months. They typically tell about villages facing hunger and sending their hunters to the area to find game, or they speak of culture heroes who bring game to humans who are experiencing privation. Most of the stories relating to this region refer to the uncertainties of
finding game during the winter months and the ambivalence that this potentially life-threatening condition evokes. Most of the stories single out the bison as the principal prey, or else bison appear in a spiritual guise as white buffalo, buffalo women, or crazy buffalo. Indeed, across the entire range of traditional narratives associated with this area, bison occupy the predominant thematic position.

The symbolic associations the Lakotas and Cheyennes drew between bison and winter reveal a sophisticated understanding of this animal. Ernest Thompson Seton (1929:3:677-680), among others, observed that blizzards, probably more than humans, were responsible for the disappearance of many bison herds during years with hard winters. Clearly the Lakotas and Cheyennes knew this too as a matter of practical observation, but they carried it further and connected it to a wider set of cosmological principles and processes. The causal connections the Lakotas made between Waziya, the Old Man, and his grandson, Waziyata, the North Wind, caves, and the movements and health of the bison are an apt illustration of this.

The winter, the time of the year when the North Wind, Waziyata, prevailed was associated with rest and the potential for renewal. It was the season when new life grew inside the womb of the bison and Mother Earth and when the spirits of the bison prepared for their materialized emergence from the cavernous sanctuaries underneath the Black Hills. It was the time of the year bison herds were easily located by their clouds of frozen breath, and, likewise, it was a season when certain caves became visible by the vapors that emanated from their depths. Breath is visible precisely at the time of year when life is taking shape inside the womb of ungulate species, and by extension inside the Black Hills, which symbolized the site of their emergence. It is the place where the nagi [spirit] becomes attached to a material force, ni [breath], a process that takes place among all land animals but is especially associated in Lakota teachings with bison. Not surprisingly, the Lakotas connected the bison’s beginnings and their own origins to caves. In the Black Hills, where hundreds of cave openings dot the landscape, this association would have been especially pronounced. Wind Cave represents the quintessential expression of this link, not only because of its unusual air movements but also because of its location near the Race Track and Hot Springs, locations where game animals frequently congregated in the winter. Thus, it became a central site for stories of human and animal emergence.

Yet, winter was also, paradoxically, a time of death, the season when bison often wasted away and died, when Waziya, widely known for his stinginess, kept the bison to himself until Falling Star or Blood Clot Boy killed him and forced his offspring into a cave, which was made visible by the emanations of their frosty breath. Bison were admired for their strength and endurance because they faced and stood up against this wind even during the most severe blizzards. As tough as they were, they still sometimes succumbed to its force, and even when they survived, the North Wind took its toll on their nutritional status.

In this context, it is appropriate to say something about the multiple metaphorical uses of the term wasicun. Although today it is commonly used as an ascription for white people, it appears to have had a complex set of metaphorical meanings in the past. In a group interview James Walker (1980:108-109) conducted with Thomas Tyon, William Garnett, Thunder Bear, and George Sword with James Walker, the following was recorded:

White is the favorite color of Waziya. The white people are like Waziya. They have no mercy on the red people.

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125 On cold subzero days in mid-winter, some of the early rangers at Wind Cave National Park looked for cave openings because this was the time when the condensation arising from their depths was visible (Bohi 1962:443).
Wa is the white of Waziya (the snow). Wasicun is the tontonsni of the snowstorm. White men are called wasicun.

There are several interesting connections here. First of all, Waziya has been mistaken by several different writers, from Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:6) to Helen Rezatto (1989:18-20), to be a white person in a European American sense. While many Lakota stories describe him as white in appearance, they are not referring to someone of European American derivation but rather to their fabled and interconnected figures of winter, old age, and the North Wind. Like Waziya, Europeans embodied the sicun or spiritual potency of the snow and winter, which starved the bison and took other life-giving forces away. Linea Sundstrom (Personal Communication, July 12, 2002) also reminds us that the word wasicu is commonly translated today as “takes the fat,” which many Lakota and Dakota speakers interpret as referring to the avaricious nature of European Americans, who like Waziya, take and hoard the “fat” of animals, the land, and the people. As mentioned before, bison wasted away over the winter and lost so much of their fat content that their meat was no longer edible. By extension, the people suffered when the meat from the animal they so depended upon lost its nutritional value.

Equally dangerous to tribes were unseasonably mild winters. During these winters, bison often stayed on the grasslands, failing to return to their customary winter haunts where tribes typically established their homes during this season. In 1832-1833, Lakotas who still lived along the valley of the Missouri River faced starvation when the bison did not arrive and remained on the upland grasslands, days away from their villages (Clow 1995). Hard winters with enough cold and snow to force bison into their usual seasonal movements were favored because these winters made it easier to capture bison using driving techniques. Winter conditions such as these brought the bison, health, and life to the people, as Eagle Louse (1939) and Left Hand Bear (in Hot Springs Star 1938) clearly indicated after their summer encampments at Wind Cave National Park in 1937 and 1938.

In the early historic period, before the arrival of horses, the season between late fall and early winter was probably the time of the year when local tribes hunted bison using pound and jump techniques. The rolling terrain and sheltered recesses of Wind Cave National Park and its nearby surroundings would have been excellent locations to hunt bison in this manner during the winter-time. Theodore Binnema (2001:35) argues that early winter may have been the best season to hunt bison because, as he puts it:

Even the almost incessant winds helped hunters. Bison have a keen sense of smell and can be difficult to approach when the weather is calm or the winds very light and shifting. A consistent wind was particularly useful to communal hunters, who sometimes required several days to coax a bison herd to a kill site.

Bison are very sensitive to the movement and direction of the winds. They face the north winds and the blizzards of winter, and they move south towards warm Chinook winds to find snow free areas to graze during the winter. In the spring and summer, they appear impervious to the west winds’ thunder, lightening, and hail (Lott 2002:84), and this gets expressed in some of the complicated ideas that associate summer storms and hail with bison in Lakota and Cheyenne cosmologies. The Lakotas’ connection of bison to the Wind, Tate, but especially his sons, Waziyata and Wiyoheyata makes sense given what is known about the behavior of bison in their natural state.

Winter and its wind, Waziyata, were fickle. In some years, Waziyata brought so much snow and ice to the open plains that bison were unable to uncover the grass and water below, and many
died, although the losses never matched those of domesticated ungulates. Unlike cattle, bison have the ability to dig through moderate levels of snow and ice to retrieve their nourishment. They are even known to dig through dirt and sand to uncover hidden sources of water, an ability that some tribal stories link to their emergence from springs. Even in moderate winters, bison quickly use up the reserve fats they store over the summer from grazing on the rich grasses of the prairies, and by early spring, they lose most of the fat that makes their meat nutritious and palatable. This is probably why they were hardly hunted during the late winter and early spring months, and why local tribes preserved their meat with its fat in a dried form when it was still nourishing from the late summer to the early winter. In the end, Lakota notions of Waziya and parallel ideas among the Cheyennes about Hoimaha give evidence of the paradoxical associations between winter and the bison.

Along the Race Track, especially in the southern reaches of the Hills, the generally milder temperatures and lesser amounts of snow cover meant that bison had extended access to good forage, including rich stores of cool season grasses that have a second growth period in the early fall months. Ricegrasses also provide excellent forage for wildlife in the fall months, and one variety, the rough-leaf [Oryzopsis asperifolia], keeps its green leaves through the winter (Larson and Johnson 1999:418), a fact that may have had symbolic significance for some local tribes. Canada wildryes also mature late, but their nutritional value rapidly declines after flowering (Ibid:404). There were also dried stores of late sprouting warm season grasses, the nutritious blue and hairy gramas and the buffalograsses. Importantly, the rich grassland environment of the southern portions of the Race Track extended the period bison and other ungulates could be hunted, and its lighter snow cover and generally level surface probably created conditions that made animals easier to reach during the early months of winter as well.

Locations along the Race Track, including those in the area of Wind Cave National Park, were highly valued, not only because these were common winter haunts for bison, but also because other animals would be available for food if bison failed to return. The season from late fall to early spring was the primary time of the year to hunt elk and mule deer, which commonly inhabited the Race Track and the rocky recesses of the Hogback. Blacktail Creek and Elk Mountain were no doubt given their identities because these were areas frequented by the species after whom they were named. As mentioned several times before, most of the Lakota stories associated with the Wind Cave area take place during the winter months, which matches the time of year the tate hunted for elk and deer. Whether Lakota winter camps were in the park at places like Wind Cave Canyon, at nearby locations along Beaver Creek and the Fall River, or outside the Hills along the Cheyenne and White rivers and even as far away as the Platte, it is clear that this was an area to which small groups of hunters came during the late fall and early winter months to find game (see Chapters Seven and Ten). The lands that make up most of the park’s properties were clearly understood as a game reserve. They were a favorite winter hunting ground for the Lakotas, an area that once held large numbers of bison. Even after this animal disappeared from the region, it was still rich in other sorts of large and small game, including several different species of birds commonly taken for food. The snowbird (Junco hyemalis), which appears in the Lakota origin story, is one of these and abundant in the area of Wind Cave National Park. In the early 1970s, a Lakota elder, Moses Circle Bear (1971:12,14), would echo these associations when he talked about the Black Hills as a safety net, a place the people could always count on to find food.

Also, the rich grasses found along the Race Track would have made this a good place to graze horses during the winter months. By the end of the eighteenth century, this became an important consideration as local tribes adopted these animals and amassed huge herds for their own use and trade. Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:6), however, commented about the lack of sufficient
grass in the Black Hills to supply the herds of large camps for extended periods of time. While it is true that the Hills would not have been well suited to supporting the pastoralist adaptations of large populations year-round, there was sufficient forage to support smaller herds during the winter months when tribes broke up into their band groupings and stayed near the Hills. Locations along the Race Track and some of the Hills’ lower elevation valleys offered prime winter grazing conditions for horses. In fact, many American observers in the 1870s made special note of the abundance of high quality grasses for grazing cattle and horses in this area. And in the 1880s, several large ranches in the area raised thoroughbred racehorses that grazed on lands, which eventually became part of Wind Cave National Park. Since there is no evidence that local tribes ever maintained large concentrated settlements inside the Hogback and along the Race Track during the winter months when they typically used the area, and since the only time of the year they did gather in large groups was in the summer during the season of communal bison hunting, which took place at locations outside the Black Hills, Denig’s point is moot. It does, however, have some bearing on those populations who specialized in horse pastoralism and who eventually migrated to the southern Plains. But it has little merit for the groups, who remained in the vicinity of the Hills and whose economies were more oriented towards hunting for subsistence or trade rather than horse raising (see Chapter Seven).

Throughout the year, local tribes timed the movements of the animals and their own annual subsistence and ceremonial cycles to the position of the sun and other stars. When the star of the Buffalo Gap (Capella) began moving towards the Sun on Lakota star maps, it signaled a time when the bison left their winter homes at the Race Track and moved to the open grasslands with their newborn calves. As mentioned before, this is one of only a few stars in the northern hemisphere that does not set and that moves towards the horizon in the months of spring and summer and returns towards the zenith in the fall. In the months after the vernal equinox, some Lakotas began to make preparations for a ceremonial pilgrimage into the Black Hills that led up to the performance of the Sun Dance near Bear Lodge Butte and other locations in and around the Black Hills. Other Lakotas entered the Hills during the late spring and early summer to cut lodgepoles, to collect food and medicinal plants, to fast and carry on other prayerful observances. Arvol Looking Horse (in Parlow 1983a:42) describes this journey as follows:

The Lakota originally had an archetypal annual sacred journey of the people following the buffalo around the plains. The buffalo are migrating north April-May and the people are coming from the winter camps. The buffalo lead them through Buffalo Gap up the lower section of the Black Hills and they get to Mount Harney. The buffalo, the principle representative of the sun in the animal world, and the incarnation of solar power and divine generosity, led the people on the archetypal sacred annual journey from place to place. Each place corresponding to constellations in which the sun has just entered… The constellations are visible scriptures of the people. The land forms are visible scriptures telling the same stories during the day. As the people followed the buffalo, they were literally on the sunspath. What the sun was doing was going through those different constellations which correspond to these earth forms. In terms of spiritual attunement, following the sunspath is living in harmony with the will of the Creator…The sun is going clockwise and the Lakota are being led by the buffalo counterclockwise, they are following the sunspath on the earth.

In the month after the summer solstice, when the Sun arrived in the constellation Mato tipila, groups started to leave the interiors of the Hills to travel to the places where they gathered together in large encampments for the Sun Dance near Sundance Mountain, for meetings at Bear

126 Charlotte Black Elk (1992b:50-51) states that the Buffalo Gap star is Capella, although it is located on the opposite side of the celestial race Trace Track where the star Rigel is placed on Lakota star maps. When the Sun rose in Rigel, bison left the Hills through the Buffalo Gap and the Lakotas entered the Hills’ interiors to conduct their ceremonial observances.
Butte where they deliberated on military strategies and engaged in trade, and for making preparations to commence the wani-sapa, the large communal hunts, which took place at the end of the summer on the grasslands beyond the Hills. These hunts were held over a period of a few months, after which time the bands went their separate ways, traveling to trading posts to secure their supplies and returning to the locations where they conventionally encamped over the winter months. November, when the Big Dipper and the Milky Way start to move closer together (Lone Wolf in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:135-136; in Buechel and Manhart 1998:231-233), was the month bands established their semi-permanent winter campsites at locations where they typically remained for the next four to five months. Many of these were situated at the base of the Hogback or along the Race Track, including locations near Wind Cave.

The careful observation of the sun’s movements in relation to landforms and constellations fits Andrew Isenberg’s characterization of Plains Indian bison hunting as a “solar economy.” As he writes:

In the summer, the shortgrasses of the western plains transformed solar energy into carbohydrates, the bison transformed the grasses into protein...Because the nomads’ economy ultimately relied on solar energy, it was renewable. But the nomadic economy was limited by the ability of shortgrasses to produce carbohydrates. Drought, for instance, interfered with the predictable operation of the nomads’ solar economy (Isenberg 2002:68).

The Lakotas clearly understood that the migrations and habits of bison were also closely related to the movements of Wi, the Sun. They not only timed their own movements according to the sun’s position, but they also incorporated this awareness into some of the symbolism associated with their Sun Dances. The circle around the outer edge of the dance area was known as the “Sun Trail” or “Sunspath,” and the sunflower [Helianthus annus] was used in this ceremony because, like the bison, it followed the sun (see Chapter Twelve).

The Cheyennes also had a similar annual cycle that followed the movement of game in and around the Black Hills. The Northern Cheyennes, some of whom continued to camp in the vicinity of the southeastern Black Hills, used the area in and around Wind Cave National Park for hunting bison, elk, and deer in the winter as well. Like the Lakotas, they set up their winter campsites in the low elevation, sheltered valleys of the Black Hills, dispersed in the early spring, and then regrouped in the summer for ceremonies, communal bison and pronghorn hunting, and large-scale war parties to protect existing territories and/or establish new ones. The timing of some of these events was also coordinated with the position of the stars (Schlesier 1987:15, 25). Most of the details of this knowledge have been lost, but Karl Schlesier (Ibid:15, 25, 83-87, 104-105) has written about a fifty-six day ceremonial cycle that was coordinated with the risings of Aldebaran, Rigel, and Sirius, stars also important to the Lakotas in signaling the time for some of their summer ceremonies.

Particular kinds of meteorological events, especially cloud formations and wind directions, also marked changes in the movements of animals and the annual living cycle of tribes (Young Bear in Parlow 1983a:26-27). For the Lakotas, as one example, the month of November was marked not only by the position of certain stars in the night sky, but also by the appearance of

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127 Throughout the northern plains are the remains of stone cairns, wheels, and alignments that appear to have functioned in astronomical observances (Kehoe and Kehoe 1977; Hall 1985; Liebman 2002). Most of these stone formations were constructed in prehistoric times, but many historic tribes continued to use them as sites for fasting and vision seeking. Not coincidentally, 28 radiating stone lines make up the famous Medicine Wheel in Wyoming and 28 poles are used to construct the Cheyenne and Lakotas’ Sun Dance lodges (Hall 1985:181-182). Twenty eight days also make up the lunar month for most tribes in the Plains.
Stone Boy’s clouds over the gateways to the Black Hills and the prevailing direction of the wind. When Waziyata, the North Wind, started to gain prominence, his dominating presence signaled the bison to take shelter inside the Buffalo Gap. It was here, just above the Race Track at Wind Cave, that the bison, returned to their underworld home, a cave that released breath and from which new life came into the world in the spring, probably after the time the sun started to rise over the Buffalo Gap, emerging from the underworld where it spent much of its time with its friends, Tatanka and the Pte Oyate, over the winter months.

The spring and fall equinoxes also coincided with the timing of the golden eagle’s return to and departure from the Black Hills. Golden eagles (the chief of the wingeds), which are often symbolically equated with bison (the chief of the animals, four-leggeds), typically frequent the eastern side of the Black Hills (the chief of the land), arriving here in the spring and leaving in the fall, and this probably did not go unnoticed in determining the locations and seasons of tribal eagle trapping. The commencement of this trapping may have been coordinated with the position of the sun too, and this would make sense given the fact that the eagle is understood as a messenger of the Sun, Wi, and carries the ton of his rays in its tail feathers. The arrival and departure of other avian species in the area were also harbingers of seasonal change and the movements of other animals. (Buechel 1970:423; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:117, 277-278). Nighthawks, which are highly sacred to the Cheyennes and the Lakotas, were the last to arrive in the spring after the grasses started to green and the buffalo began to put on fat and the last to leave in the fall when, like the bison, they began to leave for their winter homes (Dorsey, J. 1894:500; Buechel 1970:444; Moore 1986:182-184).

Both tribes also saw tension between the Sun and the North Wind or Winter (see Chapters Nine and Ten). The Lakotas connected the two in very specific ways, and they did so especially in their understanding of the bison’s movements and life cycle. Fire carried the sicun of the sun, and when the force of the sun came into contact with certain stones (i.e., flint), it released its energy in fire and heat. As in Lakota conceptions of the workings of the sweatlodge, the interactions between fire, water, and stone release ni, the breath of life. In a similar way, as the sun moved higher in the sky during the spring, it triggered birth by releasing new life from the interactions of its rays with stone and water. This solstitial shift around the time of the vernal equinox marked the season of birthing, the actual material emergence of bison and other animals. It also meant the reign of Waziyata had ended and the warm southerly winds of Itokagata were about to return.

The Sun remained much of the winter with the bison, his companions, in their stone home under the earth. When the Sun filled the sky during the daytime, or when he rose higher in the sky after the vernal equinox, the bison left their sheltered retreats and followed him in their migrations to the open grasslands. As part of this seasonal movement, the Lakotas clearly connected the Buffalo Gap and Wind Cave to each other and attached a shared meaning to both. They specifically associated the Sun’s arrival at the Buffalo Gap with the bison’s emergence from their underground winter homes in the Black Hills and their return to the grasslands (Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a:42-43; Black Elk, C. 1992; Goodman 1992). They believed that the bison followed the movements of their companion the Sun, leaving their cave homes as their friend moved farther north after the vernal equinox. As the Sun rises higher in the sky, and by analogy when a fire is lit, it drives Waziya away and back to his underworld abode (Black Elk in Brown 1971:314; Walker 1980:245; Goodman 1992:7).

128 Another associate of the Sun, the porcupine, may have been systematically hunted at this time of the year. Curiously, the quills of the porcupine, like the tail feathers of the eagle, hold the ton of the sun’s rays. In Cheyenne and Lakota traditions, this animal is also connected to the Wind Cave/Buffalo Gap area.
As discussed before, the Lakotas understood the universe to be in a constant state of motion, revolving around the axis of a horizontal elliptical plane and a vertical one. The intersections of the planes, the points where they cross or connect are powerful positions charged with energy and movement. When the days and seasons change, the planes come together, bringing celestial and subterranean spaces into contact with each other. In the process, powerful forces are released. One of these junctures takes place sometime around the vernal equinox, a time when the sun may have risen through and been aligned with the v-shaped land formation known as the Buffalo Gap. If so, this would have marked a wondrous and joyous event to the people who lived within its reaches, something that could have been readily observed from locations at Wind Cave National Park, atop Elk Mountain, where Wind Cave is situated, or farther north along Rankin Ridge at what is now Lookout Point.\(^{129}\) Again, it is important to note that the Lakotas marked this event, and still do so, with a special pipe ceremony around the 21st of March. The dates and years when alignments might have taken place here need to be determined, but the fact remains that the Lakotas saw a relationship between the higher movement of the sun in the spring and the migrations of bison to the grasslands through the Buffalo Gap from their home at Wind Cave. According to Arvol Looking Horse (quoted above), the Lakotas traveled through the Buffalo Gap on their sacred journey to Harney Peak, following a path that very likely took some of them across the lands of Wind Cave National Park.\(^{130}\)

The Cheyennes may have done so as well, but there is nothing in the literature that speaks to this directly. One might hypothesize, however, that the Buffalo Gap\(^{131}\) area may have been associated with one of their four sacred pillars or mountains, the place where the Southeast Wind, Hesenota or (Esseneta’he) lived, a Maheyeno who symbolized the coming of spring and whose primary messenger was the Sun and his associates the golden eagle and the porcupine. As revealed earlier (Chapters Nine and Ten), this might be the location for the origin of the Me e no’ist st, the quill-workers guild among the Cheyennes. Both the Cheyennes and the Lakotas equate porcupine quills and the tail feathers of the eagle with the Sun, the special friend of the bison. By extension, both connect porcupine quills, eagle plumes, and bison hair with the breath of life. The yellow hair of young calves is especially equated with the sun. Here again is another example of the complex synergistic relationships between natural forces, topography, and animals. Also, as discussed earlier (Chapters Nine and Twelve), each of the Cheyennes’ sacred winds is associated with a distinct mountain where the spirits of different sets of animals have their homes, which in Cheyenne traditions are also identified with caves.

When the Thunderbirds reawakened later in the spring, many Lakotas traveled towards the home of these sacred birds in the high elevation interiors of the Hills to conduct ceremonial observances and cut lodgepoles as well as gather a host of different plants for medicine and food. In doing so, they followed well-established trails to reach the higher elevations. These included routes that followed Stockade-Beaver Creek on the western side of the Hills, Spearfish Creek in the north, and Rapid and French creeks on the east. In the south, there were two common routes: the Red Canyon and Pleasant Valley or Shirrtail Canyon trails and another by way of the Buffalo Gap and Beaver Creek, a route that would have taken them across park properties. Some Lakotas continued to follow and camp along the routes across Wind Cave National Park after 1877, when

\(^{129}\) This needs to be tested, of course, and calculations made for the dates when the sun is aligned with the Buffalo Gap and how this has changed over time. Even if there is not an exact alignment today between the timing of the vernal equinox and the date the sun rises through this gap, such a correspondence may very well have existed in the past.

\(^{130}\) Charlotte Black Elk (1992a) writes about the Lakotas following another passageway into the Hills to perform ceremonies at Harney Peak. Given the fact that Lakota camps encircled the Hills, it is likely that local groups entered the Hills at the any one of the gateways closest to their winter camps.

\(^{131}\) Linea Sundstrom (2002, Personal Communication) needs to be acknowledged for suggesting this possible connection.
they returned to the Hills each summer to cut their lodgepoles and attend celebrations in local white communities (McAdam 1973; Smith 1973). These were also the routes that some European Americans traveled when they entered the central Hills during the Gold Rush years.

Some local bands also probably traveled to the interior regions along these trails in the fall and winter months to hunt animals whose peltries and hides were at their prime during this time of the year. This would have been particularly true for the Lakotas and Cheyennes whose immediate families were linked by marriage to European American traders and trappers. As revealed earlier, Walter Jenney and Henry Newton described how blazes were set in the Hills’ interiors to mark trails when these were covered by snow. Again, the familiar route that crosses Wind Cave National Park along Beaver Creek and its tributaries may have been used for this purpose.

In the late summer, when the bison were well established on their summer grazing grounds outside the Hills, so were the Lakotas and Cheyennes. Until the 1850s, they were able to follow the herds that left the Buffalo Gap to migrate to their grassland feeding grounds east and south of the Hills towards the upper reaches of the White and Niobrara Rivers. When bison began to disappear from these locations, some Lakotas continued to winter in the area of the Buffalo Gap and Wind Cave because abundant supplies of winter game, notably elk and deer, remained there, but now they had to travel to locations west and north of the Hills, or even as far south as Kansas and Colorado, to hunt bison over the summer months. Even after bison were extirpated from the Buffalo Gap–Wind Cave area, the Lakotas still associated the region with their spiritual presence. The bison were still here but no longer in their materialized form. Their spirits, including Tatanka, the immortal leader of the animals, continued to reside here, however.

It is worthwhile to reiterate here that over time Tatanka and Wi appear to have become more significant than Waziyata and Waziya, as guardians of bison movements. Although the latter two figures never disappeared from Lakota stories and liturgical texts, their relative positioning in Lakota cosmologies seems to have changed (Dorsey, J 1894:468; Walker 1917:91; Herman, n.d.: Wind Cave National Park). This is particularly apparent in relation to Wind Cave where some of the earliest traditions make explicit connections between the subterranean recesses of the Black Hills and a white, giant figure, while many later stories tell of a white bison bull, which is often the symbol for Tatanka. In fact, this cosmological shift may have followed the historical change in the seasons bison were typically hunted. Prior to the widespread adoption of horses and the commercial marketing of their robes, bison were usually hunted in the late fall and early winter through driving techniques at locations with natural enclosures or precipices. In fact, just south of the park is the Sanson Buffalo Jump, where bison were hunted in this manner during prehistoric times. By the early nineteenth century, the customary time of the year to hunt bison was the late summer and early fall when the herds congregated on the open plains at locations outside the Black Hills. After 1850, bison were no longer even present in sizable numbers on the eastern side of the Black Hills and in the vicinity of Wind Cave.

As discussed in Chapter Seven, the Black Hills fit into the annual cycles of tribes in a number of different ways. When the Lakotas and Cheyennes wintered along the Missouri River, they approached the Hills during the seasons of communal bison hunting from late summer to late fall. Since bison hunts took place on the grasslands surrounding the Hills, tribal parties would have entered them only for special kinds of procurement, such as lodgepole collection and bear hunting. Similarly, in later years, when bands wintered at agencies located on the White or Platte rivers, they generally entered the Hills for specialized purposes from the late spring to the late fall. Those whose summer bison hunting grounds were located in the Powder-Tongue River country often stayed at locations in and around the Hills when they traveled back and forth from their winter settlements at the agencies. These travels generally took place in the spring and the fall. The groups, however, who wintered in and around the Hills left their reaches in the summer months to hunt on the open plains.
When bison were nearly extinguished on the northern plains, Lakotas and Cheyennes believed that they had not died out but had simply returned to their underground cavern homes from which they would reemerge someday to repopulate the earth’s surface. From a Lakota perspective, this followed a perfectly natural part of the bison’s short-term and long-range cycles, in which their numbers and locations fluctuated with climatic changes in the region -- a fact attested to in the archaeological and historical record of the Great Plains (Clow 1995:259-262; Isenberg 2002:27). Again, when bison were reintroduced in the Black Hills at Wind Cave National Park in 1913, this event probably did not go unnoticed, nor would it have been unexpected. After all, Wind Cave was a major portal to and from their underworld home, and so logically, this would be the place they would first reappear. This event was certainly consistent with tribal beliefs, and it may have even reaffirmed the conviction that Wind Cave was the origin home of the bison. Nor is it fortuitous that some Lakotas would link the story of their own emergence to this particular cave since they saw their own identity and origin as closely tied to the Pte Oyate, the Buffalo Nation. Like their bison progenitors, many Lakotas returned every winter to the sheltered recesses of the Hills. Winter was the season when tribes were the most sedentary and when the earth was at rest, covered with a blanket of snow and ice that took on appearances similar to the crystalline formations inside caves, the home of the first immortal buffalo man, Waziya, and his grandson, Waziyata, the North Wind, who directed the movements of the bison and their close human relatives (See Chapters Ten and Fourteen).

Besides bison, many other animals are associated with the lands that now make up Wind Cave National Park. Indeed, one could argue that all of the animals have a connection to this region, insofar as they gathered here for the Great Race whose outcome determined the nature of animal and human relations. However, as pointed out in the last chapter and also in Chapter Ten, the animals of greatest significance in this story are those who sided with humans, notably the magpie and crow. Both of these birds are closely linked to bison in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions because they were able to tell humans the whereabouts of the large herds.133 The coyote and wolf were also allied with humans in the Great Race, and both of these carnivores are also linked with bison. In Lakota cosmologies, all four of these species share with the bison a special connection to the north wind. These animals were closely associated with Waziya, probably because their own movements were dictated by the migrations of the bison on whose meat they also depended. The wolf plays an important role in the Lakotas’ emergence story as an accomplice of Iktomi who enticed Tokahe and other humans to leave their underground home at Wind Cave. In Cheyenne traditions, wolves and coyotes occupy highly revered positions because they are seen as the sacred messengers of the Maiyun (see Chapter Ten). In the early twentieth century, wolves were extirpated from their homes in the area of Wind Cave National Park through a systematic policy of extermination by local ranchers and federal agencies, and no attempts have been made to reintroduce them to the area where they were once very plentiful.

In the early half of the nineteenth century, Wind Cave National Park and its surrounding environs, including the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs, remained ideal locations for winter settlement because of their easy access to game, notably, bison, elk, deer, and pronghorn. The region offered other necessary amenities, including access to good shelter, wood, fresh water, and even forage for small herds of horses. Even in later years, when bison were extirpated from the Black Hills, this area remained rich in game until European Americans reduced local game populations in their sport, subsistence, and commercial hunting. After 1874, when European Americans began to settle this region, they soon came to recognize the advantages of the area’s milder winter climate, fine grasses, and potable waters. They homesteaded along the nearby Fall

133 Indeed, there are a host of birds that have special associations with bison in Lakota traditions, and some of them are named after the bison, such as Pte gopeca [Northern Harrier], Ptehin 'cicilla [Killdeer], Pteya 'hpa [Cowbird], and Pte'gaglouca [grasshopper sparrow].
River and along Beaver and Highland creeks, and they ran their cattle and horses on the open range that covered park properties until this use was prohibited. They also gathered timber and plant foods in the area and hunted here, and it is probably not a coincidence that most of their stories about Wind Cave and its discovery involve hunters and hunting too. Indeed, European American ranchers who settled here tended to fare better at this location during the years of severe blizzards than some of their comrades who settled in the grasslands outside the Hogback (see Chapters Six and Seven).

II. THE SEASONS OF PLANT AND MINERAL LIFE

While the Black Hills were unquestionably associated with the movement of local animal populations, they were also distinguished by their plant life, which included many species that never died over the winter months. The year-round greenery of the Hills’ abundant and concentrated stands of lodgepole pines, ponderosas, cedars, sages, spruces, and kinnikinick must have underscored the idea that this region had powers to perpetually renew and regenerate life. Kinnikinick or bearberry, the gift of a spirit wolf, comes from the same direction as the North Wind and the bison, and it was a vital ingredient in the tobacco mixtures that local tribes used when smoking the pipe to carry their messages to the spirits and Wakan Tanka or Ma’heo. Trees in the pine family are also identified with the Winter Man, and as indicated before, the name Waziya can be translated to mean “toward the pine,” an association that no doubt underscored this spiritual figure’s immortality. The notion that the Hills embodied immortal forces and spirits is a long-standing one that, at least in terms of the written record, extends back to the mid-nineteenth century. This association no doubt imbued the Black Hills with their reputation for providing tribal people the animal, plant, and mineral resources necessary to maintain and regenerate their own health, and it is probably the principal reason why the Hills remain a preferred site for the collection of many plants used in tribal healing today.

Like animals, plants follow seasonal cycles. The ripening of plants, according to specific seasons, also influenced when and where local tribes moved their locations in any given year. The time around the summer solstice, for example, marked a short window of opportunity for identifying and gathering the wild turnips that grew in abundance at various locations along the Race Track and in the Foothills, including areas of Wind Cave National Park. The early part of summer, from June to July, was the season for harvesting different varieties of fruit, including strawberries, chokecherries, serviceberries, and golden currants. A large number of medicinal plants reach their potency at this time of the year too, and many of these were only found in the Hills. The Wood lily (Cilium philadelphicum), which grows at Wind Cave National Park and is not found on the surrounding grasslands, is one of the medicinal plants used by the Lakotas.

The early months of summer were also the time of the year the Lakotas traveled long distances to reach the interiors of the Hills to secure their lodgepoles, an activity widely acknowledged and reported in historic sources. While most reports document this activity at locations farther north along Spring and Rapid creeks or near the Central Prairies, some of the higher elevation locations at Wind Cave National Park may have been used for this purpose as well. In fact, Luther Standing Bear (1975:16-17) wrote about the processing of ponderosa pine for lodgepoles in the vicinity of the Buffalo Gap. Whether or not lodgepoles were procured regularly on park properties, two major trails, one along the Race Track and the other along

134 In the western plains of South Dakota, the only dense stands of pine were located on the precipices of high elevation formations like the Black Hills, Slim Buttes, and the Cave Hills. Some of these areas are also associated with stories of the old man of winter, Waziya.
Beaver Creek, led tribal parties to locations where lodgepoles were taken in the interiors and where other kinds of plant procurement and ceremonial activity took place in the late spring and early summer.

Other plants, including wild plums, do not ripen until the late summer when most tribal groups were camping in the grasslands near the large herds of bison. Yet, some berries and species of nuts are not ready for picking until the fall, the time when some bands began to return to the Hills for specialized procurement activities and/or to establish their winter campsites in and around the Hills, including areas near Wind Cave National Park. In fact, the Lakotas harvest red-osier dogwood only in the fall and winter months after its stems turn red.

Many of the most important food and medicinal plants for the Lakotas and Cheyennes grow in the neighborhood of Wind Cave National Park (see Chapter Eleven; Appendix B). Even though the vast majority are found in other locations, it can be suggested that those located near Wind Cave, along the Race Track, and on the Tatanka makalpeya, “the Stomping Grounds of the Bison,” are imbued with special potencies and symbolic significance. Again, the Lakotas believe that bison, which are the patrons of healing and herbal medicine, eat plants that are especially healthy and beneficial. The Lakotas and Cheyennes carefully observed the browsing and grazing habits of local animals. They not only connected specific species of plants to the animals who typically consumed them or took shelter in the areas they commonly grew, but they also believed that the plants held the ton or spiritual potency of the animals who were associated with them. The fetid marigold, common around the prairie dog towns of Wind Cave National Park, is associated with the powers of the animal on whose lands it grows, and it is considered a potent herbal remedy. Also located in Wind Cave National Park is the groundplum milkvetch (Astragalous crassicarpus) or pitea tawote [buffalo food], which begins to blossom at the time of the spring equinox in March and it is a highly valued food plant that is associated with the nutritious properties of the bison who ate it.

It can also be suggested that the Wind Cave area and other locations in and around the Hills were singled out for plant collection because of the great variety of species located here. Many of the plants the Lakotas and Cheyennes depended upon were widely scattered on the surrounding plains, rarely appearing in the same concentrations as found in the Hills. The Black Hills, as Joseph Black Elk (in Kadlecik and Kadlecik 1981:81) once remarked, were indeed a vast supermarket where just about everything the Lakotas and Cheyennes required to provision, shelter, heal, and enhance themselves could be found. It is little wonder that after the Hills were seized by the U.S. government in 1877, the Lakotas and Cheyennes continued to return here to collect valued plants and minerals used in their medicines and ceremonies, even traveling to the area from locations as far away as present day Oklahoma.

The times when plants blossomed or bore fruit were also associated with the developmental cycles of animals and other plants, often signaling to tribes when they needed to move and shift their productive activities. The pasqueflower was an important medicine that bloomed at the time of the spring equinox, and its rebirth, which coincided with the season when newborn calves arrived, was celebrated in song and ritual among many of the tribal nations who lived in and around the Black Hills. Its appearance also marked the time tribes started to break up their winter camps and move to other locations in and outside the Hills as they began to carry out the productive activities of the new season. Bearberry was another plant whose leaves were picked for tobacco at the time of the vernal equinox and the birthing of bison calves.

No matter what season groups were in the Hills, they clearly sought out local springs in the area either for drinking water or for healing. The thermal waters just south of Wind Cave
National Park at Hot Springs were widely used by the Cheyennes and the Lakotas. There is abundant archaeological evidence of campsites in the vicinity of these springs, and this is one area where Lakotas and Cheyennes were reported to return on a continuing and recurring basis after 1877. While their reverence for and use of these thermal waters is the best-documented, other springs have cultural significance too. Springs that emerge out of bluffs and rock outcappings are commonly associated with the spiritual homes of Little People in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions and also with the Double-Woman of the Lakotas, who is an important figure associated with excellence in quillwork. Any site of this order is bound to have spiritual significance and use, and, again, it would not be surprising to learn of such places inside the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park.
While Lakotas and Cheyennes were in the area to draw on the healing properties of the thermal waters at Hot Springs, some no doubt used it as an occasion to travel to nearby areas, including the lands of Wind Cave National Park, to hunt, gather plants and collect mineral resources. Indeed, prior to the acquisition of trade metal and European-made tools, such as axes and awls, the Black Hills would have been a prime location to acquire rock and mineral suitable for manufacturing and ceremonial use. Two locations near Wind Cave National Park, Battle Mountain and Flint Hill, were important areas to quarry flint used in the making of arrow points, and several archaeological sites on park properties also reveal quarrying activity.

The gypsum and red clay deposits found along the Red Valley are explained in Cheyenne and Lakota traditions as originating in the Great Race between the animals and humans, and both play a significant role in their ceremonial observances, including the Sun Dance (see chapters Eleven, Fourteen, Appendix C). Gypsum is also the “Sun Arrow” that gave birth to Stone Boy in Cheyenne traditions. This mineral is particularly intriguing because the Lakotas and Cheyennes appear to have understood its appearance and connection to caves in ways that mirror modern-day interpretations in the field of geology. Given their names for it, the Lakotas and Cheyennes clearly had knowledge of gypsum’s properties, especially its ability to absorb and release moisture and its transformative properties under fire and the sun. In the geological history of Wind Cave, for example, gypsum played a critical role both above and below ground, creating and filling fractures in the surrounding limestones that set the stage for the cave’s evolution and its unusual boxwork formations (Pisarowicz 20010:2). The Lakotas seem to have connected the calcite crystals found in gypsum to what appeared inside caves and to ice, while the Cheyennes connected them to frost and hailstones. The Lakotas believed that these crystals were the material out of which the Creator molded the first buffalo qua humans.  Crystalline stones gathered by Lakotas were known to have healing properties and were capable of holding the sicun, the immaterial potentialities of spirits. In fact, there is one report of Lakotas making requests for these stones at Wind Cave in the early part of the twentieth century. Most translucent crystalline stones, including the ones ants bring to the earth’s surface, are believed to have special powers. The Cheyennes imagined the white streaks of gypsum along the Red Valley as the remains of the froth issuing from the lead buffalo’s mouth as she careened around the Hills during the Great Race. At many places along the Race Track, gypsum dissolves into sink holes and crevices, connecting the earth’s surface with the underworld. Quite possibly, Cheyennes and Lakotas may have seen the ribbon-like gypsum formations along the Race Track as sun trails the bison followed when they returned to and emerged from their cavern homes underneath the Black Hills. The Lakotas, however, took this one step further and associated the crystalline structures with the spiritual figures who embodied the sacred potency of winter, notably, Waziya and Waziyatun whose home was located, in some Lakota traditions, at Wind Cave.

Soils brought up to the earth’s surface by badgers, prairie dogs, and voles, especially at locations linked to bison, have considerable cultural significance. These soils are believed to hold the purifying properties of the deep earth, and they are closely associated with ideas of regeneration and renewal, notably the emergence of corn, bison, and people from the underworld.

135 Intriguingly, a number of speleologists have advanced theories in recent years that trace the origins of life to caves. Researchers are now finding that caves have complex microbial formations, and some are starting to link these formations with the possibility of life on other planets (Harrington 2002:69-75). Obviously, the Lakotas and Cheyennes had some understanding of this possible connection when they envisioned the birth of Stone Boy from a stone made of selenite or when they proposed that the first humans were formed from the crystalline formations in caves.

136 This is also consistent with their ideas about water being a fundamental medium by which medicines are transported. In its frozen form, water is saved and stored until it is released by heat, transforming itself into its liquid form or steam. Gypsum has some of these properties too, when heated it liquefies and could have been seen as an especially suitable medium for preserving spiritual essences.
Lakotas and Cheyennes view the prairie dogs as cultivators, animals whose actions set the stage for the growth of plants that humans and bison depend upon (Anderson, R. 1958; Moore, J.1974:164; Standing Bear 1988:158-159). Instead of seeing the areas these animals inhabit as having a negative impact on the environment, a common perception among European Americans who historically made every effort to destroy the tunnels these animals created and the animals themselves, they are looked at positively as having properties necessary for regenerating the soil and producing grasses and plants with nutritive and therapeautic properties. In fact, some recent scientific research has revealed that prairie dog towns actually aerate the earth and create ecological conditions conducive to the growing of certain native grasses and plants. Again, the Lakotas and the Cheyennes clearly recognized and respected these relationships, even though they understood and explained them in different terms (see Chapter Eleven).

If we take the word “science” to mean, as it does in its original and broadest sense, a systematic body of knowledge, then we must acknowledge that the Lakotas and Cheyennes had a specific kind of scientific understanding of their environment and the Black Hills in particular. This understanding was based on careful observation, an awareness of recurring associations between different phenomena, and a tacit recognition of the forces and processes underlying the life forms -- animal, plant, and mineral -- that made up the Black Hills. Different from European American approaches, where science typically separates and isolates the region’s life forms into distinct and differentiated phenomena, such that bison, caves, and winds are discussed in largely independent discourses (i.e., zoology, geology, and meteorology), the Lakotas and Cheyennes recognize these elements as interconnected in processes where beginnings and endings are an inherent part of a singular, cyclical, and circular unity. Whereas European American forms of science reduce these phenomena to their material elements and forces, denying the existence of any spiritualized dimension, the Lakotas and Cheyennes see the materialized appearances of phenomena as manifestations of their spiritualized potentialities. From their perspectives, the Black Hills are not made up of inanimate rocks and minerals or depersonalized plants and animals. Instead, their elements, winds, animal nations, plant communities, and mineral formations have agency; they are intertwined in one another’s existence in such a way that each has the capacity to stand for the other, speak on behalf of the other, and indeed become the other because of their shared spiritual potentialities. Bison, juncos, wolves, gypsum, dogwood, bearberry, winter, snow, the North Wind, and the area of Wind Cave National Park embody common potentialities that differentiate them from the potentialities embodied in blacktail deer, slate, dragonflies, swallows, hawks, thunder, the West Wind, and the Harney Peak region.

The incredible diversity of the Black Hills’ various life forms made them a culturally significant and sacred place to the tribal nations who lived within their reaches. The Hills contained examples of most of the natural resources known to these tribes, representing not only all seven tiers of the Cheyennes’ universe but also the seven universal elements of the Lakotas’. They also embodied the Four Directions, Winds, or Pillars (Mountains) of the Cheyenne and Lakota worlds. The area of Wind Cave was especially connected to the North Wind, the bison, and the breath of life in Lakota traditions, while the Buffalo Gap may have been linked to the Southeast Wind, the Sun, and fire in Cheyenne cosmologies. In sum, the Hills contain the whole and “heart of everything that is;” they are a sentient and conscious presence, a living entity that quintessentially reveals and expresses the principles of cosmic singularity.
III. LANDSCAPES AND CEREMONIAL CYCLES

Many tribal nations in the northern plains kept star maps that were coordinated with significant landforms in the areas they lived and traveled (Chamberlain 1982; Goodman 1992; McCleary 1997). Not surprisingly, for those Lakotas and Cheyennes who remained among the Black Hills, it was distinctive landforms like the Buffalo Gap, Bear Butte, Inyan Kara Mountain, Harney Peak, and Bear Lodge Butte that were coordinated to the position of the sun and the movement of the stars, helping to mark the seasons in their annual rounds and determine where people should stay and travel at particular points in time (Schlesier 1987:15, 25, 83-87, 104-105; Goodman 1992:12-13). Springs and openings to caves set inside or in proximity to mountains were especially significant because they revealed locations where the nadir of the earth in the north and the zenith of the sky in the south come together. The points where earth and sky meet are highly regarded and considered especially sacred because they concentrate and channel the forces and powers of the universe. These portals exist throughout the plains, but one of the largest concentrations is associated with the Black Hills. The area of Wind Cave/Buffalo Gap represents one of the landscapes where this earth/sky juncture takes place.

Springs and caves were significant because these were places that revealed the interactions between stone and water that were understood to produce ni, the breath of life. Like the bison, stone stands for the universe. As Wallace Black Elk (and Lyon 1990:51) writes in reference to the stone bowl of a pipe, “The buffalo gave his life so we could wear his robe. His blood sifted into the ground and became stone. The stone represents the universe. It represents the woman.” It is not hard to envision how, by extension, this fundamental understanding was applied to the Black Hills as a whole. In Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, the stone mass of the Black Hills constitutes a hierophany of subtle yet immense proportions. The highest regions and central granitic core of the Hills are typically associated with stories of sky figures, thunderbirds, and owls. The central area is enclosed by a series of distinct, concentric geologic formations with the Race Track standing out as the most prominent circle. This depression separates the interiors from the Hogback and the surrounding grasslands along the Cheyenne River. Reading tribal stories associated with the topography of the Hills proper, it can be argued that they represent different stages in the life cycle. The innermost circle is the place where the sky and earth come together, mediated by the fertility of the thunders whose actions bring about the conception of new life that is incubated in the vast cavern formations underneath the Black Hills. Here, life emerges from its spiritual form at the openings of caves and springs to take on its physical shape. The Race Track and the adjoining Hogback can be seen as transitional zones, the liminal, betwixt and between spaces where the process of materialization undergoes its completion. It is here that the merger of spirituality and materiality is finalized in the birthing and nursing of newborn bison calves. The outlying grassland and river areas represent the places where life undergoes its maturation and growth. Once completed, it returns to its source or origin in the underworld and sky. The interiors of the Hills, associated with owl figures, symbolize death, but these same areas also signify beginnings with the arrival of the thunderbirds. Together, they signify the cosmic singularity, the inter-connectedness of life and death.\(^{137}\)

In this schemata, the outlier formations, such as Bear Butte, Bear Lodge Butte, and Inyan Kara Mountain, stand apart from the reproductive structure that symbolizes the formation of the Black Hills proper. For the Lakotas, these symbolically constitute the head of a bison as opposed to its body. The first two landforms are connected to stories of bears and events focused predominantly on healing and spiritual renewal. Just as the bear stands outside Lakota

\(^{137}\) Linea Sundstrom (1990) alludes to this life cycle model in her exhaustive work on rock art in the southern Hills, but she does not fully some of its develop its metaphorical implications.
classifications of most other animals, so do the two sites symbolically associated with them. In Cheyenne ceremonial traditions, Bear Butte, as represented in the Lone Tipi, stands apart from the Black Hills represented by the circular dance enclosure of the Animal Dance and the Sun Dance. For the Cheyennes, Bear Butte is the original creation site which guards and stewards regenerative processes in the Black Hills and the surrounding plains.

In another tradition, which the Cheyenne and Lakota share, a human man marries a Buffalo Woman whose people live underneath the earth and consume human flesh. Ultimately, the Buffalo People have a race against each other in their human and bison forms at the Race Track to determine which of them will be the hunter and the prey. It is through the death and blood of the bison that human life is born and perpetuated, as in Little Cloud’s story of a mysterious event that took place at the Buffalo Gap. The place and the event are one. The bison are not only born out of the Black Hills, but they are the Hills. Quoting Nicholas Black Elk (from Brown 1992: 13), this land, “the heart of everything that is,” is synergistically united with the bison, the “totality of all that is.” Both the Black Hills (the “Head Chief of the Land” in Red Cloud’s words) and the bison (the “Chief of the Animals” according to Black Elk) are situated within a circle that is mirrored in the sky in a constellation known by the Lakota as the Race Track, Ki inyanka ocanka, or the Sacred Hoop, Cangleska wakan. Inside this celestial circle is another constellation, Tayamni, a figure that represents an animal with stars forming the outline of its ribs, backbone, and tail (see Chapter Fifteen).

In yet another Lakota narrative, the winds, Tate, and his sons, the direct descendants of Taku Skanskan, bring movement and order to life-giving processes within the sacred circle that one of the earth’s first born creatures, Waziya, creates. His grandson, the North Wind, Waziyata, governs the movements that bring “breath” and the continuing rebirth of the Pte Oyate, the Buffalo people, from their subterranean home at Wind Cave. Also, in the story cycle of Wicalhp Hinhpaya [Falling Star], told by Nicholas Black Elk, different parts of the Black Hills are united through the hero’s travels, which transverse locations from the Race Track where Waziya’s offspring survives in a cave to the high interiors where the Thunderbirds breed their young. This is also true in the Cheyenne versions of the Falling Star. In a number of Lakota stories and liturgical texts, Wind Cave, the cave of Waziya, represents the nadir of the Hills (or universe) and the region around Harney Peak, the home of the Thunders, is the zenith (see Chapter Fifteen).

The synergistic unity of the Black Hills with its animals, plants, minerals, landforms, and stars is also recreated in the Sun Dance, which in Cheyenne traditions is seen by some as a dramatization of the Race Track Story. Many aspects of the Cheyenne Sun Dance symbolically represent the physical environment of the Black Hills, and this may apply to the Lakota Sun Dance too. In reference to the Lakota Sun Dance, Arthur Amiotte (1987:78) writes: “Perhaps in their minds they are returning to that mythical time at the beginning of the world, to the sacred lodge of the Pte Oyate (Buffalo People, the ancestors of the Lakotas) that existed originally underneath the world, to a recreation of that sacred spot through which the Buffalo People came into this world, and the other beings with them.” For many Lakota people, today, that sacred spot is the region of the Buffalo Gap, the Race Track, and Wind Cave (see Chapters Twelve and Fifteen).

Like the bison’s progenitor, the Black Hills, the Sun Dance generates its power by recreating an axis mundi that brings together the forces of the sky, earth, and the four directions. Through its performance, the Sun Dance generates renewal and simultaneously wakan as an ultimate state

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138 Remember that the Lone Tipi in the Cheyenne Sun Dance, which represents Bear Butte, stands outside the lodge circle where the regeneration actually takes place.
of goodness and well-being. Indeed, the association of the Hills’ high elevation interiors with the thunders recalls John Moore’s apt description (1996:225-226) of the Cheyenne Sun Dance as the recreation of an “enormous fertility structure” that makes up a spring thunderstorm on the plains. In the performance of Sun Dances by Lakotas and Cheyennes, the sacred tree holds the nest of the thunderbird in its fork, possibly mimicking the nest believed to exist in the Black Hills near Harney Peak. The base of the tree is placed in a ritually prepared hole that is fed with buffalo fat and other offerings, representing the underworld and caves. The tree, as an axis mundi, ties the two together in a manner not too dissimilar to the way these tribes understand the relationship between the high reaches and underground worlds of the Black Hills (see Chapters Twelve and Fifteen). Although the first Sun Dances performed by the Lakotas and Cheyennes are widely believed to have taken place near Sundance Mountain on the northwestern side of the Hills, both tribes have stories which associate the origin of the dance among the bison with either the Buffalo Gap or a cave, which can be easily read as Wind Cave. The area of Sundance Mountain and the Buffalo Gap share certain geological similarities. At both locations, seams of gypsum dissolve into sink holes and crevices (one of the building blocks in cave formation) that might be conceptualized as openings to the underworld, places where the spirits of bison returned and emerged, following the trails of gypsum around the Race Track.

The Race Track is another landform with powerful synergistic imagery that embraces the animals, the corrals in which they were traditionally hunted, and the Sun Dance. Linea Sundstrom (2001) has written about the symbolism of the Race Track in relation to another Cheyenne ceremony, the Animal Dance or the Massaum. She convincingly shows how this geological depression, with the Buffalo Gap as its eastern opening, could have easily conjured up the image of a hunting corral with its chute facing east, and she also provides evidence for the use of this and nearby areas, notably Cache Butte, for impounding antelope, bison, and other ungulates. In the older ceremonies for bison hunting, which employed the use of a corral, there were special rituals in which a spiritually gifted leader, known commonly as a Buffalo Caller, enticed the bison to the spot where they would be driven into a natural or human-made enclosure. Among the Lakotas, bison callers used special stones to attract the bison that were no doubt intended to remind them of their place of origin in the rocks and the mountains. These were probably gypsum or another crystalline mineral found in or near caves. Among both tribes, the large wing feathers of eagles were often used in summoning bison and other animals -- an association that probably linked the eagle with the bison’s special friend, the Sun (see Chapters Nine, Ten, Fifteen). The Race Track is explicitly linked in Cheyenne beliefs to the Sun Dance, and it is present, at least implicitly, in Lakota traditions and practices too.

The origin of certain sweatlodge ceremonies is also associated in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions to a cave in the southern Hills, and in stories associated with various tribal culture heroes including Tokahe, Motseyoef, Falling Star, Stone Boy, and Blood Clot Boy. Caves and sweatlodges are integrally connected to each other as representing the womb of mother earth, places where life is regenerated. For both tribes, there were close associations between bison, breath, healing, and renewal, and there were specialized sweatlodges run by people who had spiritual partnerships with bison. Indeed, sweatlodge ceremonies are understood to replicate the life generating processes that are known to be associated with certain caves in the Black Hills, and some of these have been held at locations above the cave in recent times (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

Among the Lakotas, there is also special pipe ceremony, which takes place at the Race Track celebrating the arrival of the newborn buffalo calves and initiating a ritual pilgrimage into the Black Hills every seven years. Importantly, the origin of many religious observances among the Cheyennes and Lakotas are connected to stories that are set in geographic locations that are
implicitly or explicitly tied to the Race Track and the Buffalo Gap/Wind Cave area, as well as a host of other sacred landscapes in and around the Black Hills. It is not surprising that so much of their religious life has its foundations in this region since this is a place where diverse life forms come together in a distinct geological setting -- a location that reveals and teaches people the complex workings of the universe (see Chapter Nine and Twelve). When the Black Hills are understood as an immense reproductive structure, nurturing new life forms in their shadows and feeding the surrounding grasslands with their waters and minerals, it is easy to appreciate the meaning of Red Cloud’s allusion to the Hills as the “Head Chief of the Land.”

IV. TRIBAL ALLIANCES AND MOVEMENTS

There is genre of stories in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions about encounters between a human man and a buffalo woman that is associated very specifically with the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park. These stories take on many different narrative forms, and they are found among many other tribes in the region as well. Most of the “Buffalo Woman” stories, as they are commonly called, share fundamental motifs, but they also exhibit important variations. In other words, they appear to be part of a pan-regional storytelling tradition in which certain characters and plots speak to a common stock of symbols that have been retrofitted in various ways to specific tribal histories and landscapes. The stories can be read on a number of different levels too.

On one level, and as told in Cheyenne and Lakota traditions, these stories reveal important truths about social relationships (Moore 1974:197, 198; Rice 1994). Not only do they refer to some of the tensions inherent in the relations between a man’s consanguinal and affinal kinspeople, but they also speak to some of the contradictions implicit in relations between people of different nations, associations that are not only fraught with strife and hostility but also embody opportunities for peaceful exchange and enduring partnerships. They tell how people gain entry into nations and territories other than their own through conflict as well as cooperation. Some of the Cheyenne versions of the story are explicitly connected to the story of the Great Race and the Buffalo Gap, and also to the origins of the Sun Dance and their quillworkers’ guild. Several Lakota renditions of the story are linked to Wind Cave, and at least one Lakota version of the story is associated with the Sun Dance (see Chapters Twelve and Fifteen).

Most of the stories told by the Lakotas and Cheyennes are about relationships that come about through travel and movement into the lands of another nation. In the early decades of the twentieth century, the famous Lakota storyteller, Left Heron, related several detailed versions of the story. In the rendition told to Ella Deloria (1978:86-89; also in Rice 1994:67-126), the hero, a young man, is the son of Waziya (the Old Man) and Wakanka (the Old Woman), who also appear as the original Pte Oyate in George Sword’s stories of Tate and his five sons and the emergence of Tokahe from a cave. The young man first marries a yellow-haired corn wife from the east and then takes a black-haired buffalo woman from the west as a spouse. The buffalo wife leaves him with their son, and the hero follows them to their cavern home in the mountains where he eventually remains among the Buffalo People, who can be seen to signify the nations near the Black Hills. The corn wife is abandoned when the hero takes up his new life, and she can be seen to symbolize the associations of the Lakotas with the Arikara villages and their

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139 As revealed previously, some of the stories found in Cheyenne and Arapaho traditions involve an elk wife and a bison wife. Others, as among the Lakota, include a corn wife and a buffalo wife. And in still more versions, the story speaks only about a buffalo wife.
dependence on them for a trade in corn. This feature of the story mirrors the dilemma the Lakotas would have faced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when deciding whether to live along the Missouri among the neighboring Arikaras and follow a life that included horticulture or one that was given over to the hunting of bison among the Arapahos and other populations farther west. This theme is implicit in many of the Buffalo Wife stories that come from tribal nations who at one time or another practiced horticulture along the Missouri River, and it reflects a basic division in their annual subsistence pursuits between a way of life organized around semisedentary villages and the cultivation of corn and another that entailed the pursuit of bison and other game at some distance away from the villages and their corn fields.

When the hero arrives at the buffalo wife’s home, he confronts hostile in-laws who try to deceive and kill him. Ultimately, he slays the Crazy Buffalo, his father-in-law and his domineering mother-in-law, both of whom take humans hostage and consume their flesh. After he slays the killer bison, who could easily signify the hostile Kiowas and Crows the Lakotas confronted when they first ventured into the Black Hills, he is welcome into the midst of the other peaceable Buffalo People, the friendly Cheyennes and Arapahos, perhaps. Ultimately, he remains in the mountains among the Buffalo Nation, having abandoned his ties to his corn wife and his home in the east. He continues, however, to bring meat, the gift of the Buffalo, to his community of origin.

In the version that Left Heron shared with Ella Deloria (1978:86-89), there are specific clues about the geographic route the hero’s movements take. When the young man chases after his buffalo wife and son, he follows a trail that takes him over a desolate country (much like Badlands), after which he crosses a river (possibly the Cheyenne) and rests at a large oak tree (maybe the Council Oak near Hermosa) before coming to the land of the Buffalo People behind a ridge of hills (very likely the Hogback of the Black Hills). In the version shared with James Walker (1917:183-190, 1983:109-117), he is very explicit about the buffalo’s home being located in the mountains inside a cave, and in another rendition relating to the origin of the Sun Dance (Walker 1917:212-215), the home of the buffalo people is also in a cave far to the west. Although specific place names are never given, the landscape of his travels mirrors the geography between the Missouri River and the Black Hills, and his descriptions of the cave suggest its location in the buffalo’s mountain home, a place later generations of Lakota would identify as Wind Cave.

In the wider scheme of things, it probably does not matter that we give an exact genealogical reckoning of the kinship between the peoples who historically lived in the Hills or reproduce the actual landscape over which the hero traveled. What is significant about the story is that it expresses some of the decisions the Lakotas and other tribal nations faced in making different kinds of adaptations to their neighbors and the landscapes they lived in, especially prior to 1830 when various tribes moved West, temporarily or permanently abandoning their locations along the bottomlands of the Missouri River to take up a life focused primarily on bison hunting in the region of the domal uplift known as the Black Hills.

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140 This could refer metaphorically not only to the bison proper but also to a tribe who specialized in bison hunting. One of these was the Arapaho who were known as Makpia To [Blue Cloud] people in Lakota, but coincidentally, they were also known in French sources as the Gens de Vash [Buffalo People] (Fowler 2001:860). The Arapaho also have a buffalo woman/wife story, but in their story the other wife is an elk woman, revealing a tension not between the river valleys and the high elevation prairies but rather the grasslands and the mountains (Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:388-403). Unlike the Cheyennes and Lakotas, there is no evidence that the Arapahos ever practiced horticulture or spent any length of time on the Missouri River.

141 I believe this might be an example of what Raymond Fogelson (1989:133-134) identifies as the kind of history where peoples’ movements are not traced through chronologically ordered events but embedded in other kinds of narrative structures or what he calls “non-events.”
At least one thousand years ago, people who practiced horticulture began to settle in the valley of the Missouri River. Within a span of approximately three hundred years, 1000-1300 A.D., the valley was occupied by peoples ancestral to the modern-day Mandans, Hidatsas, and Arikaras. Two to three hundred years later, the Siouan-speaking Poncas and Omahas established settlements on this river as well. In early historic times, all of these populations divided their year between crop raising at the villages along the Missouri and the hunting of bison at upstream locations on this river’s various western tributaries. From the early accounts of European Americans and tribal oral traditions, we can deduce that at various points in the prehistories and protohistories of these tribes, some attempted to establish a permanent presence on the upper reaches of waterways fed by the drainage system of the Black Hills. Few of those who continued to practice horticulture remained permanently in the area, unless like the Crows, they abandoned their farming pursuits. No matter how long some of these populations stayed within easy reach of the Hills on a year-round basis, it is clear that all of them traveled to the area for extended periods of time to hunt bison, since ceramic remains associated with various village traditions are found in the region only a short distance from Wind Cave National Park (see Chapter Two).

### Table 11. Periods of Tribal Access to the Wind Cave Area

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ponca</th>
<th>Mandan</th>
<th>Hidatsa</th>
<th>Arikara</th>
<th>Plains Apache</th>
<th>Kiowa</th>
<th>Crow</th>
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In the protohistoric era, from 1730 to 1780, two of the horticultural populations from the Missouri, the Poncas and the Arikaras, appear to have been the ones with the strongest links to the southeastern Hills. These two populations intermarried and hunted together during this
period, and they were reported at locations on the upper reaches of the Missouri’s western tributaries from the Niobrara to the Cheyenne. In their own oral traditions, the Ponca recall hunting and establishing villages on the upper reaches of the White River between 1730 and 1750. They also remember hunting in the Black Hills and knowing of Wind Cave. The Arikaras also have early remembrances and stories of the Black Hills and some of their landforms, including Bear Lodge Butte and Harney Peak, but nothing, at least in the published record, can be specifically tied to the area of the Buffalo Gap or Wind Cave (see Chapter Three).

Two other semihorticultural groups from the valley of the Missouri River, the Mandans and Hidatsas, also had knowledge of the Black Hills preserved in some of their oral traditions, but most of it refers to landscapes in the northern reaches of the Hills. When these tribal nations traveled to the Hills, they usually followed a route by way of the Little Missouri River. There is no historical evidence that they occupied or even hunted in areas south of the main branch of the Cheyenne River. The Crows, an offshoot of the Hidatsas, however, were reported at locations in the southern Hills in later years, but mostly in small groups associated with either the Kiowas or the Arapahos. Or, they were reported in war parties making raids on their Lakota and Cheyenne enemies. Their primary territorial associations with the Black Hills during this period refer to areas on the northern side of the Hills and along the Little Missouri River (see Chapter Three).

In their various travels to the Hills, the semihorticultural populations of the upper Missouri encountered peoples who lived in the region on a year-round basis and whose subsistence economies were focused on the procurement of bison. One thousand years ago and earlier, peoples associated with many different tool assemblages variously known as Besant, Pelican Lake, and Avonlea occupied sites along the major river valleys surrounding the Hills, and most of them spent time inside the Hogback as well. Artifacts associated with these complexes are found at sites scattered throughout the Black Hills, and the knappable material that went into tool-making comes from quarries inside the Black Hills, including those in the neighborhood of Wind Cave National Park, at Battle Mountain, and Flint Hill. Although some scholars have speculated about the ethnic identities of the peoples associated with these tool complexes, there is no evidence that indisputably links any historic tribal inhabitants of the area with its prehistoric residents (see Chapter Two).

Not until the protohistoric era, which began approximately three hundred years ago, is it possible to assign ethnic identities to the peoples of the Black Hills with any degree of certainty. In the southeastern Hills, where Wind Cave National Park is located, there is an impressive body of evidence that links this region to Apache-speaking populations commonly referred to in the historic literature as the Padoucas, and in the archaeological record, as the Dismal River peoples. Some of these people were specialized bison hunters, but many appear to have followed a broader spectrum of foraging strategies and even casual forms of horticulture. All of them used the bow and arrow, and according to some scholars, may very well be descended from peoples associated with the Avonlea complex. In the eighteenth century, they occupied settlements along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River and the upper reaches of the White and Niobrara rivers, and they may have had settlements as far north as the forks of the Cheyenne River just west of the Arikaras on the Missouri. Lithic material from Battle Mountain was uncovered at Dismal River sites now inundated by the Angostura Reservoir. These Apaches were probably among the first to bring horses to the Black Hills at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but fifty years later, Numic-speaking peoples, notably Comanches, Utes, and Shoshones, started to occupy a major role in the region’s horse traffic, and in time, some of the Comanches covered areas within easy reach of the southeastern Hills inhabited by the Padoucas whose name eventually became associated with them (see Chapter Three).
The historical record is unclear about how the territory in the southern Hills, once associated with the Padouca Apaches, came to be linked with the Comanches, but one thing is certain: by the end of the eighteenth century most of the Padoucas had disappeared from the region as a distinct ethnic body. Some appear to have remained, however, as small remnant groups within the ranks of larger tribal nations such as the Comanches and possibly the Arapahos. When Poncas acquired horses sometime around 1740, their oral traditions indicate that they received them from the Padoucas, but it is hard to determine whether they were applying this name to the Apaches or the Comanches. When the Cheyennes moved to the area around 1760, their oral traditions tell of them learning how to tan hides from the Comanches and how to use a specific horse medicine from the Plains Apaches, also known in the historic record as the Gattakas or Kiowa Apaches. In early historic times, these Apaches were reported primarily on the northern and western side of the Hills. They were distinct from the Padoucas, some of whom may have joined forces with them in later years (see Chapter Three).

The years between 1730 and 1760 brought many other populations to the region of the Black Hills, which was rapidly becoming a rendezvous location for northern and eastern tribes to acquire horses from the Apaches and Comanches with active ties to the Spanish Southwest. Whatever their reasons for coming to and staying in the area, we know that three major populations arrived here from Montana during this period, the Kiowas, the Crows, and the Arapahos. In the 1740s, the Kiowas were clearly among the largely unidentified populations that the La Verendrye brothers encountered on the northern side of the Hills. Their own oral traditions confirm this, but they also indicate that by 1760, the tribe was abandoning its territories in the northern reaches of the Hills to take up residence along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River where they remained for the next thirty years (see Chapter Three).

The Arapahos seem to have arrived in the region of the Black Hills about the same time as the Kiowas. Cheyenne traditions reveal that when they first started moving to the northern side of the Black Hills, circa 1750-60, they encountered Arapahos, Kiowas, Apaches, Crows, and Comanches there. Where exactly the Arapahos resided in this region is unclear until the 1790s, when early historic accounts record their presence simultaneously on the headwaters of the Little Missouri River and also along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River. As the Kiowas, Crows, and Arapahos, moved into areas of Apache and Comanche occupation, they appear to have established a presence on all sides of the Hills, following the course of the north and south branches of the Cheyenne River. In time, the newcomers replaced the Apache and Comanche populations as major horse suppliers and trade partners with tribes on the Missouri River. The Crows appear to have become the major trading partner of their relatives, the Hidatsas, while the Kiowas traded primarily with the Arikaras but occasionally with the Mandans. The Arapahos probably divided their trade between various village tribes depending on where they located their winter settlements. Thus, the Arapahos who camped along the Belle Fourche River most likely traded with the Mandans, while the South Fork bands were the probable trade partners of the Arikaras (see Chapter Three).

During the same period, the Cheyennes and possibly a small number of allied Lakotas were arriving in this region from locations in the east. When the Cheyennes began to break away from their villages on the Missouri River and establish permanent settlements on the upper reaches of the Cheyenne River, probably around 1750, they followed the well-established pattern of movement and adaptation associated with other horticultural populations in the region. They planted corn and established villages near the Missouri River and traveled to the upper reaches of its western tributaries to hunt bison. Over a period of eighty years, 1750 to 1830, the Cheyennes gradually abandoned their ties to the Missouri and permanently occupied areas along the margins of the Black Hills where game, but most especially bison, were plentiful.
By the 1790s, the largest cluster of Cheyennes established their villages at the Forks of the Cheyenne River where most of them remained until the 1820s. Other Cheyennes took up settlements along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River, camping near French Creek and even at locations farther south amidst some of their Kiowa and Arapaho allies. The Cheyennes who lived closest to Wind Cave National Park at this time were probably members of the Wotapio division who were closely aligned with the Kiowas. The Suhtaio and Omisis divisions appear to have pushed some of their settlements south as well, but the vast majority established winter camping locations around the northern edge of the Hills in alliance with the Arapahos and Apaches who lived there. By the time of Lewis and Clark, Cheyenne settlements encircled the Black Hills and were interspersed with those of other tribes who remained or arrived in the region. It was the Cheyennes among whom some of the early French traders lived when they wintered at the Forks of the Cheyenne River and also in the vicinity of French Creek (see Chapter Three).

From the descriptions of early European American observers, it is clear that the Black Hills, including the area of Wind Cave National Park, was an ethnically mixed region in which a variety of different tribes lived together peaceably and shared access to common territorial ranges. Hostilities were evident too. In the south, battles erupted between the Kiowas and the Poncas, and in the north, they engulfed the Crows and the Cheyennes/Arikaras. In 1781, when smallpox swept through the villages on the Missouri River, the locations and trading alliances of local tribes were considerably altered. Many Poncas lost their lives in this epidemic and those who lived no longer had the defensive capacity to maintain their access to hunting grounds in the southeastern Hills against the pressures of the incoming Kiowas and their allies, nor were they able to hold their powerful trading position with the Comanches who began to remain in areas south of the Platte River, abandoning territories within easy reach of the Black Hills. The Arikaras were also devastated by the epidemic, but they were able to retain their access to hunting grounds on the upper reaches of the Cheyenne River for a short period of time through their longstanding ties of friendship and intermarriage with the Kiowas and the Cheyennes (see Chapter Three).

After the 1760s, the Lakotas started to enter this ethnically complex situation in ever-growing numbers. Small groups of Lakotas probably reached the Black Hills as early as the 1760s in association with friends and relatives among the Cheyennes, Arikaras, and Poncas, but it is clear that the greater portion of the Lakota population didn’t establish themselves west of the Missouri until after 1781, when the Arikaras and Poncas, weakened by contagious disease epidemics, were no longer able to thwart their movements to the Missouri River and beyond. When Lakota/Dakota people started to settle on the Missouri, some of them took up farming and lived among and intermarried with the village tribes, especially the Cheyennes, Arikaras, and the Poncas. Following an adaptive pattern well-established in the area, the Lakotas situated their winter settlements along the bottomlands of the Missouri River but traveled to the upper reaches of its western tributaries to hunt bison in the summer and fall. Along the Cheyenne, Moreau, and Grand rivers, their movement seems to have met with little resistance. Indeed, the Lakotas appear to have formed close relationships with the northern branches of the Cheyennes and Arapahos, who lived and traveled in this area, aligning with these two tribes and the Arikaras in their wars against the Crows. The northern Lakotas or Soanes, including the Hunkpapas, Sihasapas, Minneconjous, and Itazipcos probably acquired some of their first horses from the northern branches of the Cheyennes and Arapahos. Farther south, along the Bad and White Rivers, the Lakotas’ movements met with fierce resistance. The southern Lakotas, including the Sicangus and the Oglalas, reached the Black Hills by way of the Bad and White rivers. Indeed, one story in their oral traditions indicates that the Oglalas acquired their first horses from Cheyennes who lived along the White River and in the vicinity of the southern Hills. These were probably the
Wotapio Cheyennes, who had had a long history of intermarriage with the Lakotas/Dakotas and were considered “part Sioux.” It was along the southern front of their movements towards the Black Hills that the Lakotas entered into a major war with the Kiowas that eventually engulfed some of their allies among the Wotapio division of the Cheyennes. This warfare, which is recorded in the oral traditions of the Kiowas and also in the local historical lore of European Americans living in the region of Hot Springs, led to the demise of a major division of the Kiowas and some of their Cheyenne allies, and it brought about the eventual departure of the Kiowas from areas in and around the southern Black Hills. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the Kiowas had moved their winter camps and hunting areas to the Platte River, where in later years they were joined by some of the Cheyennes and Arapahos who continued to be aligned with them (see Chapter Three).

As the Kiowas abandoned the southern Hills, many of the Arapahos and some Cheyenne divisions became the dominant populations in this area, and they remained so through the early decades of the nineteenth century when their Lakota allies began to arrive in larger numbers. By the 1820s, most of the Arapahos and some Cheyennes were on the western side of the Hills hunting bison in the country of the Platte River and establishing trade connections with the Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches who were now located in areas well south of the Platte River. The 1820s was the decade when the main body of Cheyennes started to leave the forks of the river that bears their name to take up residence on the Platte River. While their movement away from the eastern edge of the Black Hills was influenced by the growing presence of Lakotas in the region, it is also clear that Cheyennes and Arapahos migrated south and west to find better grazing conditions for their expanding horse herds (see Chapter Three). The growing importance of horses in the economies of Plains tribes probably played as much of a role in the migrations of tribes away from the Hills as warfare. Without question, the adoption of the horse greatly expanded the geographic reach of local tribes, allowing them to cover much larger territorial ranges and more diverse habitats in their annual subsistence cycles. It is also clear that horses introduced new mitigating conditions, including the need to find adequate pasturage, and according to tribal oral histories, many bands found better grazing conditions for their horses on lands south of the Platte River. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, there is no question that the Kiowas and the southernmost branches of the Cheyennes and Arapahos had become pastoralists whose lives centered as much around the maintenance of their growing horse herds as it did the hunting of bison. It is also apparent, at least among the Cheyennes, that some bands traveled long distances every year for trade, and in the process, they covered large stretches of territory extending from the Mandan-Hidatsa villages on the upper Missouri River to Spanish settlements in Texas and New Mexico. The long-distance travel associated with the horse traffic continued a pattern that stretched back to the early eighteenth century and that is associated in early historic documents with mixed Apache-Ute-Comanche groups like the Jetans (see Chapters Three, Four, and Seven).

After 1820, there is evidence not only of growing economic diversification and geographic dispersal, but also increasing sociopolitical separations within the ranks of the Cheyennes and Arapahos. Most the Arapahos who remained in the north gradually moved their territories to areas west of the Black Hills along the Platte River and even the country of the Powder River. A few bands of Arapahos, who were intermarried with the Lakotas, remained in reach of the Hills, including one under a leader named Black Bear who wintered mostly on the western side of the Hills in the vicinity of Stockade-Beaver Creek. In the same period, many Cheyennes joined the

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142 Again, there are many stories in the local histories of Hot Springs that tell of a major battle between the Lakotas and Cheyennes at Battle Mountain southeast of Wind Cave National Park. Although Battle Mountain was a quarrying site not a battleground, there is no question that battles took place between the Lakotas and combined forces of Kiowas and Cheyennes (probably from the Wotapio division) in and around the southern Black Hills in the late eighteenth century.
Arapahos in their westerly movements. Nevertheless, a sizable group of northern Cheyennes remained in the vicinity of the Black Hills until 1877. Most Cheyennes continued to winter along the northern edge of the Black Hills and in the vicinity of Bear Butte. Some of them, including a division known as the Mazikota, remained in the southeastern Hills and along the upper reaches of the White River and the south branch of the Cheyenne. They were closely intermarried with the Lakotas. This is probably the group that Francis Parkman placed in the southern Black Hills on his 1849 map, an area that includes Wind Cave National Park (see Chapter Four).

Meanwhile, the southern divisions of the Lakotas, and some of the northern divisions too, were establishing their winter camps at the base of the Black Hills. By the 1820s, most of the Lakotas had abandoned their settlements on the Missouri River and were living on the upper reaches of its western tributaries from the White River in the south to the Grand River in the north. When the Lakotas began to settle amidst the Cheyennes and Arapahos in the country of the Black Hills, they did so at a time when bison were still plentiful in the area. Until the 1840s, some of the Lakotas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes were able to follow the herds of bison that moved between the Race Track and the upper reaches of the White and Niobrara rivers, entering and leaving the Hills by way of the Buffalo Gap. As other tribal nations had done before them, these populations wintered at sites along the Race Track, in some of the Hills’ lower elevation valleys, and at various locations along of the upper reaches of the White River and the South Fork of the Cheyenne. Whether they wintered inside or outside the Hogback, many of them were within easy reach of the lands at Wind Cave National Park, a location favorable to the hunting of elk, deer, and other ungulates during the months of winter. These groups no doubt used the trails along Beaver Creek and its tributaries in the late spring and early summer months to reach locations in the interiors where they cut their lodgepoles, gathered plants, and conducted ceremonial observances. They also clearly came to the area to bathe in the thermal waters at Hot Springs, and they may have also collected knappable stone in the area for manufacturing and ceremonial purposes. As reported earlier, much of the area inside the Buffalo Gap was an ideal site for winter camping. It contained good supplies of water and timber, abundant game, and diverse plant and mineral resources. Its sheltered topography, warmer climate, and rich grasses made it an advantageous place to graze small herds of horses too. Not surprisingly, these same conditions made it attractive to European Americans when they started to occupy the region in large numbers after 1878 (see Chapters Four and Seven).

Among the Oglalas and Sicangus, two bands were closely associated with the Wind Cave region of the Hills in the historic record of the 1830s. The Oyuxpe [Unloads] were a band of Oglalas and the Wazazi [Fringed] comprised a band of mixed Ponca-Sicangu origins that became aligned with the Oglalas in later decades. These were the bands whose winter settlements were located in this area, although Sicangu and Oglala bands that wintered elsewhere accessed the area on a regular basis in the fall, winter, and spring seasons. Even bands that stayed along the Platte River after the 1840s, such as the Wagluke [Loafers], a group descended from marriages between the Sicangu and local European American traders, were reported to come to the Hills to hunt elk and gather their lodgepoles.

During the years between 1820 and 1850, the Mazikota Cheyennes as well as the Oyuxpe and Wazazi Lakotas were the band groupings with the closest reported associations to the area where Wind Cave National Park is now located. Some Minneconjous were also reported in this area, especially after 1850. At this point in history, other Lakotas and Cheyennes maintained their winter camps at a wide variety of locations elsewhere in the vicinity of the Hills, but some were beginning to establish their hunting territories and winter settlements at locations far removed from the area. The second major movement of people away from the Hills in the historic period probably started in the 1840s with the gradual decline of bison herds from the grasslands to the
east. Many groups migrated to the Platte River, where some of the area’s newly established trading posts were built. It must be noted again that other large game remained abundant in and around the Black Hills until the gold rush era, and these certainly would have been sufficient to provide an adequate subsistence for the bands that remained in their reaches. The region was no longer an optimal location for the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho bands whose livelihoods became more dependent on a traffic in bison hides; these were the groups who were now establishing their locations in regions far beyond the Hills (see Chapters Four and Seven).

By the 1840s, the vast majority of Cheyennes and Arapahos, along with many Lakotas, had left the Black Hills for the countries of the Platte and Powder rivers and remained in these areas throughout much of the year. Some of the Lakotas and Cheyennes who hunted in areas south of the Platte River had little occasion to return to the Black Hills, but some of those who hunted north of the Platte still encamped in the Hills over the winter months. Many of the Cheyennes and Oglala Lakotas, who had moved farther west and north, also continued to make use of the Hills, entering them in the spring and fall as they made their way to and from their trading posts on the Platte and White rivers. Whether or not the Lakotas and Cheyennes still wintered at the base of the Hills at locations between the Race Track and the Cheyenne River, many of them returned to the Hills in the summer from distant locations to cut lodgepoles, to collect medicinal and food plants, and to find mineral materials used in manufacturing and for ceremony. They also came back to the Hills to hold political meetings and to conduct their religious observances, many of which originated at and were identified with various sites in the Black Hills including the regions of the Buffalo Gap, Bear Butte, and Bear Lodge Butte (see Chapters Four, Five, and Seven).

Even after the 1850s, when bison began to disappear from the Platte River region, forcing more Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos to move farther south and north to find them, many bands continued to return to the Black Hills especially during the early summer months. Between 1851 and 1867, there are numerous accounts of bands gathering in the Hills and taking sanctuary there, especially during times of hostile encounters with the U.S. military. Indeed, the diversity and size of the populations who used this area appears to have increased during this period. Notwithstanding the declining presence of bison in the region, the supplies of other game and also plant resources remained adequate to support fairly large concentrations of people in the area during different seasons of the year (see Chapter Five).

After the signing of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, which set aside a large tract of territory that included the Black Hills for the exclusive occupancy of the Lakotas and for the Cheyennes and Arapahos who lived among them, the adaptive patterns of many local bands began to change once again. Under the terms of this treaty, the federal government was required to distribute food, clothing, and other supplies to these tribes. These distributions took place at the sites where federal agencies were established along the Platte, Missouri, and White rivers. Over time, growing numbers of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos began to winter at these locations, leaving them in the spring to carry out various subsistence activities at distant locations. As described in Chapter Five, Nicholas Black Elk’s people sometimes wintered near the Red Cloud Agency at Fort Robinson on the upper reaches of the White river, and in the late spring, they moved to their bison hunting grounds in the Powder-Tongue River countries, camping at various locations in the Black Hills, including the Buffalo Gap, along their route of travel. Other Lakotas, however, continued to winter at locations away from the agencies. Luther Standing Bear’s Sicangu band, for example, established their winter camps at the Buffalo Gap during these years. In the 1870s, the Buffalo Gap and the lands of Wind Cave National Park were less than fifty miles away from Spotted Tail’s Agency and about seventy-five miles from the Red Cloud Agency. Importantly, both of these agencies were within easy reach of the southeastern Hills. It
would have taken only a few days travel for small hunting parties to reach them during the fall and winter from their agency settlements and not much more time for larger camps to arrive there at other seasons for subsistence and ceremonial activity. In 1874, when the government realized it needed to move these agencies north of the Nebraska territorial line, the Sicangu leader Spotted Tail selected the Buffalo Gap as the site for a new agency. He no doubt recommended this location because of its proximity to good hunting grounds, water supplies, and timber stands. Samuel Hinman, who led the commission to determine suitable locations for a new agency, however, did not concur on the grounds that the area was not suitable for the kinds of farming endeavors the government wanted the Lakotas to pursue. His assessment contradicted the opinions of other Americans, including his superior E. L. Smith, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who described this region and the Black Hills more generally as well suited to various kinds of farming and stock-raising (see Chapters Five and Seven).

In the summers of 1874 and 1875, when large exploratory expeditions entered the Black Hills under the command of U.S. military forces, few Lakotas, Cheyennes, or Arapahos were present in the Hills. Many of the observers who traveled with these expeditions concluded that local tribes did not occupy or use the Hills, even though E.S. Howard (29 Sept 1875:254), the agent at Spotted Tail, wrote in his annual report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that tribes were staying away from the area because of the large military presence there. For many different reasons, the conclusions these observers reached about tribal relationships to the Black Hills were misleading. They were heavily biased by their own desire to have the U.S. government seize the Hills for American use and occupation. Nonetheless, their writings set into motion a train of thought that would continue to cloud our understanding of tribal occupancy and use of the Hills and even to deny that tribes had any significant and meaningful cultural attachments to them before European Americans took control over the area (see Chapter Five).

V. COMPETING CLAIMS AND CONTESTED STORIES

From the time prospectors set foot in the Hills in 1874 to the present day, the Black Hills have been a site of contestation between European Americans and the three tribes who still claim legal title to them under the terms of the 1868 Fort Laramie treaties, namely the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. The struggle over the Hills has been waged on the battlefield, in the courts, in Congress, and on the protest line, but it has also been fought in the popular media, in the writings of scholars, and in the written and oral discourse of local storytellers, Indian and white alike. The political and cultural arms of this struggle have worked in tandem, and therefore, they must be understood in relationship to each other.

On one side, many European Americans claim the Black Hills as the spoils of military conquest. They advance their claims on the grounds that Congress has the ultimate authority to abrogate or alter treaties with or without the consent of the tribes with whom they were made. Some even assert that the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos never had aboriginal property rights to the Hills since they never established permanent settlements in their interiors. Many more reason that these tribes had no right to the Hills because they did not use the resources to their best advantage, that is, for the commercial purposes European Americans deemed important.
Others presume that tribes feared the Hills on superstitious grounds, and therefore, never entered them. More recently, a few writers have argued that contemporary tribal religious attachments to the Hills are bogus, callously invented to claim a region that was never sacred to them in the first place (see Chapters Five and Fourteen).

On the other side, the Lakotas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes claim that the Black Hills were stolen from them, that they were illegally occupied and seized under the terms of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty [15 Stat. 635], and that subsequent congressional action under the 1877 Agreement circumvented the United States’ own treaty law. The Lakotas further maintain that the United States recognized them as the aboriginal occupants of this region under an earlier treaty at Fort Laramie in 1851, and that even without this treaty, there is ample evidence in the historic record and tribal oral traditions to demonstrate their aboriginal title to the area. The Cheyennes and Arapahos also assert their rights to the area, not only in terms of aboriginal
entitlement but also under the provisions of another 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty [15 Stat. 655] that permitted these tribes to locate themselves on what was then known as the Great Sioux Reservation. Moreover, all of these tribes claim the Hills as a homeland, a place that nourished and provisioned their peoples for many generations. The three tribes also believe the Hills are sacred, holding some of the primary sites of their spiritual origin and renewal (see Chapters Five and Fourteen).

Although the Lakota and Cheyennes’ (and probably Arapahos’) sacred attachments to the Black Hills encompass the entire area, there are specific locales and landscapes that are especially important. These include, among others, Inyan Kara Mountain, Bear Lodge Butte, Bear Butte, Reynolds, Slate, and Gilette prairies, Castle Rock, Harney Peak, Red and Craven canyons, the Hot Springs, the Buffalo Gap, the Race Track, and Wind Cave. The last two sit on park properties, and as pointed out in the last chapter, they are tied to important stories which tell of the origin of humankind, the nature of human relationships to the animals, and the gift of their most sacred ceremony, the Sun Dance. The stories connected with Wind Cave National Park and its environs are not new. Many of the motifs they contain can be traced back to Denig’s writings which refer to Lakota beliefs about the Black Hills in 1833, and which certainly resonate with some of the Lakota ideas that European Americans wrote about in the 1870s. It was not until the last decade of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth centuries that aspects of Cheyenne and Lakota cosmological understandings of the Black Hills would be recorded in ethnographic sources. From then until the 1960s, more writings based on tribal oral traditions would tie some of these stories in very explicit ways to sites in the Hills. When the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Lakota peoples experienced a spiritual and cultural renaissance in the 1970s, they turned to the stories that had been part of their cultural heritage for centuries. While there is no question that many of these were used, and are still being used, for political ends to regain what the Lakotas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes perceive as their rightful ownership of the Hills, none of them are completely new. They all rest on ideas consistent with traditions that can be traced back to the nineteenth century (see Chapter Fourteen).

The lands on which Wind Cave National Park now sits have long played a role in the political and cultural struggles over the Black Hills. Beginning in 1874, the trail that entered the Hills at the Buffalo Gap, following Beaver Creek to its headwaters between present day Pringle and Custer, South Dakota, crossed park properties. This trail, which followed a well-trodden tribal pathway into the Hills’ interiors, was the site of many armed struggles between European American prospectors and the allied Lakotas and Cheyennes. It was also a trail that European American expeditionary and military forces followed during their travels through the Hills in 1875. From 1874 to 1877, the Hills were a battleground, a place where tribal warriors raided the roads and settlement areas taken over by whites. This was not a place to camp with children and the elderly, except perhaps during the winter months when the Lakotas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes traditionally settled there or in isolated locations removed from the settlements and heavily used roads of European Americans (see Chapter Six).

After 1877, when Congress authorized the illegal taking of the Black Hills, whites began to expand their settlements beyond the gold rush towns of Custer and Deadwood, moving into areas of the southeastern Hills where Wind Cave National Park is now located. Americans of many different origins and from many walks of life came to the southeastern Hills to make a new life for themselves, establishing farms and ranches along many of the region’s continuously flowing waterways, including the Fall River as well as Beaver, Highland, and Lame Johnny creeks. Until 1903, when Wind Cave National Park was established, European American settlers and teamsters still used the trails along Beaver and Cold Spring creeks that crossed park properties, but there was no longer much outside traffic along these routes. When Jesse and Tom Bingham came
across Wind Cave in 1881, much of the area was open range. It was a location where local settlers grazed their cattle and horses and where they hunted the wild game that still roamed the Race Track and the surrounding Foothills and Hogback. In fact, the Bingham brothers were hunting when they found the cave, as some claim, by accident. Again, it can be argued that this “discovery” may not have been entirely fortuitous. Since their brother Matthew lived, worked, and hunted with the Lakotas at this time, it would not be surprising to learn that Jesse and Tom may have had some prior knowledge of the cave’s existence but not its exact location (see Chapters Six and Seven).

When the family of Jesse McDonald squatted on lands around Wind Cave in 1888 and began to explore and develop the cave as a tourist attraction, the southeastern Hills were becoming a mecca for a flourishing cattle industry tied commercially to the town of Buffalo Gap. They were also drawing people to the popular spa industry centered at Hot Springs. Within a decade, the settlement near the thermal waters at Hot Springs moved from a cluster of log cabins and camping sites to a bustling town with hotels and businesses that catered to a wealthy, leisured class who now traveled to the area by train and tallyho coaches. The developers of Wind Cave took advantage of the tourist bonanza and entered into a partnership with John Stabler who financed the building of a hotel at the site. The blustery feud that engulfed the Stablers, McDonalds, and the South Dakota Mining Company, who owned the subsurface rights to the land, led the United States to reconvey the land to the public domain, paving the way for the establishment of Wind Cave National Park in 1903 (see Chapter Six). Meanwhile, other settlers were coming to the area to make a living from livestock and crops, establishing additional homesteads along Beaver and Highland creeks and other sites within the modern-day boundaries of the park (see Chapter Six and Seven).

After 1877 and through the years of Wind Cave’s early development, Lakotas from the Pine Ridge Reservation, and probably some of the Cheyennes who lived with them, were gradually returning to the southeastern Black Hills. Once the military’s policy of reservation confinement was relaxed, small groups started to enter the Hills with the permission of their government agents. In the late 1870s, the Hot Springs area was settled by a small group of non-Indian men (and men of mixed ancestry) with their Lakota wives and descendants. In the following decades, even at the height of the “Indian Scare” between 1889-1990, Lakotas were reported in the area bathing at the thermal waters of Minnekahta, trading with local merchants and ranchers, visiting friends, and even camping in the town over the entire summer. There are also references to them picking berries, digging turnips, and collecting medicinal herbs in the Hills (see Chapter Six). Although there are many accounts of a Lakota presence in the southeastern Hills at the end of the nineteenth century, only a few are specific to the area of Wind Cave National Park. These indicate that the Lakotas visited the cave, camped on park properties, and traveled through the park en route to the locations where they cut their lodgepoles or to attend celebrations in white communities. Whether or not they used these occasions to hunt, gather plants, or conduct religious observances is unknown. They probably did, but these activities could have easily gone unnoticed, especially in some of the more remote sections of the park. Given the historic importance of the Wind Cave area to the Lakotas and the religious significance they continued to attach to the area, it is highly probable that small parties of Lakotas returned to this area to carry on any of a variety of procurement activities (see Chapters Six, Seven, and Fifteen).

Other than some of the events that took place along the Beaver/Cold Spring trails, which prospectors and settlers traveled from the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs region to Custer, and the stories of Wind Cave’s discovery, its development, and the feuds surrounding its property, there are very few events on park lands of great historic or cultural importance to European Americans. Indeed, much of what has been written about the park in popular regional travel writings and in
the park’s own promotional material focuses on the area’s non-human features -- the geology of its unique cave and the identities and habits of its wildlife. The history of most of its human inhabitants has been largely incidental to how the park has come to represent itself and also how others have come to see it. The human stories that have entered into park programming are few in number and selective in character. They highlight certain events over others. Most of the stories play predictably to European American cultural values and traditions. The drama of the feud surrounding Wind Cave between 1884 and 1901 is worthy of interest and well-publicized because it makes perfect grist for the legend-making mills that surround the wider history of the Black Hills and the American West more generally. It fits into the popular storylines of conflict, the battles between Indians and cowboys, stage robbers and lawmen, and cattle barons and small-scale ranchers. These are all stories of how the lawless and “wild” West was tamed and domesticated to make way for “civilization” and tourists from the East.

Also prevalent in park interpretive materials are stories of discovery and exploration, from the sighting of the cave by the Bingham brothers in 1881 to uncovering new terrain in the cave’s vast network of chambers and passageways by successive generations of spelunkers. These stories typically mark the milestones of discovery at the cave and some of the challenges spelunkers faced in their explorations. The stories take on a particular cast and follow a narrative construction prevalent in European American cultural traditions of the West, which is romantically envisioned as a wild land, a dangerous space where death is challenged by the courage and fortitude of heroic questers who search out, struggle against, and survive its perils. The questers secure their redemption and salvation by outwitting the wily forces of the West and its nature. Today, these kinds of heroic efforts are often associated with the popular leisure sport of rock climbers who scale the sides of difficult mountains, cliffs, and towers, but they can also be easily identified with the less visible recreational activity of spelunking.143 The “descent” stories of spelunkers at Wind Cave National Park provide an interesting point of contrast and comparison to the dominant “ascent” narratives at Devil’s Tower National Monument (Dorst 2000:307-310). In their own and very different ways, both celebrate the European American cultural theme of humans conquering “nature.”

Another set of stories that have found a place in park representational materials are those associated with the activities of the Civilian Conservation Corp camps at Wind Cave National Park in the 1930s. The stories feature the various improvements to park properties, including a new elevator, administration building, roads, bridges, and campsites underwritten by the federal Work Projects Administration. These also follow familiar narrative themes in European American cultural traditions that, historically, at least, have celebrated the “wonders” of technology and development. It is not surprising that all of the WPA projects were in operation precisely at the time Borglum was blasting presidential faces into the granite walls of Mount Rushmore (see Chapter Six).

Surprisingly, many other stories about Wind Cave National Park, especially ones that take place above ground, have not been part of the park’s historical self-representation, even though these play to many of the same cultural themes that cover the park’s underworld terrain. Paramount among the neglected stories are those that relate to the many interesting incidents that took place along the Sidney-Custer trail, which entered the Hills at the Buffalo Gap and crossed park properties along Beaver Creek and its tributaries, or the Cheyenne-Custer trail that follows the western boundaries of the park. These trails, which have significance to both European

143 The author speaks from experience as a recreational spelunker in her youth, repelling into cave entrances, fording underground steams, and squeezing and crawling through miles of narrow passageways to reach some of the spectacular amphitheater-sized chambers of caves in southern Indiana.
Americans and American Indians, speak to a much wider but still local history that ties the park to the world beyond its boundaries.

Much of the land that now makes up Wind Cave National Park was developed for cattle raising. Beyond the homesites near the cave, a number of settlers squatted on and then homesteaded lands over a wide area of the park, especially near reliable sources of water. Here they built ranches and farms of varying character and complexity. Many of them also used public lands adjoining their homesteads for grazing stock, logging timber for domestic use, hunting wild game, gathering berries for food, and collecting herbal plants for medicines. Much of the property added to the park in later years was once homesteaded or served as open access land, on which local European American residents depended for their own livelihoods. As park policies changed and additional lands, private as well as public, were added to the park, many traditional forms of use and access were halted. Over time, ranchers’ relations with the Park Service and other federal land-holding agencies in the Black Hills became more antagonistic, and this only increased as the administration of public lands shifted from locals to outside professionals. In more recent years, the growing importance of the tourist, leisure, and recreation industries to the Black Hills has created another set of interest groups whose demands on public lands depart from and often conflict with those of traditional users (see Chapters Six and Seven). Nonetheless, there are many fascinating stories from the history and culture of local ranch life, including its dependence on open access to public lands and its conflicts with the agencies that administer them.

From the outset, the mission of Wind Cave National Park has been directed at preserving the unique features of its natural environment, especially its unique subterranean geology and its remaining as well as reintroduced wildlife. As is the case with other properties in the National Park system, where there is an emphasis on the pristine character of the lands under its stewardship, stories of prior human inhabitants and users tend to be disregarded perhaps because, as some scholars have recently argued, they undermine, or at the very least detract from, the larger mission of keeping park lands in their “original” state. This may be why so many national parks may also deemphasize or even deny earlier European American users, other than an occasional trapper and explorer.

Also of importance are the stories of how outside, and mostly urban interests, brought new kinds of cultural sensibilities to the area, and how these influenced park policy, especially after World War II. Both the cultures of rural ranch life and urban tourism deserve some place in park interpretive programming. Since 1903 much of the park’s role in regional culture and history, as it pertains to European Americans, has been tied to tourism, travel, and recreation. The early development of Wind Cave was largely stimulated by the development of the spa industry in Hot Springs. Outings to the cave offered an interesting destination for people who came to the area primarily for the health-giving properties of the nearby thermal waters. The cave became a popular recreational diversion for the locals too. After the collapse of Hot Springs’ spa industry, which pioneered the development of tourism in the Black Hills, sightseeing travel began to gain popularity. In time, Wind Cave became the most prominent site tourists visited in the Black Hills south of Custer. Indeed, it was probably the only attraction, until the mammoth exhibit was developed, to bring people to the southeastern Black Hills after Mount Rushmore was carved and roads were built leading tourists to the spectacular scenery of the Needles and Cathedral Spires. After the 1950s, the park’s importance to the economy of the southern Hills, especially the town of Hot Springs, grew as travel and leisure began to outpace the region’s traditionally dominant ranching and farming industries (see Chapters Six and Seven). The progression of tourism in the Black Hills and the cultural traditions associated with it offer another compelling way to represent Wind Cave’s history. In fact, in some ways, the twentieth century use of park lands parallels the situation two centuries earlier when two different kinds of groups used the area simultaneously:
one stayed much of the year within the shadows of the Hills and the other traveled long-distances to access its resources on a temporary seasonal basis.

Even more conspicuous by their absence are tribal stories about Wind Cave and the area in which it is located. This is not surprising, however, given the distance the National Park Service has historically kept between itself and the tribal nations on whose lands its properties were developed (Spence 1999). As a number of scholars and journalists (Keller and Turek 1998; Spence 1999; Burnham 2000) have taken great pains to demonstrate, National Park Service properties contain lands of considerable cultural and even sacred importance to the tribes from whom they were dispossessed. Wind Cave National Park is no exception in this regard. Over the past century, it has largely disregarded the significance of this area to the tribes who once lived or who still remain within its reach, especially the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. Hardly anything about the cultural histories and traditions that these tribes associate with the area has ever appeared in park informational and promotional materials. From the park’s beginnings in 1903 until the 1970s, tribal peoples, including Lakotas and Cheyennes from the neighboring Pine Ridge Reservation, were not only ignored in the much of the park’s interpretive material, they were largely absent in park activities. Except for occasional visits and their participation in a few public events, there is little in the park’s own documents or other sources to identify any active tribal presence on the park lands. There is even less in park records and promotional literature that identifies the park with any significant tribal cultural affiliation other than William Campbell’s letter and a one-page promotional sheet based on this letter from the 1930s (see Chapters Six and Fourteen).

During this same period, however, a great deal was being recorded and eventually written about the significance of Wind Cave, the Race Track and the neighboring Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs to the Lakotas and Cheyennes. Taken together, the stories associated with the park and its environs tell of happenings in mythic and historic times of great cultural importance to these two tribes, events that created and stand at the foundation of their cosmological understandings of the universe (see Chapter Fourteen). Why none of this significant cultural material ever become a part of the way the park represented itself to the public is difficult to fathom, and especially so when the recognition of a tribal cultural presence was being widely promoted in other parts of the Black Hills. Notwithstanding the fact that tribal stories about other areas of the Hills were generic and often based on ersatz traditions, they at least acknowledged some sort of tribal cultural attachment to the area. Even at Mount Rushmore, there were active efforts to feature local Indians, especially the Lakotas. From the 1920s to the 1960s, the Lakotas from the Pine Ridge Reservation spent a great deal of time in the Black Hills, camping and traveling from one community celebration to another over extended periods of time during the summer months. They were hired at special attractions because of their ability to draw tourists. Not only did a host of venues develop that involved the Lakotas, but a number of books were written about the lore and legends of the Black Hills that featured tribal stories about many of the area’s most prominent landforms. Throughout this period, Wind Cave National Park was out of the proverbial loop, except for the brief attempt of one superintendent of the park, Edward Freeland, to involve the Lakotas in park activities between 1937 and 1938, and their attendance at one of the park’s golden anniversary festivities in 1953 (see Chapter Six). The development of NPS policies that effectively kept tribal people out of the national parks or minimized their presence was part of a nationwide trend. Only in recent years, and with varying degrees of success, have national parks tried to involve local tribes in their management and interpretive activities (cf. Keller and Turek 1998; Spence 1999; Burnham 2000 for a more detailed discussion of this in relation to other national parks).
Until the 1970s, the Lakotas and Cheyennes, especially those living on the neighboring Pine Ridge Reservation, regularly visited places of cultural significance to them in the Black Hills. Even though much of their presence in the Hills took place in the setting of tourism, it can be suggested that this experience gave them a concrete context for retelling many of the traditional stories about the importance of the Hills and its various sacred sites, and this is certainly evident from the recollections of Nicholas Black Elk’s grandchildren. Spending time in the Hills might have also opened opportunities to visit isolated locations to conduct important but unobtrusive ceremonial observances connected with fasting and other prayerful observances and also to collect plants and stones used in healing. It was in the decades after the 1930s that the Cheyennes of Oklahoma and Montana began to return to the Hills to visit some of the places of sacred significance to them, including sites in the southeastern Hills (see Chapters Six and Fourteen).

Unlike the last decades of the nineteenth century, when Lakotas and Cheyennes from Pine Ridge returned to the Hills to carry on traditional subsistence pursuits, their activity throughout much of the early half of the twentieth century was probably focused less on procurement, other than the collection of berries and medicinal plants, and more on making a living through performance. In both instances, the area that is the Black Hills continued to be understood as a source of sustenance, a place that provided people with a means of livelihood. But more significantly, the Black Hills was a place of return, an area which reminded tribal peoples of their culture, a landscape that continued to reveal and teach them some of the basic tenets of their cosmologies, and that rekindled and indeed became integrally tied to their own sense of identity as Indian people and members of particular tribal nations. In these years, the Lakotas and even the Cheyennes were reasserting their relationship to the Black Hills, even if, at times, it was on the terms of the people who had stolen this land from them (see Chapters Six and Seven).

The essential point is that the Lakotas and Cheyennes never abandoned the Black Hills. They continued to return to the area, even in the face of the racism and hostility of some of the white citizens who now claimed and dominated the area. In many of their own legendary stories about the Hills, whites portrayed themselves as heroes and heroines who had struggled to survive and establish a place for themselves against the incessant attacks of local tribes. Stories of the trails that the settlers followed to reach the Hills’ interiors frequently recount the battles that took place with local tribes along these routes. Whites were also not above inventing tales, some of which they attributed to local tribes, to justify their own dominance. The most famous of these, “The Legend of the Rose,” by Richard B. Hughes (1957), is a good example of a tale that justifies the European American occupation of the Hills. As the story goes, on their way to the Hills, a group of prospectors in search of gold came across a village of Indians dying from disease and miraculously cured them. Envious of the white men’s powers, an evil Indian medicine man organized an attack on the whites. This killing angered the Great Spirit, who stirred up his Thunders and Winds, blowing the ashes of the white men away from the spot where their remains had been cremated, frightening the Indians away from the Hills, and preventing them from ever entering their deep recesses. After his wrath had been appeased, the Great Spirit allowed his rains to return, and wherever they fell on the ashes of the “pale faces,” wild roses blossomed. Besides “explaining” why the Lakotas and other tribes feared and avoided the Hills, this story builds a case for the moral supremacy of the whites and their presence in the Hills on divine grounds.

The self-proclaimed superiority of European Americans around the conquest and occupation of the Hills and their efforts to dominate and exclude the region’s tribal inhabitants have never been absolute, however. There has always been room for slippage -- times or places where the press of a tribal presence on the landscape cannot be escaped or trivialized. The rich clusters of rock art sites, cairns, and tipi rings in the southern Hills make it hard not to acknowledge the preexistence of peoples with a much longer history in the area. Even when these have been defaced by the graffiti of the newcomers, they still reveal the presence of earlier peoples. But
when these sites are obliterated to make room for new construction, the stories they hold are lost and the evidence for reconstructing the tribal use and occupancy of the area seriously compromised. So much of the area around the entrance to Wind Cave has been transformed since the 1890s, and it is unlikely that archaeologists, even when given the opportunity, will ever be able to recover and identify the sorts of remains found, for example, at Medicine Creek Cave in the northwestern Hills, which reveal the long-standing spiritual importance of caves to tribes in the region (Sundstrom, L. 2002).

Some local whites also learned tribal stories about the area and its various sites, and a few used them to advertise ancient links to the Hills as a way to draw outside tourist audiences. From its beginnings, the town of Hot Springs drew on the tribal and naturopathic associations of its waters to promote its spa industry. Even though many of the stories were based on ersatz traditions, they still acknowledged a long-standing tribal connection to the area. Sitting Bull’s Crystal Caverns was another attraction where Indian cultural affiliations were promoted. It was here that Lakota people like Nicholas Black Elk tried to educate European Americans about the importance of his culture and its relation to the Hills. For a short period of time, one park superintendent at Wind Cave attempted to build good relations with local Lakotas and establish a context where European Americans might learn something about their traditional culture. Notwithstanding the fact that some of these efforts might be viewed today as exploitative, appropriating tribal cultural knowledge for commercial ends, they did establish small lines of communication between local whites and their Lakota neighbors in an otherwise conflicted and often hostile social environment (see Chapter Six).

In this regard, it should be said that despite some of the long-term and overarching tensions that have marked relationships between the Hills’ white inhabitants and neighboring tribespeople, there have been strong friendships between certain individuals and their families. Local town and county histories contain numerous examples of Lakotas/Cheyennes from the Pine Ridge Reservation trading with local European Americans, visiting and eating with them, and even staying on their lands for extended periods of time (see Chapter Six). Respectful and mutually beneficial relations appear to have existed, for example, with certain families in Hot Springs such as the Bingham’s, owners of some of the region’s tourist attractions like the Duhamel family, and a few administrators of public lands in the Hills including Edward Freeland of Wind Cave National Park.

Meanwhile, outside the Hills, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were attempting to push their claims for the Black Hills before Congress and the courts. The Cheyennes and Arapahos did not succeed in getting their claims heard by either the Indian Claims Commission or the U.S. Court of Claims, but the Lakotas were able to move their claims forward, although most of the decisions that came down before 1970 did not rule in their favor. Given some of the early court decisions, the white citizens of the Hills probably did not view the Sioux’s Black Hills claim as much of a threat. Confident that the law and its interpretation would be on their side, they appear to have seen the Sioux’s case more as nuisance rather than as a real danger to their properties and way of life. This all changed in the 1970s and 1980s, when the Civil Rights movement sparked the resurgence of political resistance in American Indian communities nationwide (see Chapter Eight).

The first protest in the Black Hills took place at Mount Rushmore in 1970, followed two years later by the armed confrontation in Custer over the murder of Wesley Bad Heart Bull at the Buffalo Gap and the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973. Once again, the Black Hills became the site of armed struggle and resistance. Some of the early protests of the Lakotas, which began as an alliance between traditional tribal elders of the Pine Ridge Reservation and urban Indian
youth associated with the American Indian Movement, focused on the injustices the Lakota experienced under the laws of the United States, from inequities in the handling of criminal cases to the illegalities of U.S. government actions in relation to tribal treaty rights. The politicization of the Lakotas in the 1970s stressed tribal sovereignty and the rights of tribal nations to define their own political, economic, and cultural destinies (Chapter Six). Racial tensions flared, and the Lakotas and other tribal people were no longer welcome in the Black Hills as participants in local celebrations, as performers in tourist attractions, or as casual visitors. It became uncomfortable, if not dangerous, for local Indian people to travel to the Hills subjected as they were to hostile forms of harassment (see Chapter Six).

In response to the political pressure of the 1970s, which brought about a dramatic resurgence of pride in tribal identity and culture, Congress began to enact a number of laws which gave tribes more power to protect and control their interests, including their religious rights to public lands. It also led the Lakotas to reconsider the path some of their leaders had taken to achieve justice for the illegal seizure of the Black Hills. Well before the Supreme Court awarded the Lakotas a substantial cash settlement for the illegal taking of the Black Hills, many Lakotas were moving towards strategies that would bring about the return of public lands in the Black Hills to tribal ownership. As the political winds changed direction, all of the Sioux tribes who were party to the claim refused to accept a cash settlement for the Hills. Instead they wanted the public lands in the Hills returned to them, including those within the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park (see Chapter Eight).

In the 1980s, the Lakotas began to reoccupy public lands in the Hills to bring their case to the attention of the American people. Lands under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service at Devil’s Tower National Monument and Wind Cave National Park were occupied for short periods of time in 1981, and in the same year, those under the care of the U.S. Forest Service at Victoria Creek, known as the Yellow Thunder Camp, were occupied and held for nearly eight years as legal cases over Lakota access rights wound their way through the courts. Besides the occupations, other Lakotas were using new federal policies and statutes to gain permits and temporary access to public lands in the Black Hills to practice their ceremonial observances from pipe ceremonies and sweatlodges to Sun Dances. They were arguing their cases before federal administrators and district judges in federal and state courts to gain protections and restrictions for sacred sites in the Black Hills. In doing so, they met with failure as well as success (Chapters Six and Eight).

Court rulings on cases stemming from the Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 were generally not friendly to tribal interests. Public agencies and their administrators varied greatly in their efforts to either oppose or support tribal interests (see Chapter Eight). While the U.S. National Forest Service generally resisted Lakota efforts to practice their religion on the lands under their jurisdiction, the U.S. Park Service was much more accommodating even in the face of court battles that ruled against park management policy. This was the case at Devil’s Tower National Monument where the interests of rock climbers collided with tribal religious users. Other than the brief politically motivated occupation at the park in 1981, Wind Cave National Park administrators appear to have attempted to find workable ways for local tribes to meet some of their religious obligations, from opening park lands to religious observances such as the Sun Dance to meeting requests for soils brought to the surface of the earth around prairie dog towns (Ron Terry 1999, Personal Communication). In the absence of resistance on the part of park staff and competing interest groups for the use of park properties, little attention or publicity has surrounded the tribal use of park lands for religious purposes since the late 1970s. Indeed, this use has such a low profile that it has not appeared, at least as yet, on the radar screens of journalists and scholars. This has probably served the interests of the park administrators, who do
not wish to attract unwanted attention, but also those of tribal religionists who value privacy in
the conduct of their religious observances (see Chapter Twelve).

Besides the occupations and attempts to secure permits for religious activities, the Lakotas
were pushing other strategies to reclaim the Black Hills. By the mid-1980s, they had secured
backing from several congressional delegations to move bills through Congress that would
support the return of sizable portions of public lands in the Black Hills. The first bill, known as
the Bradley Bill, was heard before the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs in 1985.
Largely due to opposition from the South Dakota congressional legislation, it never reached the
floor of the Senate for debate. Subsequent attempts at bringing other land reclamation bills before
Congress failed and never even reached the hearing stage (see Chapter Eight).

While Lakotas and Cheyennes pressed their religious claims to the Hills, some European
American scholars and journalists began to challenge the legitimacy of these claims. As writers
had done a century earlier, the new critics argued that the Lakotas, at least, never had any
significant spiritual attachments to the Hills. They advanced these claims either by trivializing
the Lakotas’ contemporary ideas or by denying that these beliefs had any historical precedent.
The work presented in this report should certainly lay to rest any doubts about the historical depth
of tribal beliefs surrounding the landscape that makes up Wind Cave National Park (see Chapters
Twelve, Thirteen, and Fourteen).

As to the idea that Lakotas were newcomers who had taken the Hills by force and had not
occupied the area long enough to sanctify it, one point needs to be made. European Americans
have long tried to cast the Lakotas’ occupation of the Hills in the reflection of their own conquest
history. By viewing the Lakotas’ relationship to the Hills solely as the outcome of aggression and
force, European Americans are able to legitimize their own occupation on the same “right of
conquest” grounds. In this historical picture, Cheyenne and Arapaho rights and interests in the
Hills are generally ignored. But this scenario is misleading because it tells only part of the much
more complex story that this report has gone to great pains to document (see Section One and
also Chapter Seven): that the Lakotas and the Cheyennes and the Arapahos before them
established their rights to the Hills through peaceful partnerships as much as through war and
conquest.

VII. RETURNING TO A COMMON GROUND

The history of the Black Hills from 1742 to 1877 was marked by peaceful forms of
relationship among some of the tribes who lived in its reaches. These were relations of coopera-
tion, cemented by ties of marriage, familial associations, and close friendships. They entailed
territorial sharing, alliances against common enemies, collaboration in subsistence, and co-
participation in ceremonial and religious activity. Through these relationships, tribes exchanged
ideas, contributing to the development of regional cultural traditions that included stories about
the landscapes they lived in and shared (see Chapter Seven).

As pointed out many times before, today’s Lakotas are not the same people as the Lakotas of
the seventeenth century. The people who make up the population of the Oglala Sioux tribe at
Pine Ridge, for example, share strong and well-documented genealogical roots with the Arikaras,
Poncas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes, all of whom lived and traveled in the Black Hills before the
main body of Lakotas arrived and took up residence in the area during the early nineteenth
century. Before their arrival, Arikaras, Poncas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes shared ancestries with
the Apaches who lived here probably as early as the sixteenth century. Decades, indeed cent-
uries, of intermarriage created strong and tight social networks within which sharing, cooperation,
and collaboration were not only possible but also encouraged across tribal boundaries. Although punctuated by periods of hostility, the Lakotas’ relations with the Arapahos and Cheyennes were especially strong and enduring. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, these three tribes lived together in peace and jointly defended the Hills against the incursions of other tribes, notably the Crows and Pawnees, and together, they attempted to thwart the advance of European Americans into their beloved Hills. Before these three tribes dominated the Hills, they were co-occupied by Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Comanches, and Crows who tried to keep the Lakotas and Shoshones at bay in the late eighteenth century. In these battles, the Arapahos and Cheyennes seem to have been caught in the middle with some aligning themselves on the side of the Kiowas, others with the Lakotas, with many more attempting to remain neutral (Chapters Three and Four).

When today’s Lakotas proclaim an ancestral connection to the Black Hills that stretches back to time immemorial, they are correct if we view their past in the light of a complex history of intertribal marriage and alliance and the cultural amalgamation that this history wrought. Seeing Lakota history from this perspective, however, has a major drawback for the purists who see tribes, including their own, as well-bounded and self-contained entities that conquered the territories they held by force and occupied them exclusively. Certainly the Lakotas’ entrance into the Hills entailed conflict and competition, but it also came about through marriage and cooperation. The Lakotas may have ultimately become the dominant population in the Black Hills but they were never their exclusive “owners.” In varying ways and degrees, their occupation of the Hills always took place in association with their Cheyenne and Arapaho allies, a fact that many of their respected leaders including Red Cloud, Black Hawk, and Nicholas Black Elk, among others, clearly recognized. Some European American and Native American commentators may choose to downplay, or even deny, this side of the historical record, but it serves little purpose other than an exclusionary diversion to allow some groups into the Hills and keep others out.

Many origin stories tied to the Hills, which assign the region and its various landforms a spiritual status, are not unique to single tribes (Sundstrom 1996, 1997). As is the case with the Buffalo Wife, Great Race, and Orphan Boy stories, which have particular applicability to the region of Wind Cave, they speak to a common stock of symbols and understandings about the significance of this place. To be sure, the stories vary in their details and in the weight of their importance from one tribe to another and even among divisions within the same tribe. People in the same tribe have even applied some of these stories to other places. Inconsistencies of this order have given some writers an excuse to challenge the credulity of the stories that tribes attach to their landscapes. While such inconsistency is often problematic in European American ways of thinking about the world, it is not troublesome to the people who tell the stories because they understand that their “truth” resides in the deeper meanings that these invoke about a place. The template of the Buffalo Wife story is a good example, one that has been applied to many separate places, but which nonetheless speaks to common experiences with and understandings of particular kinds of underground sites, notably caves. In other words, certain landforms evoke a particular class of stories, which get revised and reinterpreted according to the specific sites to which they are applied and the cultural backgrounds and experiences of the people who tell them.

There are also other narratives relating to significant and sacred landscapes that are fairly unique and specific to particular tribes and tribal divisions. The story cycle of George Sword, an Oglala intellectual at the turn of the twentieth century, is one of these; it tells about the birth of the Four Winds and the original emergence of humans, the Pte Oyate, from Wind Cave. Although the particular way this cycle is constructed, and its storylines woven together, is distinct, it nevertheless contains a common stock of symbols and understandings widespread in Lakota and Dakota traditions (Fletcher 1884d) and also familiar to other Siouan tribes, such as the Poncas and Omahas (Fletcher & LaFlesche 1972:1:63,119-121). Nor are the stories of Tokahe’s
travels, once he arrives on the earth’s surface, radically different from some of the narratives associated with the Cheyennes’ heroes, Sweet Medicine and Stands on the Ground.

Despite variations and inconsistencies in tribal stories about particular landscapes, many of them address fundamental and widely shared cosmological tenets about the nature of life and the character of the universe. When they do so, they evoke the sacred knowledge and spiritual understandings that are at the heart of the way each tribal nation and its people see themselves and interpret their presence in this world. The landscapes and the stories exist in a dynamic relationship to one another, feeding, but sometimes challenging, one another as people attempt to come to terms with their own time and place. In seeking this knowledge and understanding, the tribal nations of the plains have developed some common ways to approach that which is sacred. Ethnographers have long recognized that Cheyenne and Lakota Sun Dance observances, along with certain kinds of healing lodges, were woven out of a common and shared fabric, and that they are fundamentally different from the Sun Dances performed by other tribal nations of the Great Plains. As argued earlier, the inspiration for this dance was carved out of their mutual presence in and shared understanding of the place it began, namely the Black Hills and more specifically the places of Wind Cave/Buffalo Gap and Sundance Mountain/Bear Lodge Butte (see Chapters Twelve and Fourteen).

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos shared a common ground in and around the Black Hills that they jointly occupied and defended. It was an area where they shared access to the region’s rich resources and built a sense of community through marriage and collaboration in subsistence and trade. In the process of this sharing and community-building, they not only developed common understandings of the area but also enjoyed a common access to the sacred spots that revealed the centrality of the Black Hills in their lives. The loss of this land was deeply felt by all of the tribal nations who were attached to it. Their inability to come together politically in the twentieth century to reclaim it has engendered some bitterness. Yet, overriding some of their political differences is a profound and mutual sense of anger and frustration at being denied access to the Black Hills, particularly the public lands on which some of their most sacred sites rest.

When the United States seized the Black Hills from the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos in 1877, the federal government became the sovereign over the land. Yet, it wasn’t for another decade that government agents began the process of surveying its land and enforcing its proprietary laws. As it was under tribal control, the Black Hills and the areas surrounding it were public domain lands. Even though individual citizens logged the timber, staked claims on the minerals, ran cattle on the grasslands, and built dwellings and commercial businesses in the area, no one theoretically owned any of the Black Hills, except perhaps for mining claims, as a form of private property until the government transferred fee patents to the property under the terms of various homestead acts. Until then, it remained a common grounds, open to any party with an interest in using it and extracting its resources.

After surveying its land and validating private mining claims and squatters’ rights, the government set aside huge tracks of land in the Hills’ interiors for a national forest reserve, established in 1897 and opened much of the land between the Hogback and Cheyenne River to homesteading. Many extractive enterprises in the Hills were able to quickly capitalize because they did not have to invest in a substantial part of their means of production. The minerals, grasses, and timbers were part of an open commons, free to anyone with the interest and wherewithal to extract the resources. This situation contributed, in large part, to the early boom of the large-scale, investor-owned cattle operations in the Hills, many of which folded after the disastrous winter of 1886-1887.
Starting in 1880, the public commons was contained. Lands that settlers squatted on and improved were turned into homesteads, many of which were patented as private property. Unoccupied lands, or lands on which no improvements had been made, became subject to restrictions on their use, with fees charged and leases let for extracting certain resources from them, notably timber and grass. Even the land within the present-day borders of Wind Cave National Park was homesteaded and/or leased for grazing rights well into the twentieth century. Much of the land in the interior region of the Black Hills, which remained in the public domain, was open to multiple uses and users, but it was managed by federal agencies within the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior. Over time, these agencies began to selectively admit and exclude users to the commons. They prevented Lakotas from cutting their lodgepoles at the sites they customarily used for these purposes, and in general, they discouraged their presence in the commons. Federal agencies also restricted timber and grazing permits to ranchers whose homesteads bordered public lands, and they prevented small and local logging outfits from doing business in the Hills, preferring instead to let timber leases to large outside corporations. Few restrictions, however, were imposed on mineral extraction because of the liberal provisions of the 1864 Mining Act, many of which are still in place today. Although theoretically U.S. Forest Service lands, as one example, were publicly owned, multiple use areas, they increasingly became a reserve for a select and privileged group of users whose character shifted over time as local and national priorities for the forests changed. By the end of the twentieth century, however, many sections of the public land in the Black Hills had taken on some of the more restricted qualities of national park property with missions aimed at preserving the land for wildlife instead of stock (Geores 1990; see also, Chapter Seven).

When Wind Cave National Park was founded in 1903 and a wildlife reserve established on adjacent lands in 1912, its original eleven thousand acres gradually became off-limits to many of the extractive uses associated with national forest lands, although livestock grazing continued inside park borders until the early twentieth century. In keeping with its mission to preserve the originality and integrity of the landscapes over which it had jurisdiction, the NPS gradually prohibited this use also. Eventually, only recreational camping/hiking and the spectator sport of sightseeing were allowed to take place on the park’s lands. Over the next century, more lands would be transferred to park jurisdiction, including adjacent parcels of public land and private property holdings that bordered the park. Today, more than half of the lands now under park management have a history associated with some kind of extractive use, and even its original holdings, experienced some degree of development. Because of the park’s location, its original and acquired lands were marginally impacted, relatively speaking, by extractive developments, but they were not pristine and without a prior record of human history. One only needs to look at the large list of non-native plants that grow on park lands, many of which are Eurasian volunteers that typically seek disturbed and heavily grazed habitats, to confirm this (Pisarowicz 2001k; see also, Chapter Eleven and Appendix B). Including current efforts to restore the grasslands to a “native” state, the park is, and has always been, a historically altered environment. In this light, the questions of interest are not about how park lands constitute pristine and isolated islands of nature, but rather how the lands have dynamically changed in the course of a history with different waves of human occupation, and how their natural resources have been transformed in the process.

The history of the bison’s presence and absence on park lands, and its relationship to the changing human landscape of the Hills, the neighboring grasslands, and the nation at large is one of the park’s most compelling narratives especially when one adds tribal stories to the picture. After all in Lakota belief, this is Tachante Tatanka, the “Heart of the Bison Bull,” the Tatanka makalpeya, “the Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull,” and the abode of Waziya, the first Buffalo
Man, and his grandson, Waziyata, the North Wind. It is also the site of the Great Race where the very nature of the relationship between the bison and humanity was established. So much about Wind Cave National Park, its landscape, land forms, animals, plants, and minerals returns to the bison in local tribal traditions. Wind Cave is the home of the bison. In fact, the reason for establishing a wildlife reserve near the park in 1912 was predicated on the introduction and preservation of a small herd of bison donated by the National Bison Association. Before European Americans took control of the land that makes up the Black Hills and the Great Plains more generally, it was part of what some scholars have come to identify as the great “buffalo commons” (Binnema 2001). It was an area where vast herds of bison roamed, numbering in the millions, and where humans based much of their life on the animal’s habits, habitats, and movements. This was the bison’s country; they were the “chief of the animals” and the Black Hills, “the chief of the land,” was their home. No one owned this vast commons. Instead, tribal nations entered into social arrangements with each other to share access to the herds in the territories they lived and traveled. Tribes formed loose confederations with each other to defend and/or gain access to bison grounds (Ewers 1975; Albers and Kay 1987; Albers 1993, 1996; Binnema 2001). The Black Hills were the center of one of these grounds, and they were occupied by successive confederations of tribes who shared joint access rights and who fought together to acquire and to defend them from outside encroachment.

The Hills have always been a commons. Even after European Americans arrived, they still retained some of this character as an open access range. Only now the use was focused on the animals the newcomers brought with them – cattle. The newcomers, who owned the stock privately, ran them over lands jointly shared and managed through the formation of cattle associations and the institution of the roundup. By the 1880s, cattle had become the dominant ungulate of the commons, replacing and often standing in competition with native species. The habits of cattle led to the overgrazing of lands throughout the Black Hills and the destruction of grasslands and timbers that supported the remaining native ungulates, elk, deer, bighorn, and antelope. In time their numbers would be substantially diminished and another species, the elk, extirpated. This happened not only as a result of commercial, subsistence, and sports hunting but also because of grazing practices and the despoliation of the lands on which cattle were fed. In order to save many of the native species, game laws were instituted by the state of South Dakota, grazing leases were restricted by the forest service, and sections of public land in the Hills cordoned off to create spaces to reintroduce and protect wildlife at Wind Cave National Park and neighboring Custer State Park (see Chapters Six, Seven, and Ten). Wind Cave National Park’s first herd came from New York by way of Massachusetts and before that their origin has not been identified. To this original herd, animals were added from Yellowstone and wildlife reserves in Alberta, Canada. The pedigree of the herd at Custer State Park, however, is more local, and it includes animals from Scotty Phillips famous ranch whose progenitors were saved in 1881 by the rancher Frederick Dupree, who lived on the Cheyenne River Reservation north of the Black Hills in South Dakota. Some of these lines may also be present in the park’s herds because, in the past, it was not uncommon for some of the park’s herd to break through fences and roam among the herds of the state park (Bohi 1962).

Bison are now thriving on park lands in the Black Hills, and they are even being reintroduced on privately-owned lands, including some of those on the northeastern edge of the park (O’Brien 2002). As bison return to their former commons on public lands, private holdings, as well as tribally owned properties, their relations to humans are also changing. Throughout the plains and even in other areas of the United States, bison are becoming a form of stock raised and bred like cattle because of the growing popularity of their meat. Tribal nations in the region now own some of the larger herds, which are kept primarily for tribal use. Although some tribes have adopted practices akin to stock raising, others, such as the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, have
maintained a policy of keeping the animals as much as possible in a natural, open range habitat with minimal human intervention. With few exceptions, white ranchers are instituting more controlled stock techniques in the raising of their herds, and very soon, producers may be called upon to identify, as is the case with poultry and beef, whether their meat comes from “free range” stock or not. Bison and other game at Wind Cave National Park and Custer State Park are managed too, and the animals killed as a conservation measure with the meat donated, at least in the past, to local tribal and educational institutions (see Chapter Six). In relation to styles of management, the lines separating some of today’s bison herds owned and maintained by private enterprises for commercial ends and those under the care of public parks are nearly indistinguishable. What separates them are the purposes for which they are being kept, and in the case of the national parks, these are largely in the interests of species’ survivance and public spectatorship.

Today, Wind Cave National Park, like other parks in the national park system, remains a public commons, open to all citizens of this nation and foreign visitors, too, but for limited uses consistent with the mission of the park service to preserve its natural resources and to keep its landscapes in tact. These uses are largely restricted to viewing park lands along roads, trails, and waterways and at established campsites and other types of lodging. Camping in non-developed areas of parks, as typically practiced by backpackers, requires special permits, and in some areas, it may be prohibited because of fire risks and other dangers. Park users are generally prohibited from disturbing natural resources, for example, collecting plants and quarrying minerals, although they can fish in season and take wild fruits. Over their history, however, parks throughout the West have encouraged certain groups of users and discouraged others. Whether intentional or not, American Indian peoples have usually been excluded from making traditional use of public commons under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. Under restrictive policies aimed at preserving a park’s natural resources, many traditional procurement activities were disallowed, including the gathering of plants and minerals for religious purposes. Until recent decades, the conduct of religious observances was prohibited as well, even when their impacts were negligible and less invasive than the construction, improvement, and maintenance of campsites, trails, and roads for tourists and recreationists. As a number of commentators have argued, it would have seemed, at least prior to 1970, that parks were open to everyone except American Indians who desired access for traditional reasons. Closely following this pattern, there was another form of exclusion, and that is the absence of a tribal viewpoint in the construction of informational and interpretive materials about park lands, even when these lands had been occupied and owned by tribal peoples for thousands of years.

Under criticism and political pressure, the national parks are now being asked to become more inclusive with respect to the use and interpretation of their lands. They are now being asked to develop policies that accommodate traditional tribal interests and uses in the management of park properties. Increasingly, tribal peoples are reestablishing a presence in the parks for these purposes. Some of their efforts have led to contestation and even litigation with other user groups, as in the battles between rock climbers and tribal religionists over access to Devil’s Tower National Park, but others have led to efforts at joint management, as is the case with Badlands National Park, or more modestly, collaborative efforts in interpretive programming as exists at Glacier National Park. These attempts have not always been successful, however. One only needs to witness the recent standoff at the Stronghold in the Badlands National Monument between members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the National Park Service, or the continuing legal battles over the boundary lands at Glacier National Park to see otherwise.

Since the 1970s, tribal religionists, most of whom are Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, have returned to Wind Cave National Park to conduct their spiritual observances and to request
access to certain resources for use in religious contexts. Except for the Lakotas’ brief occupation (which also included some Cheyenne and Arapaho tribal members) of the park in 1981, park staff and administrators have accommodated some tribal needs without incident. For a longer period of time, Lakotas and other tribal peoples have come to the park as “visitors,” indistinguishable from the rest of the public who accompany the guided tours of its subterranean landscape. Today, school districts from the neighboring Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations regularly bring their children to the park on field trips. Both of these conform with standard forms of access available to the public. What has not happened, however, is any lasting and visible effort to include tribal viewpoints in the construction of narratives about the park’s subterranean and above ground landscapes, its history, and resources. If the park truly stands as common grounds, an inclusive space, then it must include the stories and perspectives of all the peoples who make up its history, especially the tribal peoples who think of this area as a very special, indeed a sacred, place in their world. In modern times, three tribes who still hold this knowledge and understanding are the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and probably the Arapahos.
Chapter Sixteen

RECOMMENDATIONS:
COMING FULL CIRCLE

O, give me a home where the buffalo roam,
Where the deer and the antelope play,
Where Seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the Skies are not cloudy all day
(Brewster Highly, Home on the Range, 1873)

Brewster Highly’s immortal lyrics could well become a theme song for Wind Cave National Park (hereafter referred to as WCNP), which has long been considered by the Lakotas to be the home of the bison. In Native American traditions, it is stories primarily of bison that give coherency to the area where Wind Cave National Park now stands and to the features of the landscape that make up much of its property. Even though bison were largely extirpated from this area by the 1870s, local tribes continued to think about the general area as the “Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull,” or Tatanka makalhpaya in Lakota. When bison were reintroduced to the area in 1913, as a gift from the National Bison Association, and placed under the protection of a game refuge, WCNP became one of only seven places in the United States where bison roamed in a “natural” state. The story of the bison, its origin, history, decline, and reemergence at WCNP provides a powerful cultural focus for the park and a way to bring together the different and at times conflicting histories of the humans who used this area and/or made it their home since prehistoric times.

This year Wind Cave National Park celebrates its one-hundredth anniversary. Anniversaries are times that call for a remembrance of the past. They are opportunities to celebrate and honor former successes and achievements, but they are also moments of reflection to ponder how threads from the past, including undeveloped ones, can move towards new and better visions and forms of representation. Anniversaries are as much about the future as they are about the past. The park’s anniversary offers an opportunity to develop a stronger and more inclusive narrative of its history, one that acknowledges the importance of this place to tribal peoples and that includes some of their histories of living here and their cultural knowledge about its landscape, landforms, animals, plants, and minerals. This occasion also opens possibilities for producing new narratives about the park’s European American neighbors and their historic relations to the area.

As a way of concluding this report, recommendations are made pursuant to the traditional cultural affiliations that various populations have to the park. The word “tradition” is enveloped in a complex set of meanings, depending on the situation or group to which it is applied. American Indian people, on the one hand, are commonly associated with traditional cultures, which too often connote a way of life existing before extensive contact with European Americans or one that is frozen in time and divorced from the world as it exists today. European Americans, by contrast, are often represented as devoid of traditions or a cultural past that has some bearing on their modern existence. Every community of Americans has traditions, cultural heritages that bring their past into the present. In every culture, these traditions are not static. They are dynamic and vibrant, taking on new expressions and forms in the world in which they are experienced.
The traditional cultural practices of the Cheyennes, Lakotas, and Arapahos, for example, are not the same as they were a century ago any more than European American culture is identical to what it was in the past. Cultures always change, while drawing on a reservoir of traditions that make them unique and distinctive to the people who share and live by them. To say that cultures change is not to imply that contemporary cultural beliefs are any less authentic or true to the traditions from which they come. This holds true for American Indian and European American traditional cultural affiliations to the Black Hills and WCNP.

The authenticity of Lakota attachments to the Black Hills, however, has been challenged in recent years by a number of historians and journalists ill-informed about how cultural traditions recreate themselves over time in new and different ways. Today’s traditions may express themselves differently and appear in new contexts, but as argued in the previous section, the beliefs that contemporary Lakotas and Cheyennes hold about the Black Hills are faithful to traditions that stretch back countless generations and that, in some instances, they share with other tribal nations also known to have lived in the area, notably the Arapahos, Arikaras, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Poncas.

I. EUROPEAN AMERICAN CULTURAL AFFILIATIONS

Currently, much of the way the park represents itself follows the path of a history focused on European Americans and their presence in and connections to the area. It chronicles the history of European American explorations in and around the Hills, the story of the cave’s discovery and development, the establishment of the park’s game reserve, the improvements to its facilities during the years of the Civilian Conservation Corps [CCC], and the management of park property. There are three aspects of local European American history and cultural heritage, however, not well developed in park interpretive material.

A. Local Ranch Culture

First of all, little attention is given to the early history of ranching on the lands that now make up the park and those being proposed as an addition to the park (e.g., the Sanson Ranch). Portions of the park were homesteaded for ranches in the late nineteenth century, and much of the rest of its land was an open range where privately owned cattle and horses freely roamed. There are many interesting lessons that can be taught about the early history of the open range in the Black Hills and the relationship between private-property holdings and public lands. There are significant lessons about the environment of WCNP and the southern Hills more generally, especially the advantages these offered for the small-scale cattle enterprises that laid the foundation of traditional European American ranch culture in Fall River and Custer counties. Interesting stories also exist around the conflicts between local domestic users who historically laid claim to resources on federally managed lands in and around the park and other groups of public users, who desired to preserve them for aesthetic and recreational purposes. Many of these stories certainly encompass the many ways the park has attempted to rehabilitate its landscapes to support the survival of various animals, plants, and minerals for future generations to know and appreciate.

Previous research (Long 1992, Western History Research 1992) on park lands and homesteads offers an important set of data to begin building interpretive programs around the area’s early ranch cultures. A more systematic historical effort needs to take place, however, to match the names of some of the park’s land patentees with local family histories, published and unpublished. For some families, such as the McAdams, Sansons, and Stablers, their histories can be reconstructed fairly easily through extant and readily available historical documents. Others,
however, will require a more extensive survey of local records and newspapers as well as the collection of oral histories. Since the generation of people who lived on park lands, or whose parents occupied them, are now passing, it is imperative that oral histories get recorded before some of the details of living on these ranches is lost. It would also be important to support historical archaeological research and the excavation of the remains of some of the park’s homestead sites. This work could become part of an effort to reconstruct an early homestead in the vicinity of the park’s headquarters and to use it to educate the public about this important era in the park’s history and the Black Hills more generally.

B. The Culture of Regional Tourism

Second, only limited consideration is given to the culture of tourism in the Black Hills, and the important, indeed pioneering, role that WCNP played in its development. In recent years, tourism as a cultural and historical phenomenon has become a popular subject of academic study. There are many stories to tell of how WCNP developed in tandem with the growth of the spa industry in Hot Springs at the end of the nineteenth century, and how, in later years, it became more closely linked to the national culture of vacationing and sightseeing. The twentieth century forms of leisure travel tied the park to scenic and wildlife attractions farther north on the lands of the Black Hills National Forest and Custer State Park, especially the areas of Harney Peak, Sylvan Lake, the Needles, and the Cathedral Spires. Tourism is a feature of the European American experience that articulates with tribal histories in the area, especially between the years 1920 and 1970, and it is one where WCNP played some role, albeit for a very brief period of time in 1937 and 1938, when it involved local Lakotas in its interpretive programming. It is also one of the few areas where some degree of mutual interest and cooperation evolved between local whites and Indians. Notwithstanding some of the critical commentary on these relationships, especially their exploitative aspects, they do draw attention to one kind of interaction between local whites and Indians not dominated by conflict.

Again, this is an area of the park’s history that requires further research. Much of this could easily be put together through materials located in the park’s own library, through travel-oriented brochures and books archived in state, county, and city libraries, and through a more thorough search of articles in local newspapers from the Hot Springs Star, the Custer County Chronicle, and the Rapid City Journal, all of which are invaluable sources of information on local tourism. Oral history work would be valuable here as well, particularly interviews with older residents of the region involved in organizations like the Kiwanis Club and the Junior Chamber of Commerce that actively promoted the region’s travel, recreational, and leisure assets. Former rangers and staff at the park should also be sought out to share their recollections and vignettes of events happening at the park over the years that reveal how the park’s own history evolved in tandem with wider trends in the culture of tourism in the United States.

C. Trails and Travel

Another topic where the histories of European Americans and local tribal nations come together is also related to travel, but at a much earlier point in the history of park lands. Indeed, there are many parallels, albeit of very generalized nature, between the local and long-distance relationships of tribes to the Black Hills in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and those of European Americans in later times. From 1874 to the present, European Americans have
had very different kinds of cultural attachments to the Hills, depending on where they come from, and this is revealed in the contrasting relations of residents and tourists to the area.

The trails that first brought tribes, then European trappers, and later prospectors and settlers into the Hills’ interiors are the subject of a rich body of writing. One of these trails, a spur of the Sidney-Deadwood route to Custer, entered the Hills at the Buffalo Gap and crossed park properties along Beaver Creek and some of its tributaries. Members of the Jenney Expedition and forces under General Crooks’ forces used this trail. When the gold rush was over in Custer, the trail was no longer a major route for outsiders to access the Hills’ interiors, although it continued to play a role in the movement of local residents and their commercial traffic. Another, the Cheyenne-Deadwood trail, came through Red Canyon and followed either Pleasant Valley or Shirttail Canyon as alternate routes to Custer, South Dakota; it skirts the edge of the park’s water supply area. After exploring the South Fork of the Cheyenne River, the Black Hills Expedition of 1874 traveled through Shirttail Canyon on their return trip to the expedition’s main encampment on French Creek. Two years later, Samuel Hinman’s exploratory party may have used this trail too. Today, a modern highway follows portions of the trail. A third major trail, which follows the Red Valley or the Race Track, crosses the northern sections of park property, and today, it is the location for one of the park’s major roads. Historically, it was the site of a local wagon route and an area for homesteading. It was also very important to the Lakotas and Cheyennes not only as a thoroughfare and camping area, but also a site of one of their most significant stories about the area and the nature of animal-human relationships.

The use of these trails over time tells a lot about how the history of the Black Hills unfolded until the end of the nineteenth century, and how it evolved in the twentieth century too. The trails illustrate the diverse ways tribal peoples adapted to the Black Hills, and how they used different parts of the Hills on a seasonal basis before European Americans arrived in large numbers. They can also be used to reveal aspects of their twentieth century relationship to the Hills as well. When Lakotas returned to the Hills after 1877 to procure their lodgepoles and to participate in the summer celebrations of local white communities, they arrived by wagon or on horseback. Some traveled portions of the park’s old transportation grid to reach destinations in the Hills’ interiors, and they also camped here as well.

European Americans used these same trails for many decades. First, the trappers and traders who arrived in the area at the turn of the nineteenth century followed them to reach their trapping sites. Except for Jedediah Smith’s brigade, which probably crossed the Black Hills along Beaver Creek and the Race Track, there is little direct information on the presence of these early European Americans at WCNP. There is, however, a richer documentary record for areas immediately to the north in the neighborhood of French, Grace Coolidge and Battle creeks. The trails also reveal stories about later generations of European Americans, the challenges they faced in entering and eventually settling the Hills, including their hostile encounters with Lakotas and Cheyennes, who were trying to defend their own territories and rights of way along these routes. The early history of the Beaver Creek route is associated with a number of interesting events, and even though many of the more notable ones took place outside park properties near Pringle or the Buffalo Gap, they nonetheless reveal one of the roles that park lands played in the history of European American settlement and development in the Hills. Many of these trails continued to be used well into the twentieth century by local white residents to reach their homesteads, fields, pastures, and the lands on which they hunted, collected timber for fuel, and gathered plants for food and medicine.

Some of the Hills’ modern highways and access roads still follow the old trail system. Yet, portions of certain trails, including the Race Track and the Sidney-Deadwood spur to Custer,
remain undeveloped. The sections of the more important trails that cross park lands should be protected from further development and even possibly listed together on the National Register of Historic Places as part of an integrated trail system. The trails offer an important avenue to the above ground history of the park, which unfortunately still occupies a subordinate position in comparison with the narratives on its underground spaces. If nothing else, portions of the trails that pass over park properties should be carefully marked and surveyed by archaeologists because of their early importance to both tribal and European American occupation and use of the Hills.

II. TRIBAL TRADITIONS AND CULTURAL AFFILIATIONS

Tribal cultural attachments to WCNP have been downplayed historically in the park’s interpretive and promotional material, and these are the ones that are given the greatest attention here, not only because current federal legislation mandates their consideration, but also because these affiliations involve complex and often new areas of interpretation and management for park staff and administrators. The discussion is divided into four sections. The first focuses on identifying the tribal nations with historic affiliations to the park and singling out those that should be included in future consultations. The second gives consideration to specific sites in the park that have special significance to local tribes, along with some of the preservation and management issues that surround them. The second describes the traditional uses to which park properties were put and the kinds of requests that tribes are likely to make to gain access to park lands and resources that fall under the definition of “traditional cultural properties.” The fourth topic addresses areas of tribal cultures that might be included in park interpretive programming and the importance of involving local tribal nations in this activity.

A. The Circle of Consulting Nations

For many of the reasons, already enumerated upon, WCNP is not only an historically important area with diverse waves of human habitation from prehistoric to modern times, but it is also a culturally significant one. It represents an area long known as a source of faunal, floral, and mineral provisions, and a place imbued with many important sacred properties. These features alone recommend further consultation with a number of different tribes. The situation is complicated, however, by the fact that park properties sit on contested lands whose ownership continues to be the subject of considerable dispute and will likely remain so into the near future.

There is no hard and fast way to make recommendations on which of the tribes who historically occupied and/or used park lands should be contacted for further consultation. On cultural grounds, for example, the groups requiring consultation are either straightforward and simple, or subtle and complex, depending on the criteria one uses to define the nature of the cultural affiliation. In the broadest sense, the case could be made that any group with a known historically documented occupancy and/or use of the area in historic times is eligible. This could include as many as twenty-four different contemporary tribal nations. If narrower criteria are used in selecting tribes for consultation, the number of tribes included is considerably reduced, but the selection process is more complicated. Although many tribes are reported to have been present in this part of the Black Hills, only a few of them had any long-standing and enduring cultural attachment to the area. Indeed, the only extensive published documentation pertaining to a cultural awareness of and/or a sacred affiliation with park properties refers to the Cheyennes and Lakotas. This is not to say that any of the other tribes did not have, or continue to have, any cultural and/or spiritual ties to the area. It only means that there is no record in the huge body of source material we consulted that gives evidence of such an association. As a result, the possible
saliency of other tribal cultural affiliations to the park is much more difficult to gauge. The Arapahos are one tribe, for example, that maintain cultural attachments to the park not addressed in published sources. The Arapahos can be recommended for consultations on other grounds, notably their historic legal ties to the area, so the lack of any published record of a cultural affiliation should not exclude them. This tribe and others, including the Arikaras and Plains Apaches, whose cultural resource staff claim continuing interests in the park, traveled and stayed in the general region of the park at various points in their history, and they also had close alliances and patterns of intermarriage with the Lakotas and/or Cheyennes who do have important and documented cultural links to the park. Even though the Arikaras and Plains Apaches do not have any legal standing with respect to claims on the Black Hills, at least from the perspective of U.S. treaty making, they still retain memories of the area from earlier historical periods.

Except for the Lakotas and Cheyennes, there is no easy and formulaic way to determine which of the tribes with an historical affiliation to the park area should be included in consultations. In large part, their inclusion in the consultative process is a function of the purposes for which their advice is being sought. If the concerns are related primarily to the contemporary religious use of the area, then the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos are the primary groups to consult. If the issues revolve around protohistoric archaeological sites that come under NAGPRA guidelines, then Plains Apaches and Arikaras may need to be approached for consultation. If the questions have to do with the history of the area’s occupation and use in the late eighteenth century, then the entire roster of tribal nations with known affiliations to the region might be called in for advice.

In addition to the historical and cultural grounds for consulting various tribes, there are also certain legal considerations that need to be addressed. Of prime importance are the treaties that the federal government entered into with various tribal nations, which in one degree or another acknowledged their sovereignty over the Black Hills. Starting with the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851, the entire Black Hills were recognized by the United States government to be part of the land holdings of the Sioux nation. The Sioux included in this treaty, which incidentally was never ratified by Congress, are the Lakota-speaking divisions: the Oglalas, Sicangus, Itazipcos, Miniconjous, Sicaspas, Hunkpapas, and Oehnonpas, the Dakota divisions of the Yanktons, and through a later addendum to the treaty, the Lower Yanktonnais. When another treaty was negotiated in 1868 to form the Great Sioux Reservation, representatives of the various Lakota divisions, some of the Yanktonnai, and the Santee Dakotas of Nebraska, but not the Yankton, signed it. This treaty also recognized the presence and rights of other friendly tribes who resided in the midst of the Lakotas, namely, the Northern Araphaoes and the Northern Cheyennes. Another treaty in 1868 with the Northern Arapahos and Northern Cheyennes further affirmed their rights to remain on lands that made up the Great Sioux Reservation, which included the Black Hills and WCNP. All of these tribes were also represented by people who entered into the controversial agreement of 1876 that led to the passage of the Black Hills Act in 1877, under which tribal lands in the Black Hills were seized illegally by the United States.

The 1877 Act is at the heart of the legal and political controversies that still engulf the Black Hills and the lands on which WCNP now sits. Whether one takes the position that the legal status of the Hills has been settled or not, it is clear that the federal government has long recognized (at least since 1851) that various tribes of the Sioux Nation have historical entitlements to the Black Hills and that the Northern Cheyennes and Northern Arapahos have historical rights to the area as well by virtue of having jointly occupied the area with the consent of their Sioux friends and relatives. On these grounds alone, the modern day tribes whose ancestors were party to, or covered by, the two 1868 Fort Laramie treaties should be included among the tribes contacted for further consultation.
In recommending the tribes with whom further consultation is required, highest priority is given to tribes with treaty ties as well as substantive historical and cultural connections to the area of WCNP. In the second tier are groups who do not have affiliations on all three grounds, but, nonetheless, either have strong historic or cultural claims to the area that merit their possible consideration. Any decision to include them among consulting tribes, however, is more contingent and tied to specific cultural or historic issues. The third and fourth tiers include tribes with known historical ties to the area but for whom there are neither treaty ties nor apparent and enduring cultural affiliations to the park area.

1. First Circle

The first circle includes tribal nations whose connections to the area were acknowledged in treaties, who have strong cultural and historical attachments that are documented in the historical and/or ethnographic record, and whose cultural preservation officers have indicated a cultural interest in the park. All of them need to be included among the circle of consulting tribes.

a. The Lakotas

First and foremost among this group is the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Given the proximity of their reservation to the southeastern Hills, this tribe has had the longest continuing cultural relationship to the park in modern times. Most of the stories about Wind Cave or the Race Track come from Lakotas and Cheyennes who are members of this tribe. Two bands identified with the Oglala division, the Wazazi and Oyruxpe, were known to cover this area in the 1830s. The Oglalas are also the Lakota division with the earliest record of occupancy in the Hills. Leaders from this division of the Sioux Nation were among the first to challenge the legality of the 1877 Agreement and to pursue the case in federal court. In more recent times, members of this tribe have been the most active in staging protests and occupations over tribal treaty rights governing the Black Hills, and they have been at the forefront in trying to bring various land recovery bills before Congress. There is no question that this tribe needs to be consulted not only because they have some of the strongest ties on historical, political, and cultural grounds to the area of WCNP, but also because this is the tribe whose members are among the most likely to look to the park as a place to conduct some of their religious observances. The cultural preservation officer with whom we spoke indicated that the entire area of the park, but especially Wind Cave and the Race Track has traditional cultural significance to the Oglalas.

A second Lakota population that has strong connections to the park represents the Lower Brule and Rosebud Sioux tribes whose members are descendents of the Sicangu (Brule) people. This population also arrived in the vicinity of the Black Hills at an early date, and some of their bands were reported to establish their winter camps in areas within easy reach of what are now park properties. Their leader, Spotted Tail, wanted to have his agency established near the park at the Buffalo Gap in 1874. Luther Standing Bear wrote about his tiospaye camping in this area during the same period. Also, a number of the stories about Wind Cave and the area of the Black Hills where it is located come from members of this tribe, especially those who live on the Rosebud Reservation, which was also the location for the settlement of a small number of Cheyennes. Sicangu leaders were parties to the signing of the 1851 and 1868 Fort Laramie Treaties, and they also played a role in future political and legal efforts to reclaim Sioux rights to the Hills. These two tribes also need to be included in the consultative process. Members of the Rosebud Tribe have already participated in archaeological research taking place at the park, and their cultural resource officer is very interested in being involved in all future consultations because of the importance of the area to the tribe in the conduct of some of their religious observances.
Three other tribes, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, and Fort Peck Assiniboin-Sioux Tribe are made up of people descended from the northern or Soane divisions of Lakotas, namely, the Hunkpapas, Sihasapas, Oohenupas, Minneconjous, and Itazipcos. These divisions were also represented in the signing of the 1851 and 1868 Fort Laramie Treaties, and their modern descendents took part in legal and congressional actions to regain their proprietary interests in the Hills. All of the Soane have strong connections to the Black Hills, but most of the evidence in the historic record and in their own oral traditions associates them with the northern reaches of the Hills. Some of the Minneconjous, however, were reported to have settled near the southeastern Hills during the 1850s and 1860s. All of these Lakotas hold significant cultural knowledge about Wind Cave, the Race Track, and the neighboring Buffalo Gap that has been recorded in historic and ethnographic sources, and therefore, they also need to be included among the consulting tribes. The cultural preservation officers of the Standing Rock, Fort Peck, and Cheyenne River tribes all expressed strong interest in participating in future consultations.

b. The Cheyennes

The Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Montana and the Southern Cheyenne Tribe of Oklahoma need to be included in the inner circle of consulting tribes as well. Northern Cheyenne bands associated with the Masikota, Totoimana, Omisis, Hisiometaneo, and Suhtaoi divisions of the tribe are known to have inhabited and/or used the Black Hills from the middle of the eighteenth century until 1877. The Masikota were probably the group of Cheyennes that Francis Parkman placed in the southern Black Hills on his 1849 map. After 1877, segments of the northern divisions of Cheyenne were widely dispersed. Some were settled with the Southern Cheyennes, after their forced removal to Oklahoma in 1878, but others returned north where they were eventually enrolled either among the Oglalas at Pine Ridge and the Sicangus at Rosebud or settled on their own reservation in Montana. The Cheyennes were not explicitly identified with the Black Hills in the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty, although they were recognized by Sioux leaders, including Red Cloud, and by government agents as part of the “Sioux Nation.” They also were not explicitly named in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty with the Sioux, but they were included in its provisions as members of “friendly tribes” who had a right to remain on the Great Sioux Reservation, which included the Black Hills and WCNP. Some of their members were also parties to another 1868 treaty at Fort Laramie, in which they were given a choice of joining other Cheyennes in Oklahoma or remaining among the Lakotas. Most of the Northern Cheyennes chose to stay in the north among their Lakota friends and relatives.

The Southern Cheyenne Tribe of Oklahoma is descended mostly from Cheyennes who lived in and around the Black Hills before 1835. The Wotapio division of the tribe lived along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River at the end of the eighteenth century, and other divisions lived at the Forks of the Cheyenne River until the 1820s when they began to move as a group to the Platte River. None of the original body of the Southern Cheyennes, however, was ever a party to treaties and agreements involving the Black Hills and WCNP. After 1878, members of some of the northern division of the Cheyenne nation who were parties to the treaties joined them. In particular, some of the Masikotas who remained in the area of WCNP until the 1870s were eventually enrolled with the Southern Cheyenne Tribe.

The strong cultural attachments of both the northern and southern divisions of the Cheyenne tribe to the Black Hills mostly refer, at least in the published literature, to the areas of Bear Butte and Bear Lodge Butte on the northern edge of the Hills, and these are the places to which the Cheyennes have traveled in the twentieth century from the considerable distances of their modern
communities in Oklahoma and Montana. The Cheyennes, however, have many stories about the Race Track and the Buffalo Gap and the origins of some of their ceremonies are associated with this area. They also retain a spiritual attachment to the thermal waters at Hot Springs, and they were reported to return to this area in the twentieth century. They have sacred stories about a cave in the southern Hills, and even though it is not explicitly identified as Wind Cave, there is a high degree of probability that this is the cave mentioned in one of their Sweet Medicine stories. Although the Cheyennes are not reported in published sources to have taken part in any active religious observances on park properties, the cultural preservation officers of both Cheyenne tribes indicate that they continue to fast and conduct other ceremonies in this area, and one of them also identified the southeastern Black Hills as a location for securing some of the plants used in their religious observances. The evidence in the published literature, combined with the strong continuing interests of the Southern Cheyennes and Northern Cheyennes, recommend that both Cheyenne tribes be included in the inner circle of consulting tribes.

c. The Arapahos

The Northern Arapaho Tribe of Wyoming and the Southern Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma are descended from peoples who settled territories along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River at locations in close proximity to the Buffalo Gap and WCNP in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. After 1806, most of the Arapaho bands moved to locations on the western side of the Hills. While the Southern Arapahos moved south and eventually ended up on a reservation in Oklahoma, the Northern Arapaho remained in the north. Two of their bands were reported to continue to live and travel at locations on the western side of the Black Hills until 1877. Unlike the Cheyennes, the Arapahos are explicitly named in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty with the Sioux and in the Black Hills Act of 1877. Also, many members of the Northern Arapahe Tribe are intermarried with and closely related to people from the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Like the Cheyennes, they have significant cultural ties to the Black Hills, and they consider Bear Butte and Bear Lodge Butte sacred sites. There is no evidence in the historic and ethnographic literature to suggest any strong cultural traditions associated with the area of WCNP. Personal communication and correspondence with Loretta Fowler (2001) and Jeffery Anderson (2001), the two most prominent contemporary ethnographers of Arapaho culture, confirms the absence of specific evidence in the published literature. Both advise that this literature may not be a reliable indicator of extant cultural interests and affiliations, however. Representatives of the culture resource offices of both tribes claimed a cultural interest in the area. There are strong historic grounds for including the Arapahos among the first circle of consulting tribes, and there are also cultural ones that need to be established through further consultations with representatives of the two Arapaho tribes.

d. The Dakotas (Crow Creek and Santee Sioux Tribes)

The Crow Creek Tribe of South Dakota and the Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska were also included in the signing of the 1868 Treaty at Fort Laramie, although there is no historic evidence that either of these tribes ever lived in or around the Black Hills. Some members of the Santee Sioux Tribe, however, did accompany the 1874 Black Hills Expedition as scouts. Historically, eastern Dakota peoples, which include the Yanktonnais who are members of the Crow Creek Tribe, lived east of the Missouri River and covered much of the country to the modern day border of Minnesota. The Dakotas who became members of the Santee Sioux Tribe lived in the eastern part of Minnesota along the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers until 1858, when they were settled on a reservation bordering the Minnesota River. After hostilities erupted between the Dakotas and their white neighbors in 1862, some of these Dakota were imprisoned and later moved to what is now known as the Santee Sioux Reservation in Nebraska. Although both of these tribes
claim rights to the Black Hills and WCNP by virtue of having signed the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and the 1876 Black Hills Agreement, and although both participated in the claims’ case and congressional actions to bring about a return of lands in the Black Hills, their historical connections to the Hills are more recent. The cultural resource officers of the Crow Creek and Santee Sioux tribes, who were party to the 1868 treaty, have expressed an interest in being consulted on Wind Cave National Park. Since these tribes were parties to treaties, agreements, and claims covering the Black Hills, they need to be included with the Lakotas in the first circle.

The cultural preservation officers with whom we spoke recommended different kinds of consultation models, however. Some of the representatives of the different Lakota/Dakota tribes with an interest in park properties suggested meeting as a group since the park is part of the cultural patrimony of the entire Sioux (Lakota/Dakota) Nation. This follows a culturally normative pattern of decision-making among the Lakotas where matters of widespread concern are handled by collectively constituted deliberative bodies. The Arapahos and Cheyennes indicated they are interested in consulting but as separate groups. Since disagreements currently exist over who has “rights” to the area, and since there have been tensions between tribes concerning various Black Hills claims, requests to hold separate and private consultations with the Cheyennes and Arapahos need to be honored and respected.

2. Second Circle

The second circle contains tribes with strong legal, historical, and/or cultural ties to the southeastern Hills, but among whom there are no published cultural traditions specifically tied to the area of WCNP.

a. The Dakotas (Yankton, Spirit Lake, Sisseton, Flandreau, & Minnesota Groups)

Most of the other Dakota tribes, the Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, the Flandreau Sioux Tribe, the Yankton Sioux Tribe, and the four federally recognized Dakota communities in Minnesota, did not have strong and lasting historical associations with the area of the Black Hills where WCNP is located. Although some of the Yankton/Yanktonnais may have traveled to this area to hunt, and although some of the Sissetons, Wahpetons, Wahpekutes, and Mdewakantons were known to have taken refuge in the Black Hills after the 1862 hostilities in Minnesota, their stay in the area was short-lived, and at best, it constituted a tertiary relationship to the area (see Chapter Seven). Furthermore, there is nothing in the ethnographic literature that suggests any older cultural attachment to the area where WCNP is now located. Present day members of these tribes, however, claim cultural connections based on a pan-Sioux identity and consider the area sacred. Through intermarriages and other close relations, many modern Dakotas have adopted many of the cultural beliefs of their Lakota relatives. The Spirit Lake and the Flandreau cultural resource officers did not indicate any interest, however, in being parties to consultations on WCNP, although individual members of these tribes do have knowledge of the area and consider it sacred. The cultural preservation officer of the Yankton Sioux Tribe deferred to the Oglala Sioux Tribe for advisory responsibilities on matters relating to WCNP. Generally speaking, the interests of these Dakota tribes are not as strong as the Lakotas, Cheyennes, or Arapahos, but they still must be respected because many of their members are descended from the Lakotas and some of the Dakota peoples who had historic ties to the region.


**a. The Arikaras**

The Arikaras have some of the oldest connections to the southeastern region of the Hills, probably extending back to prehistoric times. In the early historic era, they were known to have taken their bison hunts to the upper reaches of the Cheyenne, Bad, and White rivers in easy reach of the Buffalo Gap and the lands around WCNP. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, for reasons described at length elsewhere in this report, they no longer had easy access to the Black Hills, and by 1851, the Hills were considered enemy territory. The Arikaras have stories of locations in the Black Hills, but nothing about Wind Cave and the area that immediately surrounds it. None of their religious observances appear to be tied to the WCNP area either, nor have any other specific cultural connections been reported in the published literature. The Arikaras were not identified with this region of the Black Hills in treaties and agreements negotiated with the United States, although areas of the far northwestern Hills were considered part of their hunting territory in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851. Some of their scouts traveled with the Black Hills Expedition in 1874, and they were an important source of information about tribal beliefs surrounding the Hills. The Arikaras are now members of the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota, where they live with the Hidatsas and Mandans who also had early connections to the Black Hills but primarily in their northwestern reaches. In fact, the Mandans recently returned to Bear Butte to conduct a Buffalo Dance, according to the cultural preservation officer of the Three Affiliated Tribes. There is little basis for including the Arikaras within the inner circle of consulting tribes, but they certainly need to be consulted in a wider advisory circle especially on matters that come under the guidelines of NAGPRA. The cultural resource officer of the tribe indicated that all three tribes have connections to the Black Hills, and she expressed a strong interest in being involved in future consultations.

3. **Third Circle**

All of the remaining tribes with known historical connections to the area of WCNP area lived in this region in the eighteenth century and have been removed from it for more than two hundred years. These include the Comanches, Crows, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, and Poncas. The tribes who expressed interest in being involved in consultations are included in this circle, while those who do not wish to be consulted are listed later.

a. **Kiowas**

The Kiowas lived in the vicinity of WCNP for only a short period of time, from about 1760 to 1790. Although members of this tribe retained memories of their former occupation in this area of the Black Hills, their sacred stories refer primarily to places in the Hills’ northern reaches, notably Bear Butte and Bear Lodge Butte. There are no apparent and enduring cultural attachments to the lands that make up WCNP, at least as revealed in the ethnographic sources studied for this report. The tribe’s cultural preservation officer indicated that the tribe had important cultural interests in the Hills, but he needed to have more time to consult with his elders to determine whether any of these covered the region of Wind Cave National Park. He requested that the tribe remain on the consulting list until he could confirm whether or not the park had any importance to the tribe.

b. **Plains Apaches**

Some of the Plains Apaches also retained memories in the late nineteenth century of having lived near the southern Hills, and they also maintained detailed traditions of sacred sites in the
northern Hills, notably Bear Butte and Bear Lodge Butte. Along with the Arikaras, the Apaches have some of the oldest documented ties to the southern Hills. Apache-speaking peoples known as the Padoucas are commonly associated with the archaeological sites that are part of what is known as the Dismal River Complex. The remains of some of these sites, which are now inundated by the Angostura Reservoir, contained tools made from flint that came from Battle Mountain, indicating that these Apaches spent time in areas very close to WCNP. Other Apaches, who became known as the Plains Apaches, were reported in historic sources on the northern and western side of the Hills. They may have absorbed some of the Padoucas into their ranks when this population disappeared as an identifiable population in the late eighteenth century. While none of the Apaches have any on-going cultural connections, which would qualify them as candidates for intensive consultations with WCNP, they do have important cultural traditions about the Hills, including stories about the origin of their Manitidae Society, which may have originated somewhere in the southern Hills. They also have the sorts of demonstrable historical affiliations that require meeting with them on matters relating to protohistoric archaeological remains falling under NAGPRA guidelines. Although the Fort Sill Apaches at Lawton, Oklahoma have no interest in participating in any consultations dealing with the park, the Plains Apaches of Anadarko have expressed an interest in doing so because of their historic ties to the area.

c. The Poncas

The Poncas, and at times their close relatives among the Omahas, hunted along the upper reaches of the White River at the southeastern base of the Black Hills from 1740 to 1760. In their oral traditions, they retained memories of the Black Hills, recalled hunting there, and even had a name for Wind Cave, suggesting they had knowledge of it that probably stretches back to the early eighteenth century. There is no apparent evidence in the ethnographic record, however, of any storytelling traditions or religious observances associated with the cave and its immediate environment or the Black Hills more generally. After 1760, the Omahas had little connection to the Hills, although the Poncas retained some limited and episodic contact largely through their occasional alliances with the Sicangu Lakotas, with whom they intermarried in the early nineteenth century. Indeed, the Wazazi Lakotas were of mixed Lakota-Ponca ancestry, and they were closely associated with the southeastern area of the Black Hills in historic times. The Black Hills were not included in any of the treaties that the Poncas negotiated with the United States, nor were they among the lands that this tribe ceded. Today, the Poncas are members of two tribes: The Northern Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and the Southern Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma. Other than an old name for Wind Cave and an historic presence in the region in the eighteenth century, there is no evidence in ethnographic sources for any continuing cultural attachment to the park. The cultural preservation officer of the Northern Ponca indicated that his tribe did not have any current cultural interest in the area, while the officer for the Southern Ponca knew the tribe had historic ties to the area, but is not certain about any further consultation with the park.

4. Outside the Circle

These are tribes with historic connections to the Black Hills and to the region of Wind Cave National Park but who do not have any current cultural interests in the area and who do not want to be involved in consultations.
a. Comanches

Some of the Comanches, perhaps with a few Utes and Shoshones in their ranks, were known to live and travel in reach of the southern Hills in the mid-eighteenth century and to have taken over areas once occupied by the Padouca Apaches. None of these tribes retained memories of this occupation in any of their oral traditions recorded in the published literature. Although the cultural resource officer of the Comanche Tribe of Oklahoma heard that Wind Cave was a location “spirits” frequented, he indicated that only those among his tribe who are descended from or intermarried with Sioux know of this tradition, and that the people at Standing Rock should be the ones involved in consultations with NPS.

b. Crows

The Crows know about the area, but much of their knowledge centers on the battles that took place here with the Lakotas as late as the 1820s. The Lakotas recorded these raids in their winter counts too. Small groups of Crow may have lived along the South Fork of the Cheyenne River in the late eighteenth century amidst bands of Arapaho and Kiowa, but the main body of the tribe occupied areas northwest of the Hills. The cultural resource officer of the Crow Tribe indicated that the park was beyond the boundaries of the geographic area in which they have any continuing and vested cultural interests.

B. The Identification of Culturally Significant Landscapes and Sites

For three tribal populations, the Lakotas, the Cheyennes, and the Arapahos, the area of WCNP is a place with important and enduring cultural meanings. There are two well-documented sites on park properties of sacred significance to one or more of these tribes, the Race Track and Wind Cave.

1. The Race Track

The Race Track is described in the sacred Cheyenne narrative, “The Great Race.” In their traditions, the story is associated with the origin of their Sun Dance, Oxheheom, and possibly their Animal Dance, Massaum. The Lakotas have similar versions of this story in their traditions, and like the Cheyennes, the story recounts an epic event that shaped the fundamental nature of human-animal relationships. The Lakotas also tie the Race Track to a circular constellation, whose stars historically marked tribal travels in and around the Black Hills for subsistence and the conduct of religious observances.

In some Cheyenne and Lakota versions of the Great Race story, the race begins at the Buffalo Gap, a location associated with the origins of other important institutions and with many stories of wondrous events in their histories and in the exploits of some of their culture heroes. The area of the Race Track inside the Buffalo Gap, including the segment that crosses WCNP, is part of what the Lakotas’ call Tatanka makalhpaya, the “Stomping Grounds of the Bison Bull,” and it is an area associated especially with herbal medicines and healing. Today, the Lakotas still come to this area of the Hills to harvest the bearberry or kinnikinick and redosier dogwood for tobacco mixtures used on religious occasions. They also continue to hold a sacred pipe ceremony near this site around the the time of the vernal equinox.
The Race Track is highly significant to both tribes on cultural and religious grounds. Indeed, all locations along the Race Track are considered sacred. The Lakota cultural preservation officers with whom we spoke singled it out as a site of special importance and one that demands protection. The Cheyenne officers emphasized its cultural significance to their tribes as well, and one of them remarked that even though other parts of the Race Track had been developed, the portion that covers park properties should be protected from any further development. Another recommended that it should be listed on the register of National Historic Places, and we concur (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

Since the arrival of European Americans, the Race Track has been developed, and from a tribal perspective, desecrated. Many portions of the Race Track were transformed in the early years of European American occupation of the Black Hills. Part of the town of Hot Springs and sections of I-90, as examples, were built on this track. Inside the borders of Wind Cave National Park, much of Race Track was homesteaded between the 1880s and 1920s before it was re-conveyed to the federal government and placed under the protection of WCNP. Today, one of the park’s unimproved public roads follows the track. Much of the Race Track, however, can still be protected from further development. The lands surrounding it should be maintained as much as possible in some semblance of their “original” state. The area of the park that covers the Race Track is relatively isolated and off the beaten path of the most heavily traveled tourist routes in the Black Hills, and it should remain so in the future. It should also be nominated to the National Historic Register and preserved as part of the original trail system in the Black Hills and as a place where the animals once raced against humans to determine who would be the hunters and the prey.

2. Wind Cave

The second site, Wind Cave, is one of the Lakotas’ most sacred sites. It is the subject of several different sacred story cycles, the Four Winds and Tokahe, Falling Star, and the Buffalo Wife. The last is also shared with the Cheyennes who tie it, however, to their narrative stories of the origin of the Race Track. In Lakota traditions, Wind Cave is the origin place of the Pte Oyate, the bison nation and their human relatives. It is connected to Tate, the Wind, and his sons, especially the North Wind, Waziyata and his grandfather, Waziya, the old man of winter. It is also the domicile of a Buffalo Woman, who appears to hunters and gifts them with bison, and in one story, possibly knowledge of the Sun Dance. There are other stories that associate the cave with additional spiritual figures, including a White Buffalo Bull (Tatanka), the Crazy Bull (Gnaskiyan), and Little People. Notwithstanding variations in the stories told about the cave and their different implications, all of them imbue the cave with sacred significance, and all of them speak to a wider set of beliefs about the vital relationships between caves, bison, regeneration, the wind, and the breath of life [ni or niya]. These beliefs are part of long-standing and widely shared cosmological traditions among the Lakotas, some of whose features are also shared with the Cheyennes and Arapahos. The Cheyennes and Arapahos have no particular published stories that can be linked, at least explicitly, to Wind Cave. Nonetheless, like the Lakotas, their cultural traditions equate caves, particularly those in the Black Hills, with the homes of animal spirits. They also view them as sites of emergence and rebirth. Some of the Cheyenne’s culture heroes, including Fallen Star and Mostoyef or Sweet Medicine, are associated with caves in the southern Hills and the origin of a sweatlodge that brought humans back to life.

Wind Cave is one of many caves located on park properties. While it is the one about which the most has been written, other caves are culturally significant too. Cheyennes believe all caves in the Black Hills hold the spirits of different animal species, and Lakotas take the position that
these caves are interconnected and form a labyrinth of passageways that lead to the underworld homes of the *Pte Oyate* and other animal nations. From a Lakota perspective, the entire area underneath the Hills’ limestone formation constitutes the home of the bison and other animals; it is the place where they remain in a spiritualized state before undergoing materialization and appearing on the earth’s surface. Any one of the openings to the subterranean world of the Black Hills is considered holy by the Cheyennes and the Lakotas, but the opening at Wind Cave is singled out, at least among the Lakotas, not only because of its strong *ni*, breath-like behavior, but also because of its proximity and connection to the Buffalo Gap, the Race Track, and the thermal waters at Hot Springs. Taken together, these sites form a highly sacred landscape to the Lakotas and the Cheyennes standing at the foundation of some of their most significant religious traditions and teachings.

Nothing appears in the published literature that specifically connects any of the Arapahos’ sacred stories with this particular part of the Black Hills. The Arapahos, however, have a number of sacred stories that refer to caves as origin sites for sacred knowledge. In general, they share many of the same beliefs with the Lakotas and Cheyennes about the relationship between caves, animals, rebirth, and the breath of life. Therefore, it would not be surprising to learn from their cultural resource staffs and other spiritually knowledgeable people that they hold similar ideas about this area of the Hills. The same holds true for the Arikaras.

Like the Race Track, the natural opening to Wind Cave and much of the surrounding area in Wind Cave Canyon has also undergone significant development. This area, however, was once a location rich in tipi rings and other archeological remains, many of which, according to Rufus Pilcher, an early park superintendent, were destroyed when the elevator to the cave was built. Some remains may still be present, and this area needs to be carefully surveyed by archaeologists. Surveys also need to be conducted around the openings to other caves in the park with special attention given to identifying cairns and other rock formations frequently used to mark the location of caves with probable spiritual significance in historic and/or prehistoric times. Although stone markers near the opening to Wind Cave are likely to have been destroyed, some of them may remain at locations near more remote cave openings in the park. Further consultations with local tribes also need to be held to determine whether other caves on park properties or other special sites in proximity to the opening of Wind Cave require protection.

### 3. The Landscape as a Whole

The importance of Wind Cave, the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and the Hot Springs is not about these sites as single landforms, separated from each other and isolated from the living world of which they are a part. Instead, their significance resides in their relationships to each other and to the wider universe that constitutes the entire Black Hills along with the animals, plants, and minerals that dwell there. Again, the whole area inside the Hogback, between the Buffalo Gap and Elk Mountain where Wind Cave is nested is sacred. This is an integrated landscape, whose sacredness derives from the relationships between the various living forms that inhabit the area. The Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs are located outside the park, but Wind Cave and part of the Race Track are within park boundaries.

The importance of this area and its landmarks to tribal peoples is often diminished and trivialized in European American writings with terms like “tales” and “legends,” implying that the stories associated with them are not to be taken seriously. This represents a serious misreading of the significance of these places and the stories that surround them, all of which speak to fundamental precepts about the workings of the cosmos in Lakota and/or Cheyenne traditions. In tribal perspectives, these landmarks and their associated stellar bearings reveal
systematic bodies of knowledge about universal life-giving and life-taking processes, which are akin to European American notions of “science.” The difference between the sciences of Lakotas/Cheyennes and European Americans resides not so much in the elements and processes they describe but in their underlying premises or assumptions about the basic nature of the relationship between spirituality and materiality. In Lakota and Cheyenne perspectives, it is impossible to separate these two dimensions. Consequently, all of the major sacred sites of these tribes attend simultaneously to what European Americans would identify separately as “religion” and “science.”

4. Other Possible Sites

At least in reference to what appears in published sources and other publicly accessible material we reviewed for this report, other more specific sites within park boundaries have not been identified in the literature on the historic tribes who occupied the area. One of the cultural resource officers, however, indicated the presence of a painting on a rock above the cave near the top of a mountain (probably, Elk Mountain), where he attended a sweat several years ago. Judging by the discussions we had with various cultural resource officers, all petroglyphs and pictographs in this area are sacred and need to be identified, preserved, and protected. Other than this site, no other locations in the park were singled out in the preliminary consultations we conducted. For reasons to be discussed momentarily, this should not imply that other sites do not exist. Indeed, it is highly likely that there are many sites within the boundaries of the park that are considered special but whose whereabouts is considered privileged information.

One of the most likely places for such sites is where springs are located, especially in connection with unusual rock outcroppings and overhangs. Springs, wherever they are situated, are considered “special” places and highly regarded by the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos (see Chapter Twelve for more details). Cold Springs Creek may be one such area, given the English names associated with some of its neighboring topographic features. Twin Sisters is the name of the local range where the park’s water supply is located. In Lakota traditions, this name is a euphemism for the Double-Woman, Winyan Nunpapika. A nearby spring off park properties is called Witch Springs, which may derive from an association with this figure, another double-spirit, the Two-Face, Anog-Ite, or her mother, Wakanka, who is often identified in early texts as a “witch.” In Cheyenne traditions, the cave in the southern Hills where Sweet Medicine performed his miraculous feat was the hideout of the Two-Faces. The Double Woman, the Two Face Woman, and Wakanka appear in a number of Lakota stories linked to the cave and/or the neighboring Hot Springs, and rock art related to the first figure has been identified at other nearby locations in the Black Hills (Sundstrom, L. 2002).

Springs, bluffs, and rocky outcroppings are also tied to Little People in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, and in fact, they are identified with these landforms in the traditions of many of the tribes known to have lived in this area of the Black Hills, including the Arapahos, Kiowas, and Poncas. These diminutive figures appear in Lakota stories about Wind Cave and the Hot Springs. They are well known for their capricious behavior, and people need to take special care when moving about the areas they are known to frequent. Offerings and prayers are often made to them. It is highly likely today, and certainly in the past, that springs and rock outcroppings on park properties hold links to Little People. All areas where springs are located on park properties should also be carefully surveyed by tribal consultants and archaeologists not only for evidence of occupation but equally important, for signs of spiritual activity. These areas are important in the culture history of the tribal peoples who occupied the area and also for some of the park’s early European American settlers. Of particular interest inside park boundaries are springs located on sections 11 and 14 of T5S R5E that belonged to Margaret Ferguson who formed the Siloam
Mineral Springs Company and tried to develop the hot springs on her property in 1904 (Western History Research 1992: 104). There is also a rich cluster of springs on the southwestern edge of the park, on and off park properties, marked on the old GLO maps.

Another striking topographic feature in the park, identified on an early GLO land map in Section 27 of T5SR6E, is a place called Giant’s Thumb, just west of the Race Track. This place name may very well be European American in origin, but if so, it is a curious coincidence, since much of the park area was once associated in Lakota traditions with the old man, Waziya, and his grandson, the North Wind, Waziyata, both of whom are often described as figures of gigantic stature.

Rankin Ridge is another location of special note. Narrow ridges of this order are often seen as culturally significant in Lakota/Dakota traditions and interpreted as the “backbone” of some spiritual figure or animal (Albers 1966-1976). Its location in the Black Hills corresponds with Lakota star maps and the relative geographic placement of Orion’s Belt known as Tayamni Cankahu (Backbone), which also make up another constellation in the form of a hand associated with a narrative where Fallen Star recovers the chief’s arm (Goodman 1992: 25-27). Although Charlotte Black Elk (1992: 50-51) claims that the stars of Orion’s Belt match the three famous prairies Slate, Reynolds, and Gilette in the center of the Hills on the Limestone Plateau, this identification doesn’t match the placement of the larger Tayamni [Animal] figure where the backbone is situated relative to the Race Track (see Goodman’s map 1992: 29). Even if Rankin Ridge is not coordinated with figures on Lakota star maps, it is the kind of landform commonly associated with sacred matters in local tribal traditions.

There are also burial sites in the area, one reported in the valley above the entrance to Wind Cave (Two Dogs in Parlow 1983a:6). Many Lakotas report that the Black Hills are an area people went to die, and a location where some of their ancestors were buried in historic times. Caves, as mentioned in earlier chapters, are portals between the world humans now live in and the world they enter and return from after death, and as result, there are likely to be burial grounds in their general vicinity. In fact, both the Lakotas and Cheyennes once buried their deceased in caves.

Also any areas of the park where certain animals, especially mule deer, bison, eagles, and elk, are known to frequent and feed may draw attention and require special respect, especially if these also coincide with unusual land forms or concentrations of significant plants (e.g., fetid marigold, bearberry, cowparnsip) and minerals, notably gypsum. Some of these areas may not draw attention on a tribal wide basis, but instead hold significance only to certain individuals and families who have spiritual attachments to these places.

Locations other than Wind Cave and the Race Track sacred to modern day Lakotas, Cheyennes, and/or Arapahos may not be easy to identify and rank as to their relative importance. Except for the locations associated with religious observances, such as Sun Dances, sweatlodges, and pipe ceremonies, which can be identified because they usually involve groups of people who need to occupy sites for an extended period and build temporary structures for which permits are required from the park service, other sorts of places are not likely to be known. Much religious observance among the Lakotas, Cheyennes, Arapahos, and other tribal nations of the Plains takes place under solitary conditions. There are many different places to which people travel for fasting and other prayerful observances or to acquire plant and mineral material used medicinally and ceremonially. These sites are usually kept secret and are not as easily identified. They are also much more variable and cover a wider range of locations. Typically, these are places where certain individuals and families have special relationships because of dreams, visions, or other spiritual encounters. Some of them may be important but known only to these individuals and
their families and/or to certain spiritually knowledgeable people. It is difficult to determine the importance of such places over others because their significance varies widely from one person, family, or community to another. The specific locations where some of the more solitary fasting and prayerful observances take place are probably not clearly demarcated, and the signs of their use may not be obvious. They may not be associated, as argued in Chapter Twelve, with elaborate and visible offerings such as cloth banners and tobacco ties. Since this is the land of the bison, the offerings are more likely to be unobtrusive and buried in the ground where the bison come from. Yet, for those who use them, they need protection from development and outside traffic. Indeed, one Lakota cultural resource officer was very explicit about the fact that all tobacco ties should be left alone and that visitors to the park should be explicitly instructed not to pick them up. In their informational material, other National Park sites, including Devil’s Tower National Monument and Badlands National Monument, advise visitors not to tamper with these offerings. Wind Cave National Park should do so as well.

Again, it must be emphasized that the sanctity of an area is not necessarily correlated with intensive use. Certain places may be avoided out of respect and used only by persons who know how to spiritually approach them. Their whereabouts is kept secret out of respect for the spiritual presence that resides there. Developments of any kind at these sites would be viewed as defiling.

Also for many of the religious observances that Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos practice today, there is not a set place where most of them must be conducted. The location of many of the sweatlodges and pipe ceremonies run by spiritually gifted people may be held in any of variety of locations, depending on the advice a religious practitioner is given in communications with his/her spiritual partners. Similarly, fasting and prayer can take place in many different places. It is critical to understand that there may be many different areas of the park where people have chosen and will choose to make solitary religious observances or conduct group ceremonies. The places people select may be based on tradition or the preferences of the people who serve as their spiritual guides, but they may also be completely novel, inspired by a spiritual revelation to seek out a certain spot to pray and communicate with that which is sacred.

5. Cultural Sensitivities Surrounding Identification of Site Locations

The ways in which the Lakotas and Cheyennes have talked about and conceptualized the Black Hills and their various landscapes, including those located at WCNP, make it difficult to single out a series of discrete sites that can be identified, segregated, and ranked for purposes of cultural protection and management. Where other landscapes exist within the boundaries of the national park, they already possess some degree of protection from further destruction and desecration. While the park service may want other spots to be identified and segregated for purposes of protection and management, this is not always possible or even desirable, especially when the total landscape of the park, or at the very least, a significant portion of it is understood as culturally significant. Park officials need to be mindful of the fact that people may not wish to divulge sacred sites out of fear that unwanted attention will be drawn to them. In my nearly forty years of experience working and living in American Indian communities, one of the things I’ve heard consistently is that sacred places should be left alone out of respect for the spiritual presence that resides there and people shouldn’t “play around” or “mess around” with them unless they know how to approach them properly and with due respect. There is a general sense, not at all unwarranted, that in keeping the locations of these places secret, this will give them the solitude they require and deserve, at the same time, to afford them some degree of protection.

As Suzan Harjo (2002:A3), the highly respected Cheyenne-Creek director of the Morning Star Foundation and frequent columnist in Indian Country Today writes:
Many traditional religious matters cannot be discussed or revealed. Some Native traditional religious matters must remain private and confidential because disclosure would violate the tenets of the religions themselves. Other Native traditional matters must remain private because many Native leaders and practitioners still fear that such disclosures would lead to another federal Indian “civilization” era.

It has been the experience of Native Americans that disclosure about the location, nature or use of sacred places leads to assaults on them. Many of these places are fragile and have been destroyed by too many visitors or vehicles or activities.

With federal agencies, however, a delicate line must be walked because all information is ultimately accessible to the public under various Freedom of Information laws. A recent Executive Order 13007, however, contains a very important provision under Section 1. Part (a) that reads: “Where appropriate, agencies shall maintain the confidentiality of a site.” This provides for some confidentiality, but a question that still exists is how does one protect information on sites and locales about which tribal peoples do not wish the public to have general or even specific knowledge? Obviously there are different levels on which this information might be solicited and received in a way that could be used by park staff “on a need to know” basis without making it available to the general public in reports like this one. Knowledge about sacred sites is a trust, and it is not a subject to which many outsiders are made privy, no matter what their ethnic background. Importantly, if these sites are to be identified, it needs to be done in direct consultation with the concerned parties, namely the tribes and the NPS staff, who will be entrusted with stewarding the knowledge of these places and protecting them from desecration and unwanted tourist traffic.

Consultations on these matters are very delicate undertakings. “Fishing expedition” sorts of inquiries, including the preliminary consultations for this report, are not likely to be successful in uncovering information on specific sites in need of protection. The identity of additional sites may come to light by asking people “what sites are sacred, and where are these located?” Many more are likely to remain unidentified, however. The danger of this approach is that the results may be interpreted as exhaustive when they are not.

With tribes as large and internally diverse as the Cheyennes and the Lakotas, the two most likely to have cultural attachments to sites other than the Race Track and Wind Cave, there are differences on a family, community, divisional, and even tribal basis. For instance, the Sicangu Lakotas may have a sacred map of the park that is different from the Oglala Lakotas or the Northern Cheyennes. As another example, people from Kyle on Pine Ridge may have different traditions than those from White Clay. To get an adequate sense of all the sites and landscapes deserving special care and respect would be an enormous undertaking, requiring meetings with every district on each Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho reservation. In fact, the importance of certain sites may never come to light until they face development, at which point people may come forward and reveal their location to protect them. This should not be construed as individuals fabricating something to block development for political reasons, but rather as a strategy to keep things secret unless they are threatened and likely to be irreparably harmed. Importantly, park staff need to ask the general questions, but they also need to be cautious about the completeness of any responses they receive to their queries. Whenever the park plans to develop something, such as put in a new trail or campground, tribes need to be brought to the table to look at the locations in order to determine if these are areas to which the tribe in general or specific segments of the tribe have direct interests. Here very specific, onsite consultations are imperative.
The park needs to approach these matters in an open-ended manner, and it needs to develop policies that are broadly based, able to cover the contingent ways in which the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho people typically identify and approach sites of cultural and even sacred significance. It is important for park staff to have some understanding of the basic practices and tenets associated with the traditions of the tribes who have vested cultural interests in the area. Allowances need to be made for the presence of sacred sites and the observance of spiritual practices in a variety of different areas within park boundaries, not just those that happen to have been identified by accident or revealed in a few published sources or verbal communications. The park needs to adopt a flexible plan in which policy and practice can be adapted to many different contingencies. Having said this, what can the park do in order to acquire some of the information necessary to develop workable guidelines?

As a start, park personnel need to consult directly and on a regular basis with the cultural resource staff of the tribes who have cultural interests in the park to determine the proper way to handle this kind of sensitive information and also to find out the best way to get the most input on sites of significance that individuals who know the area may wish to talk about. Above all, the park should never preemptively close or restrict discussions to certain individuals over others. If the park limits its consultations to people who hold elected or appointed tribal offices, they may not get input from knowledgable individuals not affiliated with tribal government. In general, sacred site identification is a vexatious issue for the managers of public lands and for the tribal peoples who want them protected and need to access them (Carroll 1993:16-21). They are vexatious precisely because of the cultural differences in the ways the two groups approach landscapes and the uses to which they put them (Greiser 1993 9-11; Othole and Anyon 1993:42-45). Tribal people are often not willing to divulge the whereabouts of significant sites because their locations need to be kept secret for any of a variety of cultural reasons. This secrecy makes it hard for administrators to inventory and rank the lands they manage with an eye to their protection and potential uses (Deloria and Stoffle 1998). There is no easy way to bridge this cultural gap, and we offer no facile schemes on how to approach the crossing. In this light, however, a few general recommendations can be made.

One thing we recommend is that the park first develop ways to involve tribes in interpretive programming on less sensitive cultural subjects (described in more detail later). A track record and positive history of dialogue between the park service and the concerned tribes has to happen before anyone is likely to entrust park staff with more specific information on matters of spiritual importance. A relationship of trust has to be developed, and this generally happens when tribes have long-term experience with individuals they know they can trust and rely upon. Unfortunately, this is sometimes difficult to achieve because park service professionals are frequently transferred and unable to remain at a site long enough to develop the kinds of relationships that instill trust and confidence. But even if this takes place and a good working rapport evolves, sites may still not be divulged for many of the reasons just described.

It must be remembered that besides its sacred significance, the area of WCNP has historic importance to the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos as a location where some of their bands lived and procured a livelihood before 1877, where some of their families traveled and/or camped in the summers until the early decades of the twentieth century, and where some of them fought and still struggle with European Americans and the United States government to maintain their access over a place that is a vital part of their cultural traditions and contemporary identities. Tribal elders from all of these tribes may know locations of historic culture value, including battle sites, camping spots, procurement areas, and trails traveled to reach other destinations in the Hills. Additional inquiries and oral history interviews should be conducted, perhaps in consultation with the culture and language teaching staffs of local tribal and state universities and directed at
learning about historic events and use patterns from times prior to as well as after this area of the Black Hills became a national park.

The park also needs to bring in archaeologists, such as Linea Sundstrom, with demonstrated experience in identifying rock art sites, cairns, alignments, and other physical features in the Black Hills associated with prehistoric spiritual activity. While a survey of this order may well identify cultural properties of importance in earlier times, these may not have any bearing on modern understandings of the area. When they are conducted, they should never be construed as exhaustive of the places where religious observances might have taken place or where they still occur in the present. Nonetheless, all sites of this order inside park properties need to be identified, preserved, and protected as part of the park’s rich cultural history.

This report and certainly all others that touch on matters of cultural significance should be shared with the tribes who have expressed an interest in the area, and indeed, most of the cultural officers with whom we spoke and who have any interest in WCNP want to have a copy of this report. In fact, a report such as this one offers a concrete way to open and advance dialogue. It can be used to get clarification on certain issues, correct inaccuracies, and determine which stories and bodies of information can be shared with a wider public in park interpretive programming. In this regard, it must be pointed out that this report is not infallible. It may very well contain errors in some of its representations and interpretations that need to be revised in consultation with culturally knowledgeable tribal advisors. Any research project like this one needs to be viewed as a work in progress. Based as it is on published sources and publicly accessible archival documents, it is only a starting point for a much richer and fuller body of knowledge derived from future consultations with tribes that have strong cultural affiliations to the area.

C. Tribal Access to the Park and Its Resources

Directly related to, and in some case indistinguishable from the issue of identifying sacred sites, is defining the kinds of access that tribal people may want to have to park properties. Over the past thirty years, Wind Cave National Park is an area to which Arapahos, Lakotas, and Cheyennes have come to conduct some of their traditional religious observances and where they have made requests for access to some of its resources.

1. Access for Religious Observances

Over the past thirty years, Lakotas have conducted many religious observances on park properties, including Sun Dances, pipe ceremonies, and sweatlodges. Cheyenne and Arapaho people have participated in some of these observances too or conducted separate and more private ones on park properties. Many of the observances important to contemporary Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho religious practice have specific connections to park properties, as in the origins of the Sun Dance, or through more broadly based associations derived from the more abstract connections of what happens spiritually in sweatlodges and what goes on in caves (see chapters in Section Four).

There is no question that all three of these tribes have legitimate traditional reasons to access the park for the conduct of any of a variety of ceremonies. The issue is where and when can these ceremonies be carried out. Many areas of the park where observances have taken place in the past are isolated, away from the heavily traveled areas around the opening to Wind Cave. Many park locations are not likely to generate serious conflicts of interest among competing user groups
because they are rarely accessed. Their isolation may pose other problems for the park and its staff; for example, they may not be well-suited for some of these observances because they cannot be easily accessed for emergency and sanitation purposes or because they pose fire dangers and other risks. In relation to many of their ceremonial observances, Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos are likely to prefer some of the more solitary areas of the park with limited vehicle access. But there may be occasions when tribes, especially the Lakotas, may request access to some of the more populated areas of the park that do raise concerns about the competing interests of different user groups, paralleling some of the conflicts over access associated with Devil’s Tower National Monument (Hanson and Chirinos 1991; Chirinos 1991; Dorst 2000) and Bear Butte State Park (Forbes-Boyte 1996, 1999).

The one area of the park where it will be most difficult to accommodate tribal access is the opening to the cave and the cave itself. Tribal people are (and have been) admitted to the cave through the normal course of group tours. Indeed, school districts from Pine Ridge and Rosebud bring their children here for educational purposes (Terry 1999, Personal Communication), and one cultural resource officer mentioned that the teachers and elders who accompany these field trips talk about the cave’s cultural importance to the tribe (Albers and Kittelson 2002). Lakotas and other tribes with an interest in the park do not appear to have been given any special access for the conduct of religious ceremonies inside the cave, although requests have been made in the past for such access. So far, requests to hold ceremonies inside the cave have been raised but not pressed (Terry 1999, Personal Communication).

There are a number of reasons why it is likely that many spiritually-minded Lakotas may not press the issue. On the one hand, some Lakotas may believe that areas of the cave now open to tourist traffic have already been desecrated, and as a result, they have been abandoned by the spirits who are now retreating to more inaccessible locations within the vast one-hundred square miles of passageways which form Wind Cave and connect it, as the Lakotas believe, to other cavern formations underneath the Black Hills. Some Lakotas may very well take the position that the publicly accessible parts of the cave have lost their spiritual power, something voiced by Lakota people and recorded in published sources in relation to Harney Peak and Bear Butte. On the other hand, some Lakotas may choose to avoid the cave precisely because it is the dwelling place of spirits and because it is “dangerous” to enter their sanctuary without taking respectful precautions, which they may either not know or not be prepared to undertake.

There is also the fact that no mention has been made in the published literature of ceremonies being conducted inside of caves, other than references to people being transported into the interiors of caves in dreams and visions. Even when people are reported to have used caves as places to fast and pray, it is not always clear whether they entered cave interiors or conducted their observances near their openings. The one reference (Stabler in Bohi 1962) to Lakotas touring the cave in the 1890s clearly describes their reverential and prayerful attitude towards this place. It is more likely that requests will continue to be made in the future for the use of surface locations where the cave is nested. Any of the more remote places in and around Elk Mountain where the cave is situated might be used for ceremonial purposes, and in fact, they have been so used in the past according to the culture resource officers of some Lakota tribes. Given native understandings of the interconnectedness of all caves in the Hills, it is also probable that requests will be made for the conduct of religious observances at some of the cave openings in more remote areas of park properties.

The park could be still pressed in the future to open the interiors of Wind Cave for religious observances outside the tour schedule. One culture resource officer indicated that some Lakota people would like to enter the cave privately to hear what the spirits are saying and to identify the
language they are speaking. Requests may very well be made for the conduct of prayerful observances that require the smoking of a pipe or smudging with cedar, sage, and/or sweetgrass. Such access would certainly require some accommodation on the part of WCNP staff. The question park managers need to ask themselves: Is this activity any more intrusive than allowing a group of recreational spelunkers to explore the cave with their carbide lamps, ropes, knee pads, and other devices which permit them to safely navigate the cave’s underground passageways? The use is clearly different, but what needs to be weighed objectively is whether the impact on the cave and its fragile boxwork formations is qualitatively different. As a former spelunker, I would maintain that allowances could be made, in the short-term and long-run, for small Lakota, Cheyenne, and/or Arapaho groups to make prayerful observances privately because this activity is much less invasive than the throngs of tourists who wind their way through the cave everyday and no more intrusive than the activity of most spelunkers.

2. Access to Resources Used in Traditional Cultural Practices

Beyond the need for some Lakotas and Cheyennes to use the park to conduct their religious observances, requests have been made and are likely to be made in the future for securing herbs, soils, stones, and other resources for healing and ceremonial purposes (Terry 1999, Personal Communication). In this regard, the park has special importance because of Lakota and Cheyenne beliefs about the underground world as the home of the bison, an animal also connected to a variety of plants and minerals used in their healing and ceremonial traditions. Although discussed in some detail in previous chapters, the point needs to be made again that natural resources found on park properties are significant not because they are rare and don’t appear elsewhere, but because of the overall sacred character of the landscape where they are located. The animals, plants, soils, and stones associated with the places where humans and bison emerged to populate the earth’s surface or where they raced to determine the nature of their relationship are likely to be seen as especially sacred and potent.

Some of the plants found on park properties that Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos might request for use in traditional cultural contexts are discussed extensively in Chapter Eleven and in Appendix B, and this does not bear repeating here. Most of the Cheyenne and Lakota culture officers with whom we spoke associated the park with plants. Most of the plants that tribes require for traditional cultural purposes would not be threatened because they do not require any sort of intensive harvesting. A few tribal culture preservation officers singled out two of the plants important in the park, sage and kinnikinick, but most spoke about the area’s plants in general terms. One officer also mentioned that visitors to the park should be advised not to pick the sage in the area because of its sacred significance (Albers and Kittelson 2002).

Soils used in building ceremonial altars, especially those brought to the surface of the earth through the actions of prairie dogs, voles, badgers, ants, and other burrowing animals, are believed to hold the purifying properties of the deep earth. Although none of the cultural resource officers with whom we spoke mentioned the soils, Lakotas have requested them from park staff in the past (Terry 1999, Personal Communication). As discussed in considerable length elsewhere (see Chapter Nine for further details), these soils are considered sacred and especially so because they come from ground that is the home of the bison. Such requests are certainly consistent with Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho historic and modern religious practice.

There are a number of stones and minerals found on park properties that are associated with traditional cultural functions. As described in greater depth in Chapter Eleven and Appendix C, one of these is gypsum. While the tribal cultural preservation officers with whom we spoke made no specific mention about the area in relation to minerals, there is one reference (Pilcher
1964) to the Lakotas making a request for stones in the past. Requests of this order also follow long-standing traditional cultural uses. Gypsum is essential to the conduct of many important religious ceremonies, and even though it can be found at many locations outside WCNP, the local outcroppings may have special importance because, once again, they come from the home of the bison or appear along the Race Track. Indeed, the very origin of gypsum deposits found along the Race Track is revealed in one of the Cheyenne stories about the Great Race (see Chapter Fifteen).

Nor did any of the tribal resource officers single out the park as a source of animal parts for traditional cultural purposes. Bison skulls, bladders, and other parts have been requested for these purposes in the past (Terry 1999, Personal Communication). Once again, these requests are perfectly appropriate and tied to traditional cultural ideas not only connected to particular animals (see Chapter Ten and Appendix A) but also linked to the park and its general environs. Indeed, with congressional approval, WCNP supplied local tribes with bison and other game meat for several decades. The park is closely associated with animal origins. Wind Cave is the home of the Pte Oyate, Buffalo Nation, in Lakota traditions. It is also integrally related to the establishment of the prevailing order of relations between animals and humans as revealed in the story of the Great Race that took place along the Race Track. It is also probably related to the Falling Star cycle, whose stories happen at locations in and around the Hills in both Lakota and Cheyenne traditions.

The scope, identities, and/or whereabouts of the plants, soils, minerals, and animal parts that Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos may need to access from park properties for traditional cultural uses requires further and more direct consultation. What needs to be determined through such consultation is whether there are any specific areas of the park where people need to collect plants, soils, and stones for traditional cultural purposes. As in the case of sacred sites, additional details on this subject may not be forthcoming because of the secretive nature of the information or the fear that once a location is divulged access to it will be prohibited. Here as well, WCNP staff need to devise an open-ended approach, one that takes into consideration the private and contingent nature of traditional utilization patterns associated with many of the plants, minerals, and soils found on park properties. Also, it bears repeating that significant individual, family, community, and tribal differences probably exist in identifying the location, nature, and significance of “natural” resources associated with traditional cultural uses. Once more, there is no simple or formulaic way to single out and rank these resources for purposes of protection and use.

D. Tribal Perspectives in Park Interpretive Programming

As mentioned before, the park could go a long way in establishing positive relationships with local tribes by involving them in the production of narratives for the park’s interpretive programs and literature. The park sits on lands that have had considerable cultural significance to the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos for many generations. The tribal side of the park’s natural and cultural history has remained conspicuously absent in various educational venues, and this ought to be changed.

In response to the issue of whether the park should include a tribal perspective, we have heard two sorts of informal responses on the matter. One, a minority view, is the park has no business involving itself in matters of cultural importance to local tribes. In the second perspective, representing the vast majority, people are disturbed that the park has not incorporated anything
specific about local tribes in its literature and programs. Some are offended by the failure of the park to acknowledge the rich tribal history associated with the region and especially the suggestion that Wind Cave was first “discovered” by European Americans. In more formal consultations, all of the cultural officers with whom we spoke believed the park should include tribal perspectives in its interpretive venues. The issue is not whether any attention should be given to tribal perspectives, but rather, what kinds of information can be legitimately included and who has the right to convey it. All of the cultural officers indicated that there were areas of cultural knowledge that could become part of the park’s interpretive programming and some even suggested that certain traditional stories about the area could be told as well, but only by people from the tribes where the stories originated. All were equally emphatic that certain kinds of information about beliefs and practices surrounding spiritual observances and ceremonies should not be included. Some also indicated that certain sacred narratives about the area and its landforms should not be shared with the public. This is an area where it is absolutely imperative for direct communication to take place between park staff and tribal cultural resource officers. Further and direct consultations need to take place around what aspects of traditional cultural belief and practice can become part of the park’s interpretive programming.

There are many cultural subjects relating to the park that offer valuable teachings without crossing the line into highly sensitive and sacred cultural material. As revealed elsewhere in this report (Section Three and Appendices A-C), there is a vast wealth of published cultural information on the animals, plants, and minerals found on park properties and some of the practical aspects of their utilization. In consultation with local tribes, it is possible to do culturally sensitive programming of the kind that took place at Glacier National Park with the Piegan Institute, where common plants and their uses were identified along one important park trail. The development of educational material that incorporates tribal perspectives could be focused geographically or topically.

As discussed earlier, some of WCNP’s historic trails along Beaver and Cold Spring creeks might serve as a focus for telling stories of historical events that happened along their routes at different points in time, for describing the different groups of peoples who used them and their modes of adaptation to the area, and finally, for identifying some of the natural resources they would have encountered along the route at different points in time. For example, the trails could be used as a vehicle for talking about the history of certain plants and animals from different cultural perspectives. Native plants, such as chokecherry and wild mint, might be identified and described from a European American botanical perspective and then discussed in terms of how they are named and understood in tribal botanies. Their common and utilitarian uses for both groups could be discussed in both historic and modern contexts. Information about when certain native plants became abundant in the area, when others disappeared, and when new plants, such as mullein, arrived could lead to fascinating stories about wider human-environmental adaptations to the region. Currently, there are a number of programs at local educational institutions, including Red Cloud High School, Sinte Gleska University, and the American Indian Studies program at Black Hills State College, where work is being conducted on identifying the native names and uses of plants in the region. The park could certainly work cooperatively with one or more of these institutions to develop interesting interpretive materials from a tribal perspective.

In devising interpretive programming around some of the park’s trail systems, it is imperative that the park not follow rhetorical structures where history begins with Indians and ends with whites. A persisting problem with the literature on the cultural history of the Black Hills is that it treats tribal traditions as relics from the past, not as vital and continuing bodies of knowledge. Every stage of history in the park’s development, both before and after it was established in 1903, should include a discussion of tribal affiliations and connections. To be sure, tribal relationships
are different today than in former times but so are those of the region’s European Americans. Above all, tribal connections to the park should not be sequestered and treated apart from the overall picture of the park’s history, nor should they be diminished and trivialized in the kinds of narrative structures which privilege European American perspectives.

Interpretive programs might also be focused on some of the animals that make up the park’s landscape. In this regard, the natural and most significant focus for American Indians and European Americans is the bison. After all, this is the bison’s home, their stomping grounds, and the place where they first returned after being extirpated from the area in the 1880s. So much of the park’s identity in tribal traditions is connected to the bison, and in European American traditions, it remains a focus as well. Even in the years when cattle took over much of their traditional range, the bison were still present in the memories and stories of the people who once lived and traveled in the area and in the place names given to local landforms. How bison were historically taken in this area, how they were used, and also how they are thought of in traditional and contemporary belief systems are important subjects for the park’s cultural programming. These topics could be presented in conjunction with the presentation of materials on the wider history of bison in the Black Hills region, their changing place in the lives of the tribal peoples who originally settled this land and in the lives of the European Americans who came to settle the area in later years. There is a rich published literature on this subject. Much of what is written about the bison from a tribal perspective is based on the words of Lakotas and Cheyennes. The information is part of a public record that people, such as Luther Standing Bear, Nicholas Black Elk, John Stands in Timber, and Wesley Whiteman, wanted to be preserved and shared. Today, there are many tribal people among the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho nations who are knowledgeable about this subject and who could serve as advisors in developing innovative and culturally sensitive interpretive materials. It has already been done at a provincial park in southern Alberta, called, Head Smashed In Buffalo Jump. This World Heritage Site, which received international awards and acclaim, represents a joint effort between the provincial government of Alberta and the Blackfeet tribe, and it serves as a model for how an area can become a focus for conveying cultural and historic information in a setting where Indians and non-Indians cooperatively participate in its production.

Other animals, from mule deer and elk to snowbirds and prairie dogs, might also be a focus for developing collaborative cultural materials. There are many plants, including wild turnip, box elder, ponderosa pine, the purple coneflower, and even sage, that might be described in collaborative ways without crossing sensitive cultural boundaries. The same holds true with certain minerals from flint and gypsum to sandstone and limestone. Whatever natural resources are selected for developing interpretive material, input from tribal cultural resource officers, educators at local tribal and state colleges, and knowledgeable tribal elders and spiritual leaders is necessary to determine what subjects and content are appropriate to share in public settings. Since it is hard sometimes to talk about tribal relationships with the natural world without touching upon spiritual issues, it is necessary to bring tribal people into the consultative process to determine where the lines need to be drawn. The very understanding of bison, for example, where they come from, and what they mean takes one into the realm of sacred knowledge and understanding in tribal perspectives. Since aspects of most knowledge about animals, plants, and minerals inevitably touch on sacred issues, it is imperative to get advice from local tribes on the cultural protocols here.

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144 Te Papa, the National Museum of New Zealand has done an excellent job of telling the natural and cultural histories of New Zealand from the two very different perspectives of the indigenous Maori tribes and the incoming Europeans [Pakahana].
The focus, or if one will the handle, for cultural programming might include specific landforms. Even highly sacred places, such as the Race Track and Wind Cave, are the subject of stories that have become part of the public record. Some aspects of these stories might be told. Certainly, Henry Black Elk and James La Pointe wanted their stories about Wind Cave known and told to the children. They were published in sources sponsored and supported by tribal educational institutions Sinte Gleska University and the Indian Historical Press, respectively, and so are many other stories about the cave and the Race Track. Here, the issue is not so much whether their versions or any other stories should be told, but who should do the telling. Two tribal cultural preservation officers were very emphatic that stories of this kind need to be told by members of the tribes who consider them part of their cultural patrimony. There is a thin line here, not only with respect to a tribe’s intellectual property rights but also in relation to the appropriateness of telling certain stories even when these have been published. Again, the tribes need to be consulted on what stories can be told, who can be entrusted with their telling, and how they should be framed.

It is also important to remember that there are many different stories and versions of the same narratives about these places. There is not, as discussed earlier, any single or “right” story about either Wind Cave or the Race Track. This diversity needs to be acknowledged and respected, and the visiting public needs to be made aware of this fact. Even if tribes do not wish to give their consent to having specific stories told about Wind Cave and the Race Track, there might be respectful ways the park service can allude to the fact that tribes hold important bodies of knowledge about these landforms. It might be possible, for instance, to talk about how the Cheyennes and Lakotas see caves as the spiritual homes of animals and the places where they come to the earth’s surface to undergo their materialization. Or, it might be appropriate, as another example, to alert park visitors to the fact that the park sits on land that is spiritually important to local tribes and that if they come across tobacco ties and other evidence of spiritual activity these should be left alone.

Above all, one thing that needs to be corrected is the false idea that local tribes lacked a sophisticated understanding of their environments. Tribal ideas about the Black Hills, their geological activity, astronomical phenomena, plant habitats, and animal life deserve to be treated with respect as different, but no less compelling ways of thinking about the workings of the universe. The Black Hills’ incredible natural diversity and their position as a confluence for all kinds of different life forms is well recognized in the knowledge banks of local tribes. The Black Hills are a powerful teacher in this regard, as the Lakotas and Cheyennes have long known, and it would behoove the park service to incorporate, where it is culturally appropriate and permissible to do so, some of the important teachings about the Hills and the area of Wind Cave National Park that come from the writings and oral traditions of the tribes familiar with this place.

Directly following, another thing in need of clarification is the misleading impression that local tribes lacked any knowledge of Wind Cave before European Americans arrived. It is hard to imagine how the cave’s presence would have gone undetected by peoples as intimately familiar with the region for hundreds of years as the Cheyennes, Lakotas, and Arapahos. It is a bit disingenuous to attribute the cave’s “discovery” to Jesse and Tom Bingham. Although the Binghams may have been the first European Americans to spot the cave, there can be no doubt that local tribes knew of its existence well before European Americans ever ventured into this area.
III. CONCLUSIONS

Part of developing sound management policies and making decisions about the park’s traditional cultural properties requires fostering and maintaining good collegial relations with the local populations whose own histories and traditions are represented in these resources. In the same way that parks are expected to maintain respectful ties with their European American neighbors and their state and local governments, so parks should approach local tribal people and their tribal governments in the same way. Politeness and good common sense can go a long way in building positive relationships where matters of common interest can be approached in mutually respectful and acceptable ways. Even though the terms of tribal interest and access to the park are likely to be substantially different from those of European Americans, these should be handled through the same kind of open dialogue typically associated with other impact and access issues.

In brief review, there are four major areas to which the park needs to direct its attention in regards to traditional cultural properties.

>1) First, it needs to acknowledge and respect the rich body of culture history and tradition that surrounds this place. There needs to be some level of recognition in park literature and programming of the importance of this region to the Lakotas, Arapahos, and Cheyennes, and the place it occupied earlier, and perhaps contemporaneously, for other tribes, including the Arikaras, Comanches, Poncas, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches. Minimally, the park should at least acknowledge the occupancy and probable use of its lands by these tribes, the kinds of adaptations they might have made to the area, and the importance of this in relation to the habits and habitats of the animals and other life forms located here. Ideally, the telling of this history and its associated traditions would take place from the viewpoints and perspectives of the people who were here over the last two centuries, which includes the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. It would also include various groups of European Americans, especially those who occupied and made a living from the lands of Wind Cave National Park, but their story should be placed in perspective. It needs to complement, not dominate, the history of the area where the park is situated.

>2) Second, the park needs to work directly with tribal culture preservation officers to determine where additional but more solitary sacred sites might be located for fasting and other prayerful observances and to determine how these places need to be protected. In addition, it needs to find out how some of the more culturally sensitive information about these places might be respectfully collected and protected by park staff.

>3) Allowances and considerations regarding requests for the use of park properties for ceremonial observances need to be guided by flexible and open-ended management policies, ones that are informed by and respond to the diverse ways different tribes approach their religious observances. Sun Dances, sweatlodges, pipe ceremonies, fasting, and a host of solitary prayerful observances are all consistent with the sacred character of park properties. In all respects, permission to carry on religious observances in the park’s subterranean and surface spaces needs to be judged in terms of their potential impacts on the landscape and its resources, not because they represent styles of access different from those customarily undertaken by European Americans.

>4) Allowances and considerations might also be made for access to plants, soils, minerals, and animal parts used in traditional cultural contexts. Although this report has listed and described many of these in Section Four and in Appendices A, B, and C, the coverage is by no
means exhaustive or complete. Most of the traditional cultural resources that tribal people require from this area are important because of their association, at least in Lakota traditions, with the lands on which the bison originate. The fact that this land is their home and stomping grounds is very significant in relation to a host of traditional practices still carried on in Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho communities.

In order to develop a sensible policy, direct consultations need to take place with all interested tribal parties. The way in which the consultation is structured may vary from one tribe to another, according to local cultural norms and the preferences of the tribes’ culture preservation officers. As stated in Executive Order 13084, signed in May of 1998, all federal agencies are directed to work with tribes on a government-to-government basis to collaborate and consult on the formulation of federal regulatory policies and practices affecting tribal interests. Two years earlier, Executive Order 13007 was signed into law, directing federal agencies to provide accommodations to protect sacred sites and permit access to and uses of these sites by religious practitioners from federally-recognized tribes.145 Along with other legislation, including Public Laws 96-95 [ARPA], 101-601 [NAGPRA], 95-341 (ARFA), and the National Historic Preservation Act, there is now a body of laws and regulations requiring federal agencies to protect traditional cultural, historic, and/or sacred properties of interest to American Indian tribes and to afford these tribes’ access to and use of them. As we interpret these statutes and directives, the park must arrange its consultations through tribal governments, especially the cultural preservation offices that are delegated to deal with such matters.

In many cases, the park will need to solicit advice beyond the offices of tribal government and call on tribal educators and religious practitioners for information and direction. Above all, the park service should not rely on lone advisors and consultants. Wind Cave and the Race Track remain an important part of the cultural patrimony of all the Lakotas and Cheyennes. Individual members of these two tribes may be uncomfortable speaking on behalf of, much less offering advice on, matters that affect their entire nation. Whenever one is dealing with a cultural issue that affects an entire tribe, it is imperative that people representing the widest range of cultural interests come to the table to confer on an issue. What must not be done is to choose or identify specific people as “final” arbitrators and authorities on what is or is not significant about the park’s sites and landscapes. While there are certainly tribal people who know more about the area than others, and while there are those who are more qualified than others to talk about its spiritual standing, no one can speak for the entire Oglala tribe, much less the entire Lakota or Cheyenne nation. Because as soon as one person is identified as an “expert,” there are hundreds of others who will invalidate their view and disclaim any association with it. This is not to imply that any one consultant’s advice should not be taken seriously, but, rather, that there is a need to respect the fact that there are multiple perspectives. There are many different stories, sites, resources, and modes of access that define tribal affiliations with this area. At all times, this diversity must be acknowledged and respected.

It is also important to remember that most everything about the Black Hills is highly politicized. This makes consultation and consensus on various cultural matters all the more difficult. WCNP is contested land. It is part of the long-standing and from a Sioux perspective, still unresolved claims. It is also part of an area to which the Cheyennes and Arapahos lay claim. Although neither of these latter tribes was ever able to press their claims in federal court, they still have strong historical entitlements to this area. Notwithstanding the close ties of friendship and

145 The expression “federally-recognized tribe” refers to a tribe that through treaty, executive order, or congressional agreement, has an established relationship with the federal government. As this applies in Executive Order 13007, only persons who are members of such tribes are in a position to consult on matters governing the protection of sacred sites on federal properties and to access and make use of them.
kinship that otherwise connect them, the inability of the Cheyenne and Arapaho to come together with the Lakotas in a united effort to reclaim the Hills has created some degree of resentment. All three of these tribes need to be included in consultations, and the Cheyennes, in particular, need to be involved in any decisions about areas of the park that cover the Race Track. On religious grounds and in terms of more general, traditional cultural affiliations, the Cheyennes have a significant cultural stake in this area. Although Cheyenne and Arapaho communities are located at some distance from WCNP, a fact that has clearly influenced the frequency and intensity of their visits to the park, they are still vital players in cultural consultations. Given some of the tensions that surround each of these tribe’s relationship to the Black Hills, each should be consulted separately, not as a mechanism for creating further divisiveness but out of respect for their differing cultural interests in the park.

Even among the tribes who make up the Sioux Nation, at least for the purposes of the Black Hills claims, there are going to be disagreements over who has the most legitimate right to speak on behalf of cultural interests pertaining to the park. Since all of these tribes are interrelated through close-knit webs of kinship and friendship, it is hard to say which ones stand in a more or less privileged relationship regarding their cultural concerns for the park. While it is true that the Oglala Sioux Tribe is the closest geographically and the one whose members probably have more occasion to visit the park, the Rosebud, Lower Brule, Cheyenne River, Fort Peck, and Standing Rock Sioux tribes also have vital interests and strong cultural traditions that are tied to this area of the Hills. In the case of the Sioux, as noted previously, many of the cultural preservation officers indicated a preference for consulting with park staff as a group. An advisory group made up of cultural preservation officers, Lakota language and culture instructors from tribal institutions of higher education (i.e., Sinte Gleska University), culturally knowledgeable tribal elders, and religious leaders from each of the tribes could offer a powerful and positive collective voice on matters of mutual interest to the park and the Lakota people. Organizing consultations in this manner not only insures wide representation, but it also avoids any appearance of preferential treatment.

However the consultations are organized, it is clear that all three tribes need to be represented when it comes to developing interpretive programming that incorporates tribal perspectives. All of them need to be featured in the stories that are told about the park’s history over the past two-hundred years. Their perspectives need to be included in the narratives about the park’s various life forms, their interests need to be considered relative to the location and protection of sacred sites, and their concerns need to be heard regarding access to the park for the conduct of religious observances and access to other traditional cultural properties necessary for the continuance of important cultural practices and beliefs.

It is also recommended that the park service develop venues where park service staff and researchers engaged in archaeological and ethnographic studies of neighboring parks have an opportunity to meet, share, and discuss issues of mutual interest. Since research conducted at Devil’s Tower National Monument, Badlands National Park, Scotts Bluff National Monument, and Agate Fossil Bed National Monument involve many of the same tribes whose histories and relationships to these areas intersect, there should be some opportunity to discuss possible directions for achieving consistency in the management policies surrounding sacred sites, traditional cultural properties, and interpretive programming. Indeed, at some point in the future, it might be a good idea to create a special position for a cultural liaison to work with tribes in forming advisory bodies and in consulting on matters that pertain to all of them.

Notwithstanding the strong legal and moral claims that certain tribes hold to the area that makes up WCNP, it is not likely that park properties are going to be relinquished to the Lakotas
or any other tribe in the near or foreseeable future. This does not mean that tribal concerns should be dismissed. It is no longer possible, given current federal policy and law, to not attend to these concerns. Even without these mandates, the tribal presence and relationship to the park is simply too compelling and rich to ignore any longer. What park managers and staff need to determine is what role the park will play in bringing a more culturally complex appreciation of the places and resources it stewards, and what it will do to protect traditional cultural properties and permit access to them in culturally appropriate ways.

In concluding, the stories that surround many places in the Black Hills have had an uncanny tendency to reproduce themselves over time and from one group of people to another. For many different reasons, the landscapes themselves appear to play a role in evoking and shaping the way people come to understand and approach them. Certainly the tribal nations who lived in this area, and whose knowledge about it has passed down to the present, held remarkably similar understandings of the area. Although European Americans initially approached the Black Hills and its varied landscapes with very different kinds of sensibilities, they too eventually adopted approaches, which quite curiously hold traces of the ways in which tribal peoples have related to the area. For example, except for a brief time between 1880-1930 when some of the land inside the borders of WCNP was parceled out and privatized, this area of the Hills has always been a commons.

Humans came to the lands of Wind Cave National Park and its surrounding areas for many different reasons and purposes, but, in the end, they have always been beholden, in one way or another, to its ultimate “owner,” the bison. In tribal traditions, most of the stories about this area focus on bison. Coincidentally, European American ties to this land have returned to the bison too. It is the bison whose presence (and even absence) has given this area of the Black Hills a distinct cultural definition throughout much of its human history. It is the bison that holds the key to building a foundation of cooperation in the creation of innovative narratives about the park and in reaching consensus about the management of its sites and resources. It is the bison that can bring together the different groups who have a cultural interest in the park and its resources.

These remarks are not intended to be Pollyannaish, although they certainly can be construed in this way. Their aim is to find a realistic and workable way to approach, attend to, and represent the park’s interests in a manner that can incorporate the divergent and at times conflicting, interests of its various public constituencies. The park is already common ground, at least technically, but it also needs some kind of common denominator for reaching out to and drawing in the many different voices and perspectives that can reflect upon and contribute stories about its landscape, life forms, and history. In closing, and in keeping with much of the spirit in which this report is written, it is worthwhile to quote the words of a song, composed by Brave Buffalo, a Lakota from Standing Rock (in Densmore 1918:174).

Wa-hi-na-wa-pin kte.........................I will appear
Wama’yanka yo................................-behold me
tatan’ka wan.................................a buffalo
HEMA’kiya......................................said to me.
Anonymous  n.d.  Waziya. Unpublished manuscript. Wind Cave National Park Library Archives. (F Ref 18801 WICA 1476 Box 1 File Early Indian History).

Anonymous  n.d.  Know Your Service. #12. Mimeographed Circular. Wind Cave National Park Library Archives (F Ref 1880 WICA 1476 Pre Park Box 1 File Early Indian History).


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Wind Cave National Park 

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The animals described in this appendix are organized into five major groups, following common European American taxonomic practice: 1) Mammals; 2) Birds; 3) Insects and Spiders; 4) Reptiles and Amphibians; and 5) Fish, Crustaceans, and Mollusks. Again, unless otherwise indicated, most references to animal species at Wind Cave National Park come from the park’s own web sites (Pisarowicz 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2001d).

Because of the enormous amount of ethnographic material on tribal relationships to animals, information was assembled mostly on the Cheyennes and Lakotas, the two tribal nations with the most intense and best documented use of the area that became Wind Cave National Park. While the material gathered together here is comprehensive, it is by no means inclusive of tribal knowledge and relationships to animals in traditional contexts. Sources for material on relations to animals among other tribal nations who lived in the Black Hills are vast. Some of the better and more accessible sources include: Arapahos (Kroeber 1902-07; Dorsey and Kroeber 1905); Arikaras (Curtis 1907-30:5; Tabeau in Abel 1939), Comanches (Wallace and Hoebel 1952), Crows (Lowie 1922, 1956), Hidatsas (Bowers 1963), Kiowas (Mishkin 1940; Mariott 1945; Nye 1962), Mandans (Bowers 1950), Plains Apaches (Schweinfurth 2002), and Poncas (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1972; Howard 1965).

**I. Mammals**

As a group, the mammals were the most important animals to the Lakotas and the Cheyennes as a source of food and material used in manufacture. They were also significant for spiritual protection and guidance.

**Ungulates [Artiodactyla]**

For the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, the region near Wind Cave is most closely associated with animals represented by the ungulate order, especially bison. Although other species, including the coyote, wolf, snowbird, swifthawk, crow, and magpie, also play a role in stories associated with the Buffalo Gap, the Race Track, and the cave itself, the bison figures most prominently. Many of the stories that surround the region not only establish the nature of human and animal (specifically bison) relationships, but they also describe the origins of the bison and the dependence of humans on their beneficence.

All of the ungulate species located in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave were an important source of food and skins for the tribal nations who lived in the region during historic times. Although bison were clearly the most significant of these animals in practical and spiritual terms, pronghorn, elk,
deer, and bighorn were important too. Bison, however, occupied the most complex position in tribal cosmologies. They were the principal source of food and material well being, and as such, their spiritualized essence was represented and highlighted in nearly every major sacred text and ceremony.

Among the Cheyennes, Esceheman, the earth maiyun, and her daughter, Ehypoystah, not only appear in the image of a bison, but they are also the primary progenitors of the animal. The two major culture figures of the Cheyenne, Sweet Medicine and Stands on the Ground, were gifted with the power of the Sacred Arrows and Sacred Hat respectively to bring the bison and other game animals to the people. The stories that revolve around these figures are considered among the most sacred to the Cheyennes, and two of their major ceremonies, the Oxheheom [New Life Lodge] or Sun Dance and the Maassau or Animal Dance, recreate aspects of their most sacred stories. As told in these texts, the Cheyenne received some of their knowledge about the spiritual nature of animals at Bear Butte in the Black Hills (Kroeber 1900; Dorsey, G. 1905; Grinnell 1907,1910, 1926:242-243, 257-280, 1972:2:211-385; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:11-41, 73-114; Schlesier 1987:4-9).

There is another highly sacred Cheyenne text that takes place at the Race Track, which covers a portion of the land at Wind Cave National Park. This story is known to the Lakotas and considered highly sacred to them as well. It tells of a great gathering of the animals and a race between them to determine who would be the hunted and the hunter. The central figure that humans run against is a buffalo in Cheyenne stories. Humans win the race through the help of certain carnivores and birds, notably, the magpie. As a reward for their victory, humans receive knowledge of the buffalo’s dance that is recreated in the Cheyennes' most revered ceremony, the Sun Dance. Some Lakotas and Cheyennes believe this took place at the Buffalo Gap (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24; Powell 1969:2:472-477; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:72).

The Lakotas also have other sacred stories that take place at Wind Cave, which is situated above and just to the west of the Race Track (Walker 1917, 1983; Koeller 1951; Herman in One Feather 1972; Red Cloud in Matson 1972; Black Elk in Thiez 1975:6-8; LaPointe 1976:79-84; Swift Bird in Kadlicek and Kadlicek 1981:147-148; Charging Eagle and Zeilinger 1987). In their stories, the cave is the entrance to the subterranean home of the Pte Oyate [Buffalo Nation], and for some Lakotas, the origin place of humanity. Of all the animals, humans are most closely identified with bison. Like humans, bison stand apart from other major categorical groups of animals, hooves, claws, diggers, and builders, in Lakota origin stories (Walker 1983:273-274, 358-360). Whereas other game have a spiritualized essence and their own individual guardian animals, bison take precedence over all of them and play a controlling role in their destinies. Also, when Okaga hunts for Wohpe, she prepares the skins of pronghorn, bighorn, and deer (Walker 1983:67-70) for Waziyata, the North Wind, the direction of the bison.

The life-sustaining significance of game animals as a source of sustenance and general well-being continues to the present-day among the Lakotas and Cheyennes, remaining prominent in their religious life and symbolism and central to their cultural identities as well.

THE BOVID FAMILY

[BOVIDAE]

The family Bovidae contains two species that were closely associated with the Black Hills and the surrounding grasslands in historic times, the bison and the bighorn. Of these two species, the bison was the most abundant and the most important as a source of food and technology. It was also the most significant animal in tribal cosmologies. Bighorns, while prevalent in the area during the early nineteenth century, appear to have
been less important culturally. Their meat, skins, and horns were prized, and there were also spiritual connections to these animals, but very little information has survived about them.

**Bison**

* [Bison bison]

Before the 1850s, and, for some tribes, up until the 1870s, bison were the mainstay of their economies. They were a major source of food, and they provided many basic materials for shelter, tools, medicine, and clothing (Densmore 1948:172). After the 1820s, their robes became important items of trade, exchanged for the wide assortment of foreign commodities that European American traders stocked. For most of the tribal nations who lived in reach of the Black Hills, bison occupied a pivotal place in their livelihood and cosmology. The Lakotas considered the bison the chief of all the animals and the penultimate metaphor for the workings of the cosmos (Black Elk in Brown 1992:13). Among the Cheyennes, where predatory mammals and birds occupied some of the highest spiritual positions in the cosmic order and stood in control over game animals (like pronghorn), bison were an exception because they were considered game animals and also powerful spirit beings (Schlesier 1987:8).

**Habitat and History**

In the early nineteenth century, the base of the Black Hills along the forks of the Cheyenne River was commonly described as a rich bison range where tribal nations who lived in villages along the Missouri River often took their fall hunts (Tabeau in Abel 1939:87). Over the next three decades, other observers would report on the abundance of bison on the grasslands surrounding the Black Hills, although occasional local shortages were observed as well (Clow 1992:13). Among the Cheyennes, where predatory mammals and birds occupied some of the highest spiritual positions in the cosmic order and stood in control over game animals (like pronghorn), bison were an exception because they were considered game animals and also powerful spirit beings (Schlesier 1987:8).

In the 1840s, however, reports of bison herds dwindling on the plains east of the Hills start to appear and even accounts of shortages along the Platte River become more frequent. By the 1850s, statements about the declining herds at these locations were commonplace (Denig in Ewers 1961:22, 25; Hyde 1961:29; Parkman in Feltskog 1969:200; Hurt 1974:242; Price, C. 1996:46-50). Although bison were still hunted near the Black Hills, as evidenced by Lt. G.K. Warren’s description (1875:15-16) of a Lakota bison hunt on the western side of the Hills near Inyan Kara Mountain in 1857 and General William F. Raynolds’ sighting of bison near the Hills in 1859 (Turner 1974:144), it is clear the Hills were no longer at the center of the best bison hunting ranges. Ferdinand V. Hayden (1862b:151) noted: “but there are certain parts of the country over which they formerly roamed in immense herds, but are never or rarely seen at the present time. The area over which the buffalo graze is annually contracting its geographical limits.” 1866, seven years later, is purportedly the last date when bison were sighted in the Black Hills (Turner 1974:144). Later dates, however, are reported for stragglers in the Hills in 1879, at Buffalo Gap in 1881, Hot Springs in 1882, and Custer in 1884 (McGillacuddy 1879; Clark 1927:22-23; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:221; Sundstrom, J. 1994:110). According to Turner (1974:144), when the military abandoned its posts along the North Platte in the 1860s, bison were still plentiful. However, by 1871, the herds were largely gone from eastern Wyoming. The Black Hills Expedition of 1874 did not sight any bison on their march from the Missouri to the Black Hills, even though a small number of stragglers still inhabited the country north of the Hills towards the Grand River (Turner 1974). George Grinnell (1875:79) reported sighting fresh skulls and a ritual arrangement of 60 painted skulls lined up in five rows all facing east. Large herds, however, still dominated territories along the
Tongue, Powder, and Yellowstone rivers, and they also remained plentiful along the Arkansas and Republican rivers until professional non-Indian buffalo hunters exterminated them in the late 1870s. It was to these regions that many of the Cheyennes, Lakotas, and Arapahos moved, often traveling from their winter camps along the White and Cheyenne rivers at the base of the Black Hills to do so (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:154-165).

After being extirpated from the Black Hills for nearly half a century, bison were returned to the area of Wind Cave National Park in 1913 as a gift from the National Bison Society. Seven bulls and seven cows were purchased from the New York Zoological Gardens from stock acquired a decade earlier at the Berkshire Hills Game Preserve in Massachusetts (Turner 1974: 144). Even though the Hills were restocked with imported bison, the first place they returned was the area of Wind Cave -- a symbolically significant fact that probably did not go unnoticed by the Lakotas who believe this cave is the home and origin place of the Pte Oyate or Buffalo Nation.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The significance of the bison in the lives of local tribes is evidenced by the multiplicity of names they assigned to this animal. In the Lakota language, for example, there are more than twenty different names for bison. The generic name for a cow is *pte* (Buechel 1970:448), and for the bull, it is *tatanka* (Ibid:483). Bison are further separated by age, as in the names *ptehincala* [calf] (Ibid: 448), *he slusluta* [a three year old ‘slippery-horn’] (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:293), *hitobuye*, [a four year old] (Buechel 1970: 178), *pte hayuktanla* [a heifer, ‘horns begin to bend’] (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:293), *hepola* [a yearling bull, ‘horns swell’] *hehblogeca* [a bull two years of age, ‘hollow horn’] (Ibid.), and *hehutela* [an old bison whose horns are worn off and badly damaged] (Buechel 1970:171).

Cows were distinguished by the texture of their hair, the color of their skin, and by their size and weight as in: *ptehin sma* [thick, long haired buffalo] (Buechel 1970: 448), *hehlogeca* [the rare horned cow] (Ibid: 172), *pte san* [the white buffalo cow] (Ibid: 449), *pte chepa* [fat cow] (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:293), *ptewin’kte* [the fat but sterile cow] (Buechel 1970:449), *pteta’maka* [a lean cow] (Ibid.), *hohetapte* [a lean cow whose fat is found at the time it’s killed] (Ibid:181), *pte cik’ala* [small cow] (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:293), and, *cehinka tapte* [a large cow] (Buechel 1970:129), Bulls were differentiated as follows: *tatanka heslusluta* [a bull with smooth horns] (Ibid:483), *tatanka winkte* [a bull with small testicles] (Ibid.), *tagica* [a lean bull], and *taguha* [an old bull] (Ibid:473).

The Cheyennes also had a similarly diverse set of names for bison (Hayden 1862b:291, 297; Petter 1913-15:193, 195, 312). *Esevon* is the name for a herd of bison (Petter 1913-15:193). *Hotova?a* or *hotoa?a*, *hotovaao?o* or *hotoaao?o* are names for the bull (Petter 1913-15:193), while *mehe* is a cow (Ibid:195, 312). *Hetanevoska* refers to a male calf and *heevoksa* a female calf; these terms refer to their yellow coloration at this stage of their life cycle. A calf at one year of age is called *moxtavoksa* [black calf], while a two-year old heifer is known as *monscess*. *Hotoxpess* is the word used for a bull between one and three years old, *hoxtoxpeoeva* is a scabby young bull, and *hoxtoxpa* refers to bull around four years of age (Ibid:193). A fat bison cow is called *voesemehe*, a mysterious bison is called *Ma’heonemehe*, a lean cow is known as *mamehe*, and a young one *monemehe* (Ibid:193, 315). A cow that bears late in the fall is known as *ookoenemehe*, one with her first calf is called *zemonhosesz*, and one who bears when old is named *matamamehe*. *Vosta* is the name for the sacred white buffalo (Ibid:193).
Much has been written in the ethnographic literature about the ways in which the tribal nations of the plains procured bison, but the best overall synthesis of their procurement strategies is George Arthur’s work (1975) *An Introduction to the Ecology of Early Historic Communal Bison Hunting Among the Northern Plains Indians*. In times before the adoption of horses, the Native peoples of the Plains drove bison over cliffs, into natural enclosures and snow banks, or into specially constructed corrals. A number of archaeological sites in the neighborhood of the Black Hills, including some on or near park properties, reveal these common practices. After the arrival of horses, bison were more commonly surrounded, or as some observers claimed, even “herded” (Seton 1929: 1:668) and hunted on horse-back with bows and arrows or with guns.

Although bison could be taken at any time of the year, the most common season to hunt them was during the late summer through the early fall months when they gathered on the open grasslands in large herds (Denismore 1918:437; Ewers 1938: 43-44; Hoebel 1960:53). This was the season when bands came together to conduct their large communal hunts, which among the Lakotas were called *wani-sapa*. One of the most comprehensive descriptions of this kind of bison hunting as practiced by the Lakotas is found in the work of James Walker (1982:74-94) based on information he secured at the end of the nineteenth century from tribal elders at Pine Ridge. According to his description, the hunt began with a ceremony to spiritually prepare the assembled parties for their collective undertaking. Simultaneously, a council was called together, comprised of leaders from participating *tiospaye*, to determine who among them would lead the hunt and select the warrior societies to serve as the hunt *akicita* or marshals. Once the marshals and their assistants were chosen, they took complete control over the policing of the camp, its movements, and the hunts.

Anyone who disobeyed the orders of the *akicita* and the customary rules of a hunt encampment was subject to severe punishment. According to Thomas Tyon and John Blunt Horn’s description (in Walker 1982:32), these rules included the following:

- All must move together. No one must take advantage to get at the game before the others can profit by it. If anyone stampedes the game he must be punished. The meat gotten during a hunt must be fairly and equally divided among all members of the party. The marshals must direct the approach and attack on the game. Everyone in a hunting party must obey the directions of the marshals.

In the meantime, the hunters began to ready their horses and weapons, while women conducted an array of tasks in preparation for the camp’s journey to the bison grounds. Travel to favorable bison hunting ranges often involved journeys of several days at speeds of ten to twenty five miles per day (Ibid:80-83). Scouts were sent out ahead of the main body to be on the lookout for enemies and to determine the best locations to encamp and follow a herd (Ibid:84-85). Once a camping site was chosen, a spiritual intercessor, or shaman, performed ceremonies “to call the buffalo.” Games were played, including the *Woskate Painyankapi* [Game of Wands and Hoops], and races were held that were believed to bring a successful outcome to the hunt (Mekeer 1901b: 1-2; Walker 1905:278-283, 1982:89). People in the camp were admonished by the *akicita* to keep quiet, to quell the cries of their children and the barks of their dogs in order not to attract the attention of enemies or alarm nearby herds (Walker 1982:90). When the scouts located a herd to surround, they returned to the camp and announced this in a ritual manner with the use of a sacred pipe and a prayer to *Taku Wakan* (Ibid:90-91). After this, a herald went about the camp announcing the discovery of the bison and preparations were then made to begin the hunt the following morning at dawn (Ibid:91-92). The *akicita* lined up the hunters for the assault, and when the signal
was given to approach the herd, the hunters rode swiftly, surrounding and rushing on the herd and killing as many bison as possible (Ibid:92). While the hunt was in progress, the women, children, and elderly approached the hunting site to assist in butchering and transporting the meat and hides (Ibid:92-93). Besides this elaborate account, there are Royal B. Hassrick’s detailed descriptions (1964:174-178) of the surround method of hunting and the practice of driving bison over a cliff. Edward S. Curtis (1907-30:3-8-10) also writes about these different methods of hunting bison, and John Ewers (1938:42-44) presents an excellent summary of historical records that describe Lakota practices of impounding, driving animals over cliffs, surrounding them, and hunting them on snowshoes. Two historical sources also need to be singled out; Francis Parkman’s account (in Feltskog 1969) of a Lakota buffalo hunt on the Platte River plains and Lt. G. K. Warren’s famous report (1875:15-16) of Lakotas driving bison into a canyon near Inyan Kara mountain on the western side of the Black Hills. Lakota eyewitness recollections of bison hunts are given by Siyaka (in Densmore 1918:439-442), Luther Standing Bear (1975:49-53, 58-66), Henry Standing Bear (in DeMallie 1984:143-147), and Nicholas Black Elk (in Ibid:147-148).

As described by George Bird Grinnell (1972:1:262-263), the Cheyenne method of surrounding bison on horseback, using lances, bows and arrows, or rifles as weapons, was very similar to what Walker described for the Lakotas. The hunt and camp were placed under strict marshal law, and anyone who committed an infraction was severely punished. After the arrival of horses, the surround method surpassed most of the older techniques for hunting bison among the Cheyennes as it did among the Lakotas. In earlier times, probably pre-1820, various driving and impounding techniques, one of which included bringing the bison into the camp circle, were more common. According to Karl Schlesier (1987:53), these were the proper and most respectful to ways to kill bison. From Grinnell (1972:1:264-265) and Schlesier’s (1987:53-60) descriptions, pens or corrals for impounding bison were typically constructed under a “bluff or cutbank” with at least one wall serving as a side for the enclosure. The opposite side was constructed of brush and sticks. The two sides were fashioned into a v-shaped chute formation, with the opening of the enclosure facing the prairie. The bison were both enticed and driven into the enclosure with the participation of all members of the camp, men, women, children, and the elderly. Once the bison were in the enclosure, they were shot with arrows and killed. Many of the techniques used by the Cheyennes to impound bison were inspired by dreams, and White Hawk told Grinnell (1972:1:266-268) some of his. One dream involved a method whereby two elderly men beckoned the bison into the enclosure by waving large bird wings (Ibid:266). Another entailed the construction of the enclosure itself, as White Hawk (in Grinnell 1972:1:266) described it:

His dream said to him: ‘You shall take our people and have them make a large pen out of wood and brush, with a gap in one side, and a chute with diverging wings running far out on the prairie, fences which shall hide the people from the buffalo. Then you shall take certain men of the camp and go out with them on the prairie, and you can bring the buffalo into this pen.’

Where Cheyenne drove bison into pounds, they often left stacked piles of bison horns in a manner similar to the Arapaho practice of piling up elk horns. These piles appear to be connected to a widespread pattern of propitiating the spirits of slain animals common among many tribal nations in the Algonkian language family. Grinnell (1972:1:268) reported numerous piles of bison horn at locations west of the Hills when he traveled there with the Black Hills Expedition in 1874.

Another older form of Cheyenne bison hunting involved driving bison into snowdrifts with the help of dogs (Grinnell 1972:1:268). This practice was also reported for
the Lakotas (Ewers 1938:42; Hassrick 1964:177-178). Like the Lakotas, all Cheyenne communal bison hunting was ritualized and under the stewardship of shamans, called Naoetaevoan, who were spiritually partnered with the bison and able to beckon them to the locations where they were surrounded or driven into enclosures. These same shamans also performed rites at the end of the hunt to give thanks to the spirits of the bison for their assistance (Schlesier 1987:53).

When bison were taken in the winter, families and bands were geographically dispersed into more informally organized hunting groups known among the Lakotas as tate (Hassrick 1964:166). These groups were the primary hunting units during the winter when the Lakotas encamped around the Black Hills. As late as the 1820s, solitary Lakota hunters were reported to take bison on foot, although the adoption of horses had overtaken this method (Ewers 1938:42-44). Before the widespread use of horses, bison were more commonly hunted in the late fall and early winter with the use of jumps or corrals (Binemma 2001:35, 37-54). The Cheyennes also took bison in small parties when their encampments were located near mountain ranges during the wintertime, but this was the usual time of the year for deer and elk hunting. However, if a solitary hunter or small hunting party came upon a large herd of bison, they could not chase them on their own. They had to make the herd’s presence known to the entire camp, so the leaders and their marshals could organize a formal surround (Grinnell 1972:1:262).

**Food**

Bison provided the Lakotas with their principal meat staple, and nearly all parts of the animal were eaten (Curtis 1907-30:3:38; Ewers 1938:16; Walker 1982:74). Considered delicacies to be served on ceremonial occasions were the tongue, gristles around the nostrils, the flesh from the hump, the raw liver soaked in gall, the pancreas, and the tripe (Ewers 1938:15; Hassrick 1964:190; Standing Bear 1978:54; Walker 1982:64, 93-94; Brown 1992:14). Also highly valued was the fetus of a calf cooked in the gravid uterus (Walker 1982:74). Sausages were made with with bits of boiled or roasted meat, blood, and/or tallow and stuffed into the small intestines (Hassrick 1964:190; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:386). Bone marrow was boiled to release the fat for making pemmican (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:386). The lungs were dried and cooked over hot coals (Hassrick 1964:190). Other bison parts that were consumed included the testicles and eyes (Ewers 1938:15). The brains and the shavings from scraped hides were used as thickeners in making soups and puddings (Standing Bear 1978:54). Hide scrapings were also eaten during difficult times, and even rawhide containers might be boiled and consumed under emergency circumstances (Ewers 1938:16). As John Ewers (Ibid:16) wrote: “But in times of food shortage all parts of the buffalo, save the glands of the neck, the sinews, bull’s pizzle, horns, hoofs, and hair were eaten.”

Bison were also the Cheyennes’ primary source of meat (Hoebel 1960:64; Grinnell 1972:1:255). The Cheyennes prized the tongue, gristles around the nostrils, the flesh from the hump, the raw liver soaked in gall, the pancreas, and the tripe, and they served these parts on ceremonial occasions (Grinnell 1972:1:255; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55). The Cheyennes used the small intestines for making sausages, and they also consumed the lungs and many other body parts (Grinnell 1972:1:255).

Bison meat was butchered and prepared in many different ways. Some of the internal organs were eaten raw, but most food parts were either boiled in soups or roasted over hot coals (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:386). Much of the meat from the loins and back of the animal was cut into long slices and dried in the sun on large racks, or it was smoked over hot coals inside the lodge. After being dried, it was usually pounded and combined with dried fruit and tallow in small cakes commonly called pemmican (Grinnell 1972:1:255; Black Elk 1984:386). More exhaus-
tive discussions of meat preservation and preparation are found in several sources (White Elk and Looking Glass in Densmore 1918:443-444; Ewers 1938:20; Hassrick 1964:189-190; Grinnell 1972:1: 110, 120, 255-257; 264, 266, 268, 2:348-349, 360, 378; Standing Bear 1978: 53-54; No Ears in Walker 1982:40; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:209, 366, 386; Saka Sni Win n.d.:2-9). There is also an excellent but unpublished description of these activities by Edward Freeland (1938), who invited a group of Oglalas from Pine Ridge to come to Wind Cave National Park in 1937 to demonstrate techniques of butchering, drying, and cooking bison for park visitors. Some of the Lakotas’ favorite cooked bison dishes, as reported in Ferdinand Hayden’s early writings (1862a, 1862b), included a boiled mixture of rosebuds, blood, brain, and raw-hide scrapings, and another of wild turnips combined with the dried paunch of the bison.

**In Art, Manufacture, and Ceremony**

The dependence of the Lakotas and Cheyennes on the bison and the nearly exhaustive use of its parts for much of their food and many of their life necessities is widely reported in the literature. In the ceremony where they renewed their Sacred Arrows, the Cheyennes made a special point of fabricating every article with material drawn from the buffalo, including hide, glue, sinew, and blood (Dorsey, G. 1905:12). What follows is a sampling of the some of the diverse practical and ceremonial uses to which bison products were put.

Horns and hooves had many different applications. Horns were made into dishes, spoons, ladles, scrapers, and a wide variety of other utensils and tools (Curtis 1907-30:3:138; Densmore 1948:195, 303; Hoebel 1960:62; Grinnell 1972:1:64, 211; Standing Bear 1978:53-54; Walker 1982:74; Brown 1992:121). They also went into the manufacture of bows (Ewers 1938:37; Grinnell 1972:173; Brown 1992:12), and they were used medicinally in the treatment of blood diseases (Goose in Densmore 1918:251). They were worn on the headdresses of officiates who conducted the Lakota *Hunka* and *Pte San Lowanpi* (Walker 1980:223, 246). Indeed, only men who held spiritual partnerships with bison were authorized to wear the horns of dead bison because these were believed to contain the “spiritual potency” of the animal (Walker 1982:103). Hooves were used as hatchets for butchering (Densmore 1918:443), they were boiled to make glue (Standing Bear 1978:53-54), they were used in arrow-making (Grinnell 1972:1:183), and they were made into pendants, rattles, and decorative cylinders (Grinnell 1972:1:221; Brown 1992:122).

Bison bone went into the making of scrapers, needles, awls, and hooves (Densmore 1948:203; Brown 1992:121). Runners for sleds, toys, and game parts were fabricated from the rib and jaw (Vestal 1934:7; Grinnell 1972:314; Standing Bear 1978:53-54). Arrowpoints, arrow-straighteners, and knives were carved from shoulder blades and/or made from the dorsal spine (Curtis 1907-30:6:158; Bordeaux 1929:183-184; Densmore 1918:443; Grinnell 1972:185, 213-214). Finally, the Cheyennes made a specialized tool from the proximal end of the humerus to abrade the hide before tanning (Grinnell 1972: 185, 213-214).

The skulls of bison had considerable spiritual significance and were used widely in ceremonial contexts. The Lakotas believed that the skulls held the “spiritual potency” of the bison and served as a sacred dwelling for *Tatanka*, the principle spiritual representative of the bison (Walker 1980:216, 224). Takes the Gun told Walker (1980:214) that in the *Hunka* ceremony:

> ...the spirit of the buffalo comes to its skull.

> The spirit of *Tatanka* is pleased to see the

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146 Raymond DeMallie (1980:379n), however, claims that Walker may have exaggerated the spiritual restrictions associated with the wearing of buffalo headdresses.
skull of a buffalo. The buffalo skull is at the ceremony because Tatanka is pleased.

Indeed, in most Lakota ceremonies for hunting, healing, celebrating a girl becoming a woman, and honoring an adoption, bison skulls were painted and their orifices filled with sage as an act of propitiation and respect for the spirit of the buffalo (Curtis 1907-30:3:75, 78, 82, 84, 86, 87, 94, 95, 98; Densmore 1918:72, 99, 122, 275; Walker 1980:179, 216, 224, 227-228, 238, 245, 247-248, 251, 255, 1982:74, 75-76). Similarly, the Cheyennes held the skull of the buffalo in high regard and filled its orifices with sage, sedge, and other sacred plants at their Sun Dance and Animal Dance (Dorsey, G. 1905:91; Hoebel 1960:13, 16; Grinnell 1972:1:82-83, 2:125, 223, 231, 235, 270, 291, 306; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:97; Schlesier 1987:6). When Grinnell (1875:79) came across a ritual arrangement of 60 painted skulls on the grasslands north of the Black Hills, lined up in five rows all facing east, this probably represented a spiritual act to petition the bison’s friend, the sun, to bring about the animal’s return.

Various organs from the bison were used in the making of bags and containers. The paunch or stomach of a buffalo was washed, cleaned, and suspended on sticks over a fire to serve as receptacle for boiling water and cooking meat (Curtis 1907-30:3:138, 6:156; Hassrick 1964:189; Grinnell 1972:1:170, 212; Standing Bear 1975: 21; Brown 1992:122; Black Elk in DeMallie 1994:335, 386). The Cheyennes also made temporary cups from the paunch (Grinnell 1972:1:170). Bladder bags held water, food, quills, tobacco, paints, and medicines (Ewers 1938:60; Densmore 1948:176; Grinnell 1972:1:212-213; Walker 1982:100; Brown 1992:122). The Lakotas commonly used them for important ceremonial occasions including the Hunka, Sun Dance, and spirit-keeping ceremonies (Curtis 1907-30:3:72, 73, 86, 87, 140-141; Densmore 1918:71, 77, 103, 1948:176). Indeed, the Lakotas considered the bladder to be sacred because as Black Elk (in Brown 1971:104) states, “it could contain the whole universe.” The heart lining or pericardium served the Cheyennes as a water container for children and infants, and it also went into the making of cases to hold porcupine quills (Grinnell 1972:1:213, 219). The Lakotas used the pericardium as a container for mixing greasy foods (Buechel 1970:473).

The dried aorta of the buffalo was sometimes used as a smoking pipe among the Cheyennes (Curtis 1907-30:6:108). The scrotum of the bull was dried and made into rattles used in various ceremonial performances (Curtis 1907-30:3:78, 79, 86; Grinnell 1972:1:203; Walker 1980:213, 1982:74; Brown 1992:213). The Lakotas attached the tails of bison to many different objects to secure the patronage of Tatanka: they were tied on war clubs, on rods to beat the rawhide drum in the Sun Dance, and on switches used in sweatlodges. The tail was worn by the officiate of the Pte San Lowanpi (Densmore 1918:97-98; Walker 1980:179-180, 189, 246, 249, 1982:106; Brown 1992:122). The Cheyennes attached strips of buffalo tail or beard to the heels of men’s moccasins (Grinnell 1972:1:219). The tongue was another organ used by the Cheyenne; the rough skin at its tip was once fashioned into combs (Grinnell 1972:1:211). The Cheyennes also attached a bison windpipe to the headdress of the lodge-maker at their Sun Dance (Dorsey, G. 1905:95). The Lakotas made offerings of bison larynges in their spirit keeping ceremonies (Curtis 1907-30:3:106, 109, 110). Finally, the brains and liver of bison were mixed together and applied to skins and robes as a tanning solution (Hoebel 1960:62; Grinnell 1972:1:216; Standing Bear 1975:19).

The tendons, fat, and blood of the bison had many diverse uses too. The sinew from the buffalo’s hind legs was dried and cut into small arrowpoints, and sinew from the neck went into the construction and reinforcement of handles for needles, knives, and pipes (Densmore 1918:436; Grinnell 1972:1:208). Sinew from the bison’s dorsal spine was made into sewing thread, bowstrings, rope,
and cordage (Lyford 1940:38; Grinnell 1972:1:218; Walker 1982:74). Among the Cheyennes, bison sinew was handled ceremoniously during the Animal Dance and the Sun Dance, rolled into a ball and covered with red cloth (Grinnell 1972:2: 240-241, 292). The Lakotas mixed bison fat with red clay and ash to make a paste, which functioned as skin cream and a cleanser (Standing Bear 1978:118). Bison fat was also the common medium for mixing paint pigments (Walker 1982:100). The fat from the heart was offered to the Sun Dance tree, and it was used to seal pipes smoked on ceremonial occasions (Sword in Deloria 1929:391; Black Elk in Brown 1971:88; Brown 1992:123). Bison blood was applied to arrows and mixed with paints; it was used in sealing pipes and in making glue (Densmore 1918:103, 439; Grinnell 1972:1:19; Brown 1992:123). Among the Cheyennes, tallow was used in salves and other medicinal application (Grinnell 1972:2:142).

Of all the different parts of the bison, the tanned skin, rawhide, and the detached fur or hair of the animal had the most versatile uses. There are a number of descriptions on the techniques of preparing and tanning bison hides for different purposes among the Lakotas and Cheyennes (Ewers 1938:50-51; Densmore 1948:172-174; Hoebel 1960:62; Hassrick 1964:182-183; Grinnell 1972:2: 213-217; Standing Bear 1975:19-21), and generally speaking, there were three different ways to prepare them.

In one preparation, after the hair was removed, the green hide was dried in the sun until it became hard but still pliable. This was rawhide. It was used in the making of parfleches, the large rectangular envelopes in which dried food and other materials were stored. This hide also went into the fabrication of eating bowls, cooking containers, medicine pouches, knife sheaths, splints, and quiver cases (Wissler 1910:79-82; Densmore 1948:178; Grinnell 1972:1: 244-245; Standing Bear 1978:53-54). Boats, mortars, and cradleboards were shaped out of dried hides and various kinds of horse gear were constructed out of this material too (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88-89; Ewers 1938:33-35; Standing Bear 1978:3; Walker 1982:80; Brown 1992:121-122; Grinnell 1972:210-211). Saddles of wood and elk horn were covered with green hide, which was then dried in place. Various kinds of ropes and lariats were plaited with strips of rawhide (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88-89; Ewers 1938:33-34; Grinnell 1972:2:197, 206-208; Walker 1982:81). The soles of moccasins were generally cut from dried buffalo hide (Wissler 1910; Ewers 1938:22; Grinnell 1972:1:219). Glue was produced from the boiled chippings of rawhide that came from the neck of a bull and from the shavings removed from hides when they were thinned (Grinnell 1972:1:175). The hide from a bison's head lined a hole in the ground where women pounded meat and berries for pemmican (Densmore 1948:174). The Cheyennes and Lakotas made war shields by drying and shrinking the green hide from a bull’s neck (Ewers 1938:41; Grinnell 1972:1:175). Among the Lakotas, the green dried hide was used as a percussion instrument in the Sun Dance, effigies were cut out of rawhide to hang on the center pole, and a rawhide bag held the meat and plant offerings placed in the sacred tree’s fork (Densmore 1918:118; Walker 1980:179, 189).

In another mode of preparation, the hair was removed and the hide softened and tanned. Many articles of everyday clothing, including dresses, leggings, moccasins, and loincloths, as well as bedding could be made from bison skin (Walker 1982:74; Brown 1992:121-122), although the Cheyennes and Lakotas tended to prefer the hides of other ungulates for these purposes. Among the Cheyennes, the dresses of older women and the leggings of older men were fabricated out of old and well-smoked tipi-liners (or dew cloths) made from buffalo cow skin (Grinnell 1972:1: 217). At the other end of the life cycle, clothing for Lakota infants was typically made out of skins from unborn calves (Standing Bear 1978:4). Pouches for storing medicines, pipes, gambling stakes,
sewing equipment, and paints were also fabricated from soft-tanned bison skins (Ewers 1938:51, 53; Grinnell 1972:1:134). Probably the most well-known and widely reported use of soft-tanned bison hide was in the making of tipis and tipi-liners (Curtis 1907-30:3:23, 25, 6:156; Ewers 1938:56; Grinnell 1972:1:226-234; Standing Bear 1975:19-21). Grinnell (1972:1:226) notes that Cheyenne women preferred to make their tipis from the hides of cows that had just shed their winter coats in mid-spring because these were the easiest to dress. Depending on their use and size, Cheyenne lodges required anywhere from eleven to twenty-one hides to construct them (Hoebel 1960:62; Grinnell 1972:1:226).

There were also more formal and ceremonial uses for soft-tanned hides. The Lakotas painted their winter-counts and war deeds on soft-tanned buffalo skins (Walker 1982:100-101); these skins were also hung on poles with scalp locks as war banners (Brown 1992:123). After a successful raid, Cheyenne war parties painted battle images on these skins too and displayed them as they made a victorious entry into their village (Grinnell 1972:2:18-19). The Cheyennes kept their Sacred Hat in a bag made of bison skin (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:75), and their Contraries kept their lances wrapped in bison hides (Grinnell 1972:2:81). Lakota Sun dancers and their leader wore bison skins (Brown 1992:123). Bison hides draped the shade of boughs surrounding the dance circle. The skin of a calf was consecrated and hung over the entrance of the Sun Dance sweatlodge and then removed and suspended from the sacred pole during the ceremony (Densmore 1918:118, 123; Walker 1980:186).

In the third manner of preparation, the hair was left on the hide and only the underside tanned. Entire skins were used this way in making the robes worn as blankets or used as bedding in everyday settings (Grinnell 1972:1:221; Walker 1982:74; Brown 1992:121-122). This was common practice when warm coverings were needed during the winter months; in the summer months, tanned robes with the hair removed were preferred as blankets and bed covers (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:82; Grinnell 1972:1:87). Among the Cheyennes, sacks and sewing cases were also made from these skins (Grinnell 1972:218). Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:151) reported that every man, woman, and child needed one to three robes each year for their personal use.

Among the Lakotas, the robes with the fur still attached were also worn for special occasions, such as the courtship trysts of young couples (Walker 1982:51) or for ceremonial events, such as the Hunka where female children wore robes made from the skin of a buffalo calf (Curtis 1907-30:3:76, 78, 80; Densmore 1918:77). These robes were also used as coverings and wrappings for the deceased (Curtis 1907-30:3:100-102), and carried by Sun dancers and their leaders (Ibid:3:95; Densmore 1918:125; Walker 1982:97-98). The lodge-makers, priests, and pledgers at Cheyenne Sun Dances also carried bison robes, and warriors donated valuable robes to cover the roof of the Sun Dance lodge (Dorsey, G. 1905:93; Hoebel 1960:15-16). Finally, some were embellished with elaborately painted or quilled designs to signify the prestige and honor of the wearer and worn on public occasions (Ewers 1938:22, 58; Hassrick 1964:191-193; Grinnell 1972:1:159-160).

Bison hair was also removed from the hide and used separately. Among the Lakotas, the hair was attached to the wrist and ankle bands of Sun dancers, and it was worn on the ankles of mothers whose children’s ears were pierced during the ceremony (Densmore 1907-30:3:95; Walker 1980:188, 190, 192). The leading officiate of this ceremony wore shed bison hair tied on his head to recall Pte San Winyan, the White Buffalo Calf Woman (Brown 1992:123). In the Hunka ceremony bunches of bison hair were also ritually used (Curtis 1907-30:3:72, 73, 86; Densmore 1918:72). The umbilical cords of boys were wrapped in bison hair before being inserted into their lizard-shaped pouches (Densmore
1948:185; Standing Bear 1978:154), and balls used in the “Throwing the Ball Ceremony” were stuffed with bison hair (Curtis 1907-30:3:138; Brown 1992:122). The Cheyennes also incorporated bison hair in ritual ways during some of their ceremonies: the pipe bowls, stems, and tampers used in the Sun Dance were wrapped in bison hair and the ceremonial Massaum wheel had tufts of this hair tied to it (Dorsey, G. 1905:74; Grinnell 1972: 2:240-241, 314-315, 318-319).

Bison hair was employed in more practical ways to stuff moccasins, dolls, pillows, war shields, and balls used in games. It was also attached to warbonnets, belts, and horsegear and used to pad saddles and make paint brushes (Grinnell 1972:1:189; Walker 1982:74, 103; Brown 1992:122). The long hairs from a bull’s neck were spun and braided to make lariats and ropes (Walk 1982:74; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88-89). The Cheyennes took a bison’s beard hair and made brushes to sprinkle water during their sweatlodges (Grinnell 1972:2:133).

Before moving on, a few words need to be written about the special status and use of a white buffalo skin, a rarity and highly revered among the Cheyennes and Lakotas. Among both tribes, when these animals were killed, they could not be touched by the hunter but had to be handled ceremoniously by qualified men who had spiritual partnerships with bison (Densmore 1918: 446; Grinnell 1972:2:202-204). Only those who dreamed of bison were allowed to eat the flesh of this animal (Densmore 1918: 446). According to Densmore (Ibid.), “The skin was not treated like an ordinary buffalo hide.” The animal had to be skinned in a special way to prevent the spilling of blood, and only women with certain qualifications were allowed to dress it (Ibid.). This was also true for the Cheyennes whose women had to undertake a special ceremony in order to prepare a white buffalo hide (Grinnell 1972:2:202-204). The Lakotas kept the robes in special rawhide cases (Densmore 1918:446), and they displayed them on certain ceremonial occasions such as the place of honor in a spirit-keeping lodge or the altar of an adoption ceremony. Edward S. Curtis (1909-30:3:110) wrote that at the close of a spirit-keeping ceremony, a white buffalo skin was carried to the north or west and buried in a cave or hole as an offering to Wakan Tanka. The Cheyennes did not use these skins in their ceremonies, but they hung them up as offerings to the Sun, Heam-mawiho (Grinnell 1972:1:272, 2:201). In later years, according to Grinnell (1972:1:273), these hides were not treated with the same respect, sold to white traders and tanned by captive women.

Finally, dried bison dung, popularly known as “buffalo chips,” had important practical and ceremonial functions too. First and foremost, “buffalo chips,” according to Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:91), “in their natural chunks make good wood.” They were used as a popular and widely accessible form of fuel, and when pulverized, as tinder (Densmore 1918:436; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55). Because of their absorbent properties, buffalo chips were also used in lieu of diapers. As Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:379-380) describes this:

With diapers, if it is wet, you have to take it off and put on a clean one. But we used buffalo chips [dried dung]. The women packed them--the old [dried ] pieces--and used them for diapers. First they powdered them up and put the powder into the skin. Whenever they wanted to change it, they took out the buffalo chips, which had absorbed everything, and the baby was never wet. Of course we greased them, so they were not irritated. Later the women had cloth and would take it and made a little pad and put the powdered buffalo chips in it and use it in that way. Babies were never wet. They used the softest part of a buffalo hide for the diapers.

This practice is also reported for the Arapahos (Trenholm 1970:60). A similar application was described by Standing Bear (1978:118), who wrote that the talcum-like
powder made from buffalo chips was applied to the skin to treat irritations.

Among the Lakotas, buffalo-chips were widely used in ceremonial contexts whenever a pipe was being smoked. At ceremonial altars, pipes were customarily placed on a buffalo-chip for smoking in conjunction with vision seeking, during a communal bison hunt, at a spirit keeping lodge, in the Hunka, and during the Sun Dance (Curtis 1907-30:3:66; Densmore 1918:72, 79, 83, 441; Walker 1980:36-37, 76, 77, 103, 180; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:145). Dried and pulverized bison dung was mixed with tobacco to light a pipe, and it was also burned ceremoniously as incense (Curtis 1907-30:3:186). The Cheyennes used bison dung in a wide range of ceremonial contexts as well. The coloring of bison dung, according to John Moore (1974a:171), undergoes a change from bright green to white when exposed to the sun, and this mirrors the yearly transition between the green of summer and the white of winter. In healing ceremonies, pipes rested on a piece of buffalo-chip (Grinnell 1972:2:137). At the Sun Dance, pieces of dried dung were positioned at the points of the sacred root-digger and arrow as well as near the skull (Grinnell 1972:2:238, 245). During the Massaum, a piece of bison dung was wrapped in red flannel and placed at the altar next to the skull; the chips were used in other contexts of this ceremony too (Grinnell 1972:2:292, 295, 323, 333). Dried buffalo dung played a part in the ritual preparations for driving pronghorn into pits (Grinnell 1972:1:280). A mound of buffalo chips was placed outside the ceremonial lodge of the Fox Soldiers who ritually surrounded it each morning (Grinnell 1972:2:57). War parties burnt buffalo chips to celebrate a victory and to purify enemy scalps taken in battle (Grinnell 1972:2:32, 37). And finally, bison dung was used in healing to draw out snake venom (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Bison, as discussed in the text to this report, hold a much-revered place in the tribal cosmologies of the Cheyennes and the Lakotas.

**Cosmological Traditions**

In Lakota cosmology, there are two beneficent spiritual figures that are represented in the image of a buffalo, Tatanka [Bison Bull] and Pte San Winyan [White Buffalo Calf Woman]. There is also a dangerous figure, Gnaskinyan [Crazy Buffalo], and many lesser spiritual ones envisioned as bison who were part of the Pte Oyate [Buffalo Nation], including Waziya [Old Man] and Wakanka [Old Woman].

*Tatanka* is a member of the Tobtob, one of the sixteen most important figures in the pantheon of Lakota spiritual beings. In James Walker’s writings (1980:50-51, 94), he is ranked in a lesser class among the Wakan kuya [Lower Sacred] with the Bear, the Four Winds, and the Whirlwind, who all stand below the Wakan akanta [Superior Sacred] and the Wakan kolaya [Associate Sacred] but above the Wakanlapi [Similar to sacred] (Powers, W. 1977:54; Walker 1980:50-51). *Tatanka* represents the masculine spiritual presence most responsible for provisioning and prosperity and for insuring good health (Black Elk in Brown 1971:72; Little Wound in Walker 1980:67; Walker 1980:50, 225, 232). Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:121) said that he “presides” over virtue and industry too. Along with Tate and Takuskanskan, two of the other Tobtob, he rules over the hunt (Hassrick 1964:207, 214; Walker 1982:75, 76, 91); he is addressed and propitiated in all rituals associated with hunting. He is also considered to be the “chief of all the animals” (Black Elk in Brown 1992:13). Stanley Vestal, in his work (1932:18) on Sitting Bull’s life, described why the bull was so revered and admired. He wrote:

Thus, everyone knew that the buffalo was headstrong, stubborn creature, afraid of
nothing. It never turned back, never gave up, no matter what the obstacle, but always kept on going ahead, whatever the danger, whatever the weather. In winter, it moved against the wind, even in the bitterest blizzard, seeming to welcome opposition. Once it started in a given direction, nobody could head it off. It was all endurance, headstrong courage, persistence and strength.

Tatanka is also a figure of generosity and positive ceremonial outcomes (Hassrick 1964:207, 214; Little Wound in Walker 1980:67; Brown 1992:25). He and other bison figures are believed to be the closest spiritual relatives of humans (Black Elk in Brown 1971:117), and thus, they serve as models of kinship, parental duty, and domestic harmony (Walker 1982:75, 76, 91). Tatanka is one of the major spiritual figures addressed during the Lakota Hunka ceremony, and it is his spirit who resides in the skull at this and, indeed, all other major Lakota ceremonies. As Takes the Gun remarked (1980:214):

The spirit of Tatanka cares for the family. It cares for the young man or the young woman who should live together. It cares for the woman who lives with a man. It cares for little children. It cares for the hunters. It cares for the growing things (vegetation). It cares for everything that has young.

Tatanka is linked to the fecundity of women and guards over their pregnancies and menstrual cycles (Hassrick 1964:207, 214; Bad Wound in Walker 1980:124), and he is the central spiritual figure appealed to at the Pte San Lowanpi, when a young girl enters into womanhood (Black Elk in Brown 1971:116-126; Walker 1980:249). He is also featured in the “Throwing the Ball” Ceremony, which is also connected to female fertility (Black Elk in Brown 1971:133-136). Consistent with this connection is the idea that the bison cow represents motherhood in sacred discourse (Powers, M. 1986:186). Finally, Tatanka is a symbol for cosmic regeneration and represents a major figure to whom appeals are made and offerings given during the Sun Dance (Densmore 1918:98-125). He is believed to share in the power of the whirlwind, which is evidenced by the dust formations he kicks up before batting another bull (Wissler 1905:258).

The feminine representation of the bison is a bit more complex. On one and probably an older level, there is a spiritual female bison whose home is under the earth. She controls the game and sometimes marries a human man so that the bison can come to his people. There are many stories in the oral and written traditions of the Lakotas that carry this theme, and they bear a remarkable resemblance to a number of Cheyenne, Arikara, and Kiowa sacred narratives. The Lakota tradition is not as well articulated as it is among these other tribal nations, but when it appears, as discussed elsewhere, it is usually connected to a female bison figure who lives underneath the Black Hills and guards the animals.

In Lakota traditions, a prominent female spiritual figure that comes closest to this understanding is Wohpe [Meteor]. In the Lakota creation story, as given to James Walker by George Sword, she is the daughter of Skan, the Sky, and comes to earth to live with Tate, the Wind, and his sons. She is a mediator and responsible for many creative outcomes, including the making of vegetation and other life forms (Walker 1983:229-244). Later in Lakota cosmological time, she is reincarnated as Pte San Winyan, the White Buffalo Calf Woman, who brings the sacred pipe to the Lakotas and advises them in the performance of their seven sacred rituals (Black Elk in Brown 1971:3-9). There are numerous renditions of how she appeared to the Lakotas (Densmore 1918:63-66; Hassrick 1964:217-219; Finger in Walker 1980:109; Black Elk in Brown 1992; Powers, W. 1977:54; Powers, M. 1986:43-49; Looking Horse 1987: 68-69; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:38-41), but today, as in the past, she remains a supremely important figure, a model of female generosity, nurturance, and everything else that represents the highest virtues of womanhood (Powers, M. 1986:70-72; St. Pierre and
Long Soldier 1995:41-42). She is one of the primary protectors and guardians of humans, and she is appealed to and propitiated in most major ceremonies including the most important of all, the Sun Dance. Walker (1980:232) made the observation: “The council lodge and a large robe with a buffalo cow painted on it signifies that one will be sufficiently esteemed to have an honorable place in the council of the camp and have a large relationship and following.”

Gnaskiyun (Crazy Buffalo), in his various forms, represents the spiritual antithesis to the giving and protective qualities of other bison figures in Lakota cosmology (Bad Wound in Walker 1980:124). From the conversation of No Flesh, George Sword, Bad Wound, and Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:94), Gnaskiyun is the most feared of the “evil” spiritual beings. He is the grand artist of deception, appearing in a benevolent guise and persuading the people to do terrible things (Little Wound in Walker 1980:67). In the sacred liturgy of the Pte San Lowanpi, he is mentioned as a danger to young women, tempting them to defile their chastity (Hassrick 1964:260). He appears throughout the Lakota creation cycle, deceiving the animals, the Pte Oyate, and even some of the higher order Tobtob (Walker 1983). In some stories, when the White Buffalo Calf Woman's encounters two young men, his devious influence is believed to have caused the lustful emotions and subsequent death of one of them (Finger in Walker 1980:110). He is also implicated in Iron Shell’s winter count entry for 1871, the year a buffalo dreamer was fooled when he conducted a ceremony but no bison appeared (Hassrick 1964:310-311). Much like the North Wind, Waziyata, or his grandfather, Waziya, he is represented as pugnacious, selfish and stingy.

Besides these more personified spiritual images of buffalo, there are many more generalized ideas about the spiritual position of the bison. Notwithstanding variations of interpretation, the spiritualized essence of the bison was closely associated with the procreative powers of the earth (Short Bull in Walker 1980:144; Little Wound in Walker 1980:124; Brown 1992:25; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:110), especially Maka [Earth] and Inyan [Stone], both of whom rank among the four most sacred spiritual beings in the Lakota pantheon. This connection is made very explicit in the words of the intercessor at a Hunka ceremony (Walker 1980:229).


Bison are linked to the underworld: their “tipi” or home is located inside the earth and identified with caves (Bushotter in Dorsey, J. 1894:476-477; Little Wound in Walker 1980:67; Bad Wound in Walker 1980:124). More specifically, they are connected to the cave of Waziya, the Old Man (Walker 1917:91), which some Lakotas believe is Wind Cave.

Bison are also closely associated with the Sun, who moves to the underworld at night where he visits with his close bison companion, Tatanka (Walker 1917:91; Little Wound in Walker 1980:67). Bison are believed to follow the Sun in their annual migrations and to hold the sun’s rays in their hair in the same way that porcupine quills and eagle tail feathers do (Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a:42-43). Finally, the bison
is the one animal who stands metaphorically for the entire cosmos (Black Elk in Brown 1971:72). This is true because bison embody the ton of the four highest tobitob, stone, earth, sun, and sky or motion (and its associate the wind).

The Pte Oyate (Buffalo Nation) are the spirits of bison who live under the world. It is worth quoting James Walker’s interpretation (1917:91) of them:

The Buffalo People...have the power to transmogrify and may appear on the world as animals or as mankind, and may mingle with the Lakota and become their spouses. They can transmogrify their spouses and take them to the regions under the world.

The offspring of a buffalo person and a Lakota has the powers of its buffalo parent and controls its other parent. A Lakota espoused to a buffalo person, or having buffalo children, can be freed from their control only by a Shaman whose fetish has the potency of the Buffalo God.

Some Lakotas believe that the original metamorphosis of buffalo people into humans happened at Wind Cave. Originally, the buffalo people were created to act as the messengers of the Lakotas’ higher sacred beings, the Earth, Maka, the Sky, Skan, the Stone, Inyan, and the Sun, Wi. They appear throughout the Lakota origin cycle after their creation (Walker 1983), and they are specifically referenced in the sacred liturgy of the Hunka as kinspeople who come from the underworld where they live in the midst of the Sun during the night (Walker 1980:229).

In Lakota traditions, Tatanka and the Pte Oyate are often represented in perpetual conflict with wolves and coyotes, animals also associated with breath and the direction of the North Wind (Tyon in Walker 1980:121). These two animals are depicted as dangerous to humans in sacred liturgical texts associated with fertility and making kin (Walker 1980:222, 229, 231-232, 242, 249). This stands in marked contrast to Cheyenne worldviews where wolves and coyotes are not only seen as companions and helpers to bison, but they also occupy some of the more exalted positions in the Cheyennes’ cosmological order.

In Cheyenne worldviews, the animals that come from zones beneath the earth typically occupy a lower spiritual status than the animals associated with the blue sky, notably golden eagles, magpies, and vultures. These and other birds are included among the supreme maiyun (Moore, J. 1974a, 1984). Although many animals of the earth are considered sacred and sources of beneficial cosmic power, only bison and wolves are appealed to and propitiated in the context of major Cheyenne ceremonies such as the Animal Dance or the Sun Dance as representatives of the Maiyun (thunder, sun, rain, and earth), the highest sacred forces in the universe. Indeed the maiyun representing the earth and the thunder generally reveal themselves either through wolf or bison impersonations (Dorsey, G. 1905; Grinnell 1972:2:211-336; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:91-114; Powell 1969:2:481-858; Schlesier 1987:43-109). Typically most of the spiritualized manifestations of bison appear in a feminized form.

Esceheman [Our Grandmother], the deep spirit of the earth, is associated with animals and is the protector of animal spirits (Powell 1969:2:437; Schlesier 1987:5, 8, 82). Along with the Sun, Thunder, and Rain, she is one of the four central maiyun or spiritual potencies of the Cheyenne created by Ma’heo, the spiritual power over all (Schlesier 1987:8). Her helpers and the ones through whom she often reveals herself are the badger, buffalo, bear, and wolf. She is the one represented as the white or yellow wolf, Eversev honche, at the Maussam ceremony (Schlesier 1987:6-93, 94, 98, 121), and she is the one who “grants” and instructs the ceremony (Schlesier 1987:76-80, 82-83, 89-109). She

Bear and Theisz 1994:103-104). Both of these figures are closely associated with bison, and this may be why bison are often represented in a feminine form.
is also believed to have gifted a sacred hat to the Cheyenne. The Is siwun, the Sacred Hat, one of the two most important sacred symbols of the Cheyenne (the other being the Sacred Arrows), is an embodiment of the female spiritual presence of Esceheman and the buffalo, or as Father Peter Powell (1969: 2:443) puts it, “the living symbol and source of female power.”

Esceheman is also embodied in the sacred buffalo skull at the Sun Dance (Powell 1969:2:335-336, 422, 425, 597) and in the one at the Massaum (Schlesier 1987:94-95). The “Sacred Woman” of the Sun Dance may also represent an impersonation of Esceheman (Powell 1969:2:448). In this ceremony, she is ritually impregnated by the ‘man power,’ represented in the image of the Thunder (Powell 1969:2:449-459). When a keeper of the Sacred Hat died, the corpse was placed on a hill and covered by stones surrounded by four buffalo skulls at each of the four cardinal directions. If this was not done, according to Grinnell (1910:567), “the buffalo would go away to the north -- where they originally came from -- and the range would be deserted. But, if this were done, there would always be plenty of buffalo in the country.”

Her daughter, Ehyolphstah (Yellow Hair on Top Woman), comes from a union with the Thunder, Nonoma (represented as a coyote or wolf) (Schlesier 1987:78). She is represented as the figure in the story of Sweet Medicine and his friend’s journey to Bear Butte. She is the one who marries the friend and brings the buffalo to his people (Grinnell 1907; Schlesier 1987:76-79), and she is the patroness of one of the Cheyenne sweatlodges (Schlesier 1987:62). Ehyolphstah is also an important figure in the Massaum where she represented the ‘Master of the Animals’ and the Voh’kis ‘Blue Star,’ impersonated in the form of a Kit-Fox (Schlesier 1987:12, 84, 104-109). The timing of the Massaum was tied to the rising of the blue star of summer dawn, Rigel, that rose midway between Aldebran, representing Ma’heone Honehe, the Red Wolf or Nonoma, and Sirius signifying Evevesv Honche, the Horned Wolf or Esceheman (Schlesier 1987:82-83). The maiyun who stand for the Above Powers, the masculine spiritual essence, appear in the guise of birds. Since the Maiyun are represented in stars, female procreative figures such as Esceheman and Ehyolphstah have a dual positioning and exist simultaneously as earth and celestial figures. Even though the Cheyennes symbolically represent bison in a predominately female form, it is the bison bull that “talked to them” (Grinnell 1972:2:104). Whatever this means, and Grinnell doesn’t elaborate upon it, the bison is the supreme symbol of the family, fecundity, and regeneration as it is among the Lakotas. It is associated primarily with the subterranean world where the maiyun keep their home in a cave underneath Bear Butte, but it also has celestial linkages to other Maiyun including the Sun.

The Buffalo People representing the spiritualized component of the materialized bison were the ones against whom humans raced in the Black Hills, and they are often interchangeably identified with the Suhtaio division of the Cheyenne nation and their culture hero, Stands on the Ground or Erect Horns, who is most closely associated with the origin of the Sun Dance. The Suhtaio are also connected with an older, buffalo ceremony tied to healing and the sweatlodge (Grinnell 1919; Anderson 1956; Powell 1969:324-327, 341, 343, 344, 388, 408).

Finally, the Cheyennes have a figure remarkably similar to the Lakotas’ Crazy Buffalo, known as Histowumini’hott’a [The Double-toothed bull] or Hestovonenehota, who was male and known to eat people (Petter 1913-15:193; Grinnell 1972:2:99). He was probably modeled after the actual behavior and pugnacity of bulls that are known to suddenly charge humans, especially during the rutting season in June and July (Grinnell 1972:1:269). In the Cheyennes’ Massaum Ceremony, the Black Buffalo impersonators often charge the Con-
traries in imitation of bison bull behavior (Grinnell 1972:2:330, 334).

**Bison Dreamers**

In both Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, men and women who were visited and gifted by bison were highly esteemed and often played important roles in their communities as successful hunters, highly revered healers, and respected officiates at major ceremonies (Hassrick 1964:237).

For the Lakotas, bison dreamers, *Tatanka Ihnblapi*, were among the most revered of those with spiritual partnerships with animals. Men, and sometimes women, who dreamed of bison once held special dance performances to demonstrate their powers (Wissler 1912:91). They painted targets on their backs which people shot at to reveal their spiritual power to deflect arrows or, if wounded, to demonstrate their healing skills (Wissler 1912:91; Hassrick 1964:239). Their ability to avoid being wounded was one of their trademarks (Densmore 1918:173-176). They wore bison skins with heads and horns attached, they lived in black painted tipis, and in their dances, they imitated the actions of bison (Curtis 1907-30:3:63, 139; Densmore 1918:285; Hassrick 1964:144, 239; Standing Bear 1978:141-142; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:7, 88-89, 240-241).

The Lakotas often tied success in hunting to dream and visionary encounters with bison (Little Wound in Walker 1980:68), and the men who had these experiences painted a red circle on the middle of their chest to signify this (Walker 1980:281). These men often served as “buffalo callers,” and they were the ones who presided over the *wana sapi* [communal bison hunt] (Hassrick 1964: 187, 253, 310-311). Some of the men with dreams of bison formed special associations, one of which was called the *Tatanka Wahpahan* [Buffalo Headdress] Society. Also known as the Big Bellies, its members wore buffalo hair caps with horns and special bison skins (Walker 1982:35). Joseph Eppes Brown (1992:25) speculates that when the men of this society sat in a circle, adorned in their buffalo robes and headdresses, they were imitating bison bulls that encircled calves when they were attacked by wolves. There was also another society associated with men who had dreamed of the White Buffalo. Known as the White Decorated Society or White Marked Society, the members of this group carried bows and arrows to feasts and dances where “they shot arrows into the sky and the earth” to defy the powers of *Inyan* [Stone] and *Wakinyan* [Thunder] (Sword in Walker 1980:101; Wissler 1912:34-36).

Among the Lakotas, there were strong associations between bison, herbal medicine, and healing. Thomas Tyon told James Walker (1980: 153) that men who dreamed of buffalo “knew about the medicines and all other things for doctoring.” Indeed, James Walker (1980:62) claimed that these dreamers were considered to be the “most reputable” healers. Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:128-129) recounted one of his visions of the buffalo that reveals this connection:

> As I looked down upon the people, there stood on the north side a man painted red all over his body and he had with him a lance (Indian spear) and he walked into the center of the sacred nation’s hoop and lay down and rolled himself on the ground and when he got up he was a buffalo standing right in the center of the nation’s hoop. The buffalo rolled and when he got up there was an herb there in his place…After the buffalo’s arrival the people looked better and then when the buffalo turned into an herb, the people all got up and seemed to be well. Even the horses got up and stretched themselves and neighed. Then a little breeze came from the north and I could see that the wind was in the form of a spirit and as it went over the people all the dead things came to life. All the horses pulled up their tails and neighed and began to prance around.

The spirit said: ‘Behold you have seen the powers of the north in the form of man, buffalo, herb and wind. The people shall follow the man’s steps; like him they shall
walk and like the buffalo they shall live and with the herb they shall have knowledge. They shall be like relatives to the wind.’ [From the man in the illustration they should be healthy, from the buffalo they shall get meat, from the herb they shall get knowledge of diseases. The North wind will give them strong endurance].

Women also received healing powers from bison spirits (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:134-135).

Among the Cheyennes, dreams of bison gave men protection in war, assistance in hunting, and/or the gift of healing (Grinnell 1919; Anderson 1956; Powell 1969:1:324-327, 341, 343, 344, 388, 408; Grinnell 1972:1:196,151; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:34). Some of the shamans who were able to call “game” and properly propitiate them had partnerships with bison spirits associated with Esceheman. The Vonhaom, a sweatlodge, whose origin is tied to bison, was largely run by buffalo dreamers associated with the Suhtaio division (Anderson 1956; Powell 1969:1:341-344; Grinnell 1972:2:104; Schlesier 1987:15-16, 52-58). Cheyenne bison dreamers also exhibited their powers in public, but they appear to have done so in more solitary ways (Grinnell 1972:2:145). The two contexts that were an exception to this were the ceremonies of the Buffalo Society, Ottu-a-ta’ni-o (Hayden 1862b:281; Anderson 1956) and the Mas-sauam where bison dreamers impersonated the bison in the animal “hunt” (Grinnell 1972:334-335).

**Ceremonial Observances**

In both Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, many of the people who had spiritual partnerships with bison also occupied important positions in these nations’ ceremonial observances. Among the Lakotas, male shamans who acted as the chief intercessors over many major ceremonies were bison dreamers, and they were the ones who sang over the participants or prayed on their behalf (Hassrick 1964:253; Tyon in Walker 1980:153; Walker 1980:249; Powers, W. 1986:185). The Hunka Lowanpi [Making Relatives Sing], the Pte San Lowanpi [White Buffalo Sing] and the Tapawanka Yeyapi [Throwing the Ball] are three of the ceremonies where the bison is the most important spiritual benefactor, and all of these are described in great length in a number of other sources (Densmore 1918; Hassrick 1964; Walker 1980). Some bison dreamers also presided over Spirit-Keeping rites, Wanagi cagapi (Densmore 1918: 77-83).

The Wiwanyan Wacipi, the Sun Dance, was also usually led by men with spiritual connections to bison. Men with bison power were the ones who led the Buffalo Dance and blessed the feast on the day the center tree was felled (Hassrick 1964: 242). From the nineteenth century to the present, the Sun Dance remains the Lakotas’ holiest religious observance, a major ceremony of renewal and regeneration. Its conduct and performance are written about at great length in many different sources (Densmore 1918:84-151; Walker 1917, 1980; Mails 1978; Catches 1990), and this does not need to be repeated other than to review some of its major relations to bison.

The Sun Dance is held during the first full moon of summer at the time Juneberries or chokecherries are ripening and when the sage is fresh and in full bloom (Densmore 1918:98). It is performed over a four day period, which starts with the felling of the sacred cottonwood tree that serves as a center pole for the dance. Symbolically, the capture of the tree mimics a battle where scouts find it and warriors/hunters attack it. After virgins cut it down, the tree is taken to the dance area in the center of the circle. A hole is dug and offerings are put there before the tree is erected (Catches 1990:112). West of the sacred tree is an altar and behind this is a bed of sage upon which the bison skull containing the spirit of Tatanka rests. A

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148 John Moore, J. (1974a:239) argues that the spiritual power from bison only enabled its holders to locate the animal not to kill them. Power to hunt came from wolves and coyotes.
rawhide buffalo hangs on the center tree, indicating symbolically that humans have been given spiritual assistance to conquer this animal on whose behalf offerings are given and sacrifices are made during the dance. As Black Elk told Brown (1971:72) in regards to the bison bull:

He represents the people and the universe and should always be treated with respect, for was he not here before the two-legged peoples, and is he not generous in that he gives us our homes and our food? The buffalo is wise in many things, and, thus, we should learn from him and should always be as a relative with him.

A major focus of this ritual involves the propitiation of the bison, the central figure in Lakota cosmology that brings prosperity, harmony, and good health to the people.

This is also true in relation to the Cheyenne Sun Dance, the Oxheheom [The New Life Lodge], where offerings and propitiations are made to the spiritual presence of Escehe-man, whose spirit rests in the buffalo skull placed in the Lone Tipi (Dorsey, G. 1905: 91, 97; Hoebel 1960:13; Schlesier 1987:3). The Lone Tipi ceremonies are performed in preparation for the public phase of the ceremony. At these ceremonies, the assistant Chief Priest and the Lodge Maker smoke a sacred pipe to bring the bison to them (Dorsey, G. 1905:100), and other rituals are performed to symbolize their regeneration (Hoebel 1960:15; Powell 1969:2:614-645). After the sacred tree, representing the life of the people, is located, felled, and brought to the lodge, an altar is prepared which recreates the Cheyennes’ image of a prosperous universe with abundant bison and plants, the presence of sunshine, rainbows and good spirits, and a people with good health and the ability to vanquish their enemies (Hoebel 1960:14; Powell 1969:646-684). During the dance itself, the Cheyennes engage in acts of suffering and self-sacrifice, which includes inserting skewers into the back and shoulders to which rawhide ropes are tied and buffalo skulls hung. Men drag these skulls around the dance area or dance with them in place on their backs (Dorsey, G. 1905:176; Grinnell 1972:2:211). This and other acts of offering are intended to seek the spiritual benevolence necessary to renew the world and the lives of the people. The dance ends with a race to the four directions and the homes or pillars of the four sacred Ma’heyuno (Powell 1969:2:841-852). Although this ceremony is linked to bison and female generative powers, it is dedicated to Ma’heo who represents the supreme male spiritual figure in the Cheyenne cosmos (Moore, J. 1996a:225-226). There are many accounts of the Cheyenne Sun Dance. For further and more detailed descriptions of dances held at the turn of the twentieth century, the best sources are George Dorsey (1905) and George Bird Grinnell (1972:2:211-284). The best accounts of modern dances are found in Rev. Peter Powell (1969:2:611-855) and John Moore's works (1996a: 221-229).

A second major ceremony where bison symbolism played a prominent role is the Maussam, which Grinnell (1972:2:287) claimed was associated with the Cheyennes’ arrival on the plains in the country of the buffalo. This ceremony, which is no longer practiced, reveals the dual positioning of bison as game animals and spiritual beings in Cheyenne cosmology. In the dance, bison are represented among the animals that are symbolically hunted by the Contraries with the assistance of wolves and foxes. They are the “grass” and “black” buffalo who symbolize ordinary game animals, but they are also represented as a female generative force whose spiritual presence resides in the bison skull placed on the altar (Grinnell 1972:2:330-334). In this ceremony, which is described in greater detail in the discussion on wolves, the buffalo skull was placed in a bed dug in the ground because originally the bison came out of the earth. Grinnell (1972:2:296) states that this is a reference to the bison’s emergence after the visit of their two culture heroes to the old woman in the hill, Esceheman. More than that, according to Karl
Schlesier (1987:7), the ceremony reenacts the creation of the world and all of its life forms that lead up to the ritual hunt where humans slay the game on whose lives they depend.

In concluding, it cannot be emphasized enough how much the bison was revered by the Cheyennes and Lakotas, not only in a practical way as source of food, shelter, and medicine, but, spiritually, as a presence that embodied a good, healthy, and productive life. Even though bison disappeared as a principal source of food for the Cheyennes and Lakotas, they continued to be regarded as a pivotal part of their cultural traditions and identities and central to their religious life as well.

Bighorn Sheep

[Ovis canadensis auduboni]

Habitat and History

Bighorns were closely associated with the Black Hills by early traders. In 1804, the French engage La Paige reported to Lewis and Clark that he had seen bighorn sheep in the Black Hills near the Little Missouri River (Moulton 1983-87:6:338), and the trader Jon Vallé also told them of their presence in the Hills (Ibid:3:133-135). Another engage, Gueneville, described how bighorns migrated annually from the Missouri River to their winter homes in the Black Hills (Ibid:3:179-180). Nearly thirty years later, Maximillian, Prince of Wied (in Thwaites 1966:2:346-347) noted that Hidatsas regularly traveled towards the Black Hills to hunt bighorns. And in the 1850s, Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:6) and Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:150) mentioned their presence in the Hills and neighboring badland regions. Although once a very abundant species in the Black Hills and adjoining grasslands, they declined precipitously during the last decades of the nineteenth century (Grinnell 1972:1:277; Seton 1929:2:535; Turner 1974:147), and only a few small herds survived in the area (Turner 1974:147-148). After they disappeared, they were reintroduced at Custer National Park from locales outside the region. They now occupy the more remote and higher elevation locations of this park, although sometimes they appear at Wind Cave National Park (Froiland 1978:145; Turner 1974:148).

Tribal Taxonomy

The Lakotas call bighorns cinskayapi [to make horn spoons] or hecinskayapi (Buechel 1970:132, 664). The Cheyennes know them as kosa or kosane (Petter 1913-15:131; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:98).

Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

Bighorn sheep were highly valued as food and for their hides and horns (Bordeaux 1929:126; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Grinnell 1972:1:272, 277; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Hoebel 1960:64; Brown 1997:17). Historically, bighorn were not only numerous, but, according to George Bird Grinnell (1972:1:272), docile enough to kill easily with arrows. Beyond this remark, little is recorded in the historic or ethnographic record about Lakota and Cheyenne methods for hunting them, although three sources (Vestal 1934:161-162; Grinnell 1972:1:277; Powell 1981:1:112;) mention that they were hunted in the Black Hills and around Bear Butte.

The hides of bighorn sheep were much in demand because of their fineness. They were used in making garments for men and women. Among the Cheyennes, their skins were used in making dresses and leggings for women and war shirts for men (Grinnell 1972:1:217,221). The Cheyennes also used their fleece to stuff pillows to sit on (Petter 1913-15:131). The Oglalas made the skins into articles of clothing, especially war shirts (White Bull in Vestal 1934:162). Hanskaska Society members wore shirts with the dew claws of these animals still attached.
The horns of the bighorn were highly valued by both tribes for making spoons and ladles (Petter 1913-15:131; Hoebel 1960:62; Grinnell 1972:1:211; Standing Bear 1975:22). Parkman (in Feltskog 1969:292) reported that some of the horn ladles were capable of holding as much as a quart of water. In addition, the Cheyennes used their horns in making bows and in manufacturing arrow-straighteners (Curtis 1907-30:6:156; Grinnell 1972:1:174,179; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:27). The Arikaras were also reported to have made bows from the horns as well (Bradbury 1966:159). Cheyenne Contraries ate and drank from special dishes carved out of the horns of these animals (Grinnell 1972:1:85).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Among the Lakotas, bighorn sheep were a source of visionary power and the people who dreamed of them, *Hecinskayapi ihan-blapi*, were believed to hold powerful war medicines (Wissler 1912:95; Powers, W. 1977:59). One Oglala told James Owen Dorsey (1894:497):

> Goats are very mysterious, as they walk on cliffs and other high places; and those who dream of goats or have revelations from them imitate their actions. Such men can find their way up and down cliffs, the rocks get soft under their feet, enabling them to maintain a foothold, but they close up behind them, leaving no trace.

A number of Lakotas were known to have dreamed of these sheep, but whether they gathered together for special ceremonial performances of the kind associated with elk and deer dreamers is unclear (Wissler 1912:95). The Cheyennes considered them “half mysterious,” and they were animals with which people might enter into spiritual partnerships (Petter 1913-15:131).

**The Cervid Family**

There are three species of the family Cervidae at Wind Cave National Park, elk or wapiti [Cervus canadensis canadensis], mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus hemionus*), and whitetail deer (*Odocoileus virginianus dactotensis*). In the 1850s, Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:149) reported that elk were most numerous in areas west of Fort Union on the Missouri, while mule deer were common everywhere but one of their favorite haunts was the Cheyenne River. He also pointed out that mule deer rarely frequented the open prairies, preferring rugged and hilly locations along streams instead. He noted that because of unusually severe winters in the 1850s, whitetail deer were hardly seen in their timbered riparian habitats. In 1874, Grinnell (1875:78-79) reported seeing numerous whitetail deer, and mule deer, especially in the rugged foothills on the northern side of the Black Hills. He sighted a small number of red deer and a few elk, but he also remarked that throughout the Hills there was much evidence that elk existed in large numbers. All of these species have value in European American game hunting traditions, and historically, they were taken for their meat and hides by early trappers, miners, and settlers in the Black Hills (Turner 1974:137; Sundstrom, J. 1977:105, 1994:68; Friggens 1983:88-89). Their popularity as food and the commercial value of their skins threatened the survival of some species. Indeed, elk were extirpated from the region in the late nineteenth century, and

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149 Coincidentally, the word *wapiti* has a sensible trans-lation in the Dakota and Lakota language; it means “to dwell with luck” (Riggs 1968:195, 467, 533; Beuchel 1970:548).

150 Red deer (*Cervus virginianus*) were commonly dis-tinguished from whitetail deer (*Cervus Leceras*) in the early writings of European Americans, and they were certainly separate in the zoological nomenclatures of local tribes. Although they are now considered to be of the same species, Grinnell (1875:78) reported that traders and hunters in the area noted that the whitetail found in the Black Hills were much smaller than those located along the Missouri River.
mule deer populations experienced a serious decline in their numbers. Only whitetail deer held their own in the face of private and market-oriented hunting (Turner 1974:136-140).

For the Lakotas and Cheyennes, the three species of Cervidae provided an important source of food and also skins for clothing. They were hunted primarily from the late fall through the early months of spring, and they were probably taken as much as bison during this time of the year (Densmore 1918:447; Hassrick 1964:154-155). Next to bison and pronghorn, elk and deer were major sources of meat for the Lakotas who lived near the Black Hills (Ewers 1938:17; Hassrick 1964:164).

**Elk or Wapati**

* [Cervus canadensis canadensis]  

**Habitat and History**

Historically, elk were closely and specifically associated with the Black Hills. In fact, this was the location where local tribes were often reported to hunt the animal, with some traveling from locations as far away as the Missouri and Platte Rivers to do so (Moulton 1983-87:3:482; Denig in Ewers 1961:5-6; Maximilian in Thwaites 1966:22:346-347; Mallery 1987:117; Bettlelyoung and Wagonner 1988:21). Some explorers reported the hills were rich in elk (Dodge 1965:123; Progulske 1974:122; Curtis in Krause and Olson 1974:69), but by the end of the nineteenth century, they were hunted to extinction. An early settler in the area of Wind Cave National Park, Fannie McAdam (1973:17), recalled seeing lots of antlers in the area but not the animal itself. Elk were reintroduced at Custer State Park in 1914 and two years later in 1916 at Wind Cave National Park (Turner 1974:136).

**Tribal Taxonomy**

In the Lakota language, the male elk is called *hehaka* and the female, *unpan* (Buechel 1970:171, 507). The Cheyenne name for elk is *mo?ehe* (Petter 1913-15:431; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:37).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

Elk meat was an important food for Lakotas and Cheyennes (Bordeaux 1929:126; Marquis 1931:90; Ewers 1938:17; Hoebel 1960:64; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:164; Grinnell 1972:1:257; Iron Teeth (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9). Few details have been reported, however, on the Lakotas’ methods of securing them (Ewers 1938:45), although Stanley Vestal (1934:160-161) learned from White Bull that they were stalked and surrounded on foot. The Lakotas’ Cheyenne and Arapaho allies caught them in rawhide snares or drove them over cliffs and banks (Trenholm 1970:65; Grinnell 1972:1:273-276). In fact, at a location just west of the Black Hills, there is a cliff over which the Arapahos were known to drive elk (Grinnell 1972:1:276). Like other ruminant species, they tended to follow well-established trails, which made them easy to hunt with driving methods (Grinnell 1972:1:277; Turner 1974:137). According to George Grinnell (1972:1:277), it was the Arapahos’ “practice to carry the horns of the animals to a great pile of elk horns already heaped up and add them to it, so that at length there was an immense pile of these antlers.” In his journal from the Black Hills Expedition, William Ludlow (1875:17) made note of one these piles near Reynold’s Prairie, also known as Elkhorn Prairie, and Grinnell (1875:78), who also accompanied the expedition as a naturalist, gave some details of its appearance when he wrote:

On Elkhorn Prairie we came upon a collection of horns gathered together by the Indians. Three lodge-poles had been set up in the ground so as to form a tripod, and supported by these was a pile of horns 8 to 10 feet high. The horns had all been shed and had apparently been collected from the surrounding prairie and heaped up here by the Indians.
As in the case of bison hunting, Lakota men played a game of chance, known as Woskate hehaka [Game of Elk] that involved the use of a hoop or cangleska and two players. The game was usually played while men were out hunting for this animal, and it was believed to bring success to the hunt (Walker 1905:286-287). Although hoop games were also played by the Cheyennes, they were not linked to any kind of hunting in ethnographic sources (Grinnell 1972:320-324). They are explicitly connected to this activity in some of their stories, however (Grinnell 1926).

Elk hides were highly valued for their durability and suppleness (Standing Bear 1988:59). After the hair was removed, elk skins were soft tanned by the Lakotas to make moccasins, breechclouts, shirts, leggings, belts, and gowns for everyday wear as well as garments worn on ceremonial occasions. The tanned hides also served as highly valued saddle skirts, shield covers, and receptacles for holding various objects and belongings (Walker 1982:101, 103, 104; Lyford 1940:33). The Lakotas also used elk skins for drumheads (Young Bear and Thiez 1995:47), and they made sashes from them worn by certain officers of the Miwatani society (Wissler 1912:46). The Arapahos and Cheyennes used elk hides for their garments and other purposes too (Trenholm 1970:65; Grinnell 1972:1:274).

Elk have two ivory canine teeth that were highly prized by the Lakotas and other tribes because they symbolized longevity. Shooter, a Lakota, told Francis Densmore (1992:176):

In observing the carcass of an elk it is found that the teeth remain after everything else has crumbled to dust. These teeth will last longer than the life of a man, and for that reason the elk tooth has become the emblem of long life. We desire long life for our friends and ourselves. When a child is born its parents desire long life for it, and for this reason an elk tooth is given to a child if its parents can afford the gift.

These teeth often decorated the deer or pronghorn skin bodices of Lakota women’s dresses (Standing Bear 1978:102, 188; Walker 1982:52). The Cheyenne also adorned women’s dresses with elk teeth, they fringed leggings with them and made necklaces out of them as well (Curtis 1907-30:6:156; Grinnell 1972:1:221, 223). So valuable were the teeth of the elk that the Cheyennes were willing to trade a good horse for one hundred of them (Grinnell 1972:1:224).

The Cheyennes and the Lakotas preferred elkhorn for making fleshers used to scrape hides (Grinnell 1972:1:213; Densmore 1948:173; Standing Bear 1975:19). Iron Teeth (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:25), a Cheyenne woman, tells how valuable these were among her people:

This hide-scraper I have is made from the horn of an elk my husband killed just after we were married. He cut off the smaller prongs and polished the main shaft. The Indian men of the old times commonly made this kind of present to their young wives. Besides using them in tanning, the women made marks on them to keep track of the ages of their children. The five rows of notches on this one are the age-records of my five children. Each year I have added a notch to each row, for the living ones. Any time, I can count up the notches and know the age of any of my children. Throughout the seventy-four years it has always been a part of my most precious pack. There were times when I had not much else. I was carrying it in my hands when my husband was killed on the upper Powder River. It was tied to my saddle while we were in flight from Oklahoma. It was in my little pack when we broke out from the Fort Robinson prison. It has never been lost. Different white people have offered me money for it. I am very poor, but such money does not tempt me. When I die, this gift from my husband will be buried with me.

The Cheyennes used elkhorn to knap flint, and they made fleshers from the leg bones of elk (Curtis 1907-30:6:156). They sometimes made bows from elkhorn as well.
(Grinnell 1972:1:173-174; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:27), but there is no evidence of this use among the Lakotas. The Lakotas fashioned the porous portion of an elkhorn into implements for applying their paints (Walker 1982:100), and they made the pommels for their saddles from this horn (Densmore 1948:195). They also used fragments of elk bone in their remedies for treating broken and fractured bones (Densmore 1918:252-253; Bordeaux 1929:157). Finally, elk grease was mixed with skunk musk to treat colds and other respiratory disorders (Bordeaux 1929:109).

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

The Lakotas held the elk in high regard and considered it among the most wakan of the animals (Walker 1980:101). Luther Standing Bear (1988:58) describes Lakota attitudes in this way:

In his native state the elk has a very proud and independent manner. He walks about among his herd as if there is nothing in the sky nor on the earth that is his equal. And the others of the herd seem to think so too. Even when feeding, he never seems to forget his dignity. With every mouthful of food, up goes his head as he watches over his herd. The elk has a peculiar whistle, and whenever he wishes to get together a straying herd, he gives this whistle and all will run to him. When the herd is again clustered about him, he walks away contentedly, all the females jostling and pushing one another to get next to him. There is no doubt as to his position as leader of his herd.

The male elk was admired for its strength, endurance, and courage, but especially for its ability to attract and protect members of the opposite sex (Wissler 1905:261-266; Fire and Erdoes 1972:143; Brown 1992:16; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:110). Indeed, the ton of the elk is believed to preside over sexual relationship, passion, and desire (Blish 1964:199; Standing Bear 1978:216; Walker 1980:121; Walking Bull 1980:18-19). In understanding the elk’s qualities, it is worthwhile to quote Clark Wissler (1905:261), who said:

The elk is taken as the incarnation of the power over females, the real (i.e., physical) elk is regarded only as the recipient of such power. The power itself is conceived of in the nature of an abstraction similar to our conception of force. The fact that the elk seems to act in conformity with the laws governing this power is taken as evidence of its existence. Then the idea of the Indian is that the elk possesses the knowledge necessary to the work of the power. Thus a mythical, or hypothetical elk, becomes the teacher of man.

Much of the symbolism associated with the elk represented the epitome of Lakota ideas of maleness and manhood, and as a result, the elk was a favorite animal for young men to emulate. As Shooter told Densmore (1918:176):

The best part of a man’s life is between the ages of 18 and 33. Then he is at his best. He has the strength and ability to accomplish his aims. He is brave to defend himself and others and is free to do much good. He is kind to all, especially to the poor and needy. The tribe looks to him as a defender, and he is expected to shield the women. His physical strength is at its best. He is light on his feet and can reduce long distances to short ones. He is taught true politeness and is very gallant. What animal has these traits more than any other? It is the elk, which is the emblem of beauty, gallantry, and protection. The elk lives in the forest and is in harmony with all his beautiful surroundings. He goes easily through the thickets, notwithstanding his broad branching horns.

In many ways, the elk stood metaphorically as an embodiment of Itokagata, the South Wind, also connected with love and romance. Like Itokagata, the elk is associated with the flute, with the crane, and with the Whirlwind, Yumni, although in some visionary contexts the elk is linked to the East Wind too (Wissler 1905; Hassrick 1964:116, 146; Densmore 1918:176-178; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:119, 126, 218; Powers, W. 1986:139). In Brave Buffalo’s vision, the direction from which the elk is
revealed to him is southeast, symbolized simultaneously by the appearance of the crane and the crow (Densmore 1918:178). In Black Elk's visions, the elk is linked to the East, but it also stands on the same good road as bison, typically associated with the North (in DeMallie 1984:114-115, 119, 127, 218). In a Yuwipi song, a relationship is established with an elk in the direction of the East (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163). It is also tied to the butterfly, which in some contexts is associated with the West and the Thunders (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:25-27). In a Yuwipi song, a relations hip is established with an elk in the direction of the East (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163). It is also tied to the butterfly, which in some contexts is associated with the West and the Thunders (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:25-27). In a Yuwipi song, a relationship is established with an elk in the direction of the East (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163). It is also tied to the butterfly, which in some contexts is associated with the West and the Thunders (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:25-27). In a Yuwipi song, a relationship is established with an elk in the direction of the East (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:163). It is also tied to the butterfly, which in some contexts is associated with the West and the Thunders (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:25-27).

The circle is emblematic of the elk: men who dreamed of elk wore a hair ornament consisting of a small hoop wound with porcupine quills and a downy white eagle feather suspended from the center (Densmore 1918:179). They also carried a sacred hoop on their shoulder that symbolized the rainbow (Densmore 1918:295-296). Elk dreamers, Hehaka inhanblapi, were obligated to carry out an elk ceremony reminding the people of “the source of life and the mystery of growing;“ impersonating their spiritual benefactors in public performances (Wissler 1912:86). They wore a black mask with hide antlers wrapped in otter skins (Standing Bear 1988: 216). The elk ceremony or Hehaka kaga and the groups of men who performed it have been described in a variety of sources, and these do not need to be detailed any further here (Wissler 1912: 85-88; Densmore 1918:293; Powers, W. 1977:57-58,1986:184-185; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:242-244; Standing Bear 1988:216-217; Young Bear and Theisz 1994:25-27).

The Cheyennes also viewed the elk with considerable reverence, although its symbolic meanings are not as fully detailed in the ethnographic literature. Elk were seen to have a strong power, which like the deer’s had good as well as evil ends. They were greatly admired for their ability to endure and escape capture (Grinnell 1972:2:104; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55). Their antlers were considered highly sacred (Dorsey, G. 1905:19). Men who dreamt of elk found their spiritual gifts to be of great assistance (Grinnell 1972:2:104). The Cheyennes had a military society called the Himoweyuhkis, Elk-Scrapers, who carried a piece of elk horn in the image of a snake (Grinnell 1972:2:57-62). This created a sound capable of being transmitted over long distances, and it was used to attract game to camp when food was needed. The members of this society also carried rattles made of the elk’s dew claws (Dorsey, G. 1905:18-19). According to Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:56), the Elk-Scrapers were one of the three most important soldier

151 The bergamot was mixed with extracts from various parts of the elk’s body (Fire and Erdoes 1972:165).
societies among the Cheyennes. In the Cheyenne Sun Dance, a pair of elk effigies, along with figures of bison, deer, and pronghorn, were fashioned by children out of mud and placed at the base of the Sun Dance’s center pole in remembrance of the Great Race story and the animals that Sweet Medicine and Erect Horns brought from the earth (Dorsey, G. 1905:49). At one time, the Cheyennes had a special Elk Ceremony, called *Mo’hetanio*, where their elk benefactors were impersonated, but this appears to have fallen into disuse (Hayden 1862b:281). In later years, these impersonations were performed on the fifth day of the Cheyennes’ *Massaum* ceremony (Grinnell 1972:2:335-336). In the dance, the “animal” men representing all of the important species in the Cheyenne universe danced around and then entered an enclosure where they were “hunted” by members of the Bowstring Society (the Contrary Warriors) (Hoebel 1960:17). Also the Cheyennes did not link elk to romantic attraction in the same way the Lakotas did: many attributes the Lakotas associate with the elk, the Cheyennes identify with deer.

**Deer**  
*Odocoilea spp.*

**Blacktail**  
*Odocoileus hemionus hemionus*

**Whitetail**  
*Odocoileus virginianus dacotensis*

**Habitat & History**

Two species of deer, mule (or blacktail) *Odocoileus hemionus hemionus* and whitetail *Odocoileus virginianus dacotensis* are found in the Black Hills. At the start of the nineteenth century, according to Tabeau (in Abel 1939:76, 87), deer were very common near the Black Hills along the upper reaches of the White and Cheyenne rivers. Mule deer remained abundant especially in the southern Hills in later decades, but they were nearly hunted to extinction at the end of the nineteenth century because of market demands for their hides (Progulske 1974:122; Turner 1974:137). Eventually, South Dakota, like other states in the region passed game laws to limit their take, and even closed hunting in 1925 so that the local population could recover. In time, their numbers rebounded. Today, over-population is a major problem facing herds of mule deer in the Black Hills (Turner 1974). As reported in various historical writings, whitetail deer were as numerous as mule deer in the late nineteenth century, especially in the more forested sections of the northeastern Hills. Indeed, large numbers of whitetail, also known as red deer because of their rusty coloration in the summer, were killed by the expeditionary parties traveling the region in the 1870s. Dodge’s party was estimated to have killed nearly a thousand deer for food while they traveled the Hills, and Custer’s forces reportedly killed one hundred in a single day (Progulske 1974:122). In later years, miners feasted on the deer too, and in one report, over twenty carcasses were seen hanging at an isolated mining camp in the winter of 1876 (Parker, W. 1965:83, 149). Some even earned a livelihood from hunting and selling deer meat to fellow miners and commercial establishments (Ibid.). Early residents of the Wind Cave National Park region remembered deer as the only ungulates in the area at the end of the nineteenth century (McAdam 1973:17; Smith, A. 1973:16). Even though settlers and miners heavily hunted whitetail deer, there is no evidence that they faced extermination like the mule deer (Turner 1974:139).

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The Lakotas had many different names for deer which are not only sex and age specific, as in *tabloka* [buck] and *tawiyela* [doe], or *tacincala* [fawn], *hekaza* [a yearling deer with one horn], and *tahejata* [a two year old deer with two prongs] (Buechel 1970:172, 472, 473, 485) but also reflect a recognition of variability within and between species. *Tahca* is the generic name for deer (Ibid;
with particular species distinguished as follows: the whitetail is known as sintehanska [long tail] (Ibid:454) or sinteluluyapi [red-tail which probably refers to the color of their coats in the summertime] (Ibid:455), and the blacktail or mule deer as sintesapela [black tail]. Two other terms sintewaksapi [bob tail] (Ibid:455) and tahca itopasapa [black faced] marked unique features of individual animals within these species. This last deer, which appears with a black streak across its face, is believed to be wakan (Ibid:474). Vaotseva [bob tail raised] is the generic name for deer in Cheyenne. Black-tail are called moktaevasevaozeva and white (or yellow tail) are known as heovova-vaozeva (Petter1913-15:351;Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:31).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

The Lakotas and Cheyennes hunted both the whitetail and the blacktail, and like the elk, the meat of these animals was probably as important as bison during the winter months (Bordeaux 1929:126; Hoebel 1960:64;Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:154-155; Grinnell 1972:1:257). Deer flesh was the meat that the Lakotas favored most after bison, and they considered it especially healthy because of the fresh leaves and berries on which the animals fed (Brown 1992:16, 30). Studies of browse utilization by deer in the Black Hills confirms this: ground juniper, bur oak, ponderosa pine, hop hornbeam, Oregon grape, bearberry, choke-cherry, buffaloberry, blue aster, pussytoes, wild rose, and yucca are among the nutritious plants they consume (Turner 1974:140).

Deer were usually found in brush and rough topography (Wedel and Frison 2001:50), where they were typically hunted by small groups and by individuals alone or with a companion. In some techniques, a noose hidden on a well-traveled path snared them. In others, they were driven into pens at popular feeding spots. Finally, they were shot with arrows because they were docile and easy to approach and kill (Hassrick 1964:167; Grinnell 1972:1:272). Other techniques involved larger groups of hunters, surrounding and driving them into pounds where entire herds were killed. Samuel Hinman (1874:93) located one such corral near Cache Butte, forty miles due east of the Buffalo Gap. In 1874, Grinnell (1875:78) encountered some Lakotas hunting whitetail deer at the head of Elk Creek, and he reported that they waited for deer near this place because it was their “eat the ground” -- in other words a salt lick. Black Elk reported sighting deer near the Buffalo Gap in May of 1874 while hunting with his father (in DeMallie 1984:155-156), and he noted other instances of deer hunts in the region when he was young (Ibid:335, 342, 357, 369). Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:47-48) recounted an incident where a man was bitten by a snake while hunting deer in the Black Hills. Standing Bear (1988:55-56) provided a good description of Lakota methods of tracking deer when he wrote:

In tracking a deer we came to know that it is a very hard animal to follow, for it watches behind so closely. A deer will watch the top of the hill, which it has just crossed and a wise hunter will go around the base of the hill in order to, deceive the animal. If a deer is sure that it is being followed, it will run some distance, then lie down and watch for its pursuer and try to locate him before going on or before exposing itself on the brow of the next hill. When hunting, we watched the direction of the wind very closely. If we did not do this, it is very likely that our game would detect us before we did it.

There is also a good description (Hassrick 1964:187-188) of Lakota techniques for butchering deer.

Among the Lakota, deerskins were soft tanned after the hair was removed, and they were used for a wide variety of garments, receptacles, and as fringing on pipes (Curtis 1907-30:3:15, 27-29, 87, 94, 137; Lyford 1940:33; Walker 1982:52, 101). Men wore
deerskin aprons, *nite’iyapehe*, when they participated in the Sun Dance. A ball of sweetgrass was wrapped in a deerskin with long fringes and tied to the braids at marriage. Love medicine was kept in deerskin bags (Curtis 1907-30:3:19, 28-29, 95, 139; Densmore 1918:125; Walker 1982:52, 101). Soft-tanned deerskins were used in mortuary practice, and they were sewn into a special wrapping, *wi’caske*, to hold a spirit bundle and into a decorated case, *pan*, which held the gifts to be given away at a spirit-keeping ceremony (Curtis 1907-30:3:100, 102, 105; Densmore 1918:79). Deer hooves were made into rattles for *Miwatani* members (Curtis 1907-30:3:172; Wissler 1912: 48; Densmore 1948:188), they served as ornamentation in armlets and necklaces (Brown 1992:16), and they were used as cuplike utensils to hold paint (Walker 1982: 100). Rattles were also made out of deer claws (Densmore 1948:188). Deer sinew was employed in arrow-making and for sewing (Densmore 1918:438; Standing Bear 1988: 23; Brown 1992:16), the bladder functioned as a nipple to feed broth to infants (Brown 1992), and the rawhide of mule deer went into the manufacture of drumheads (Brown 1992:16). The metatarsal bones were fashioned into dice (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:325), while the phalangeal bones were used in a cup and pin game (Densmore 1948:190-191). Deer livers were taken by the Lakotas to absorb the venom of snakes when making poison arrows (Bordeaux 1929:126).

The Lakotas also applied deer parts medially. The tails of mule deer were used to apply ointments in healings performed by bear doctors (Powers, W. 1986:187). Deer liver was considered a good medicine to keep an infant from continuously crying (Beckwith, M. 1930:390). Louise Plenty Holes told Mark St. Pierre and Tilda Long Soldier (1995:83) how a deer tendon, *takan*, was used to tie off an umbilical cord.

The Cheyenne fabricated moccasins, women’s dresses and leggings out of deerskins, and they manufactured men’s ceremonial regalia and war shields out of this material as well (Grinnell 1972:1:58, 189, 217, 221). They also covered the shafts of lances and the handholds of bighorn sheep bows with deer hide. They made necklaces from deer teeth and tails (Grinnell 1972:1:175, 187, 223, 2:124) and arrowpoints from deer antler (Grinnell 1972:1:183). Deer udders were used to feed infants (Grinnell 1972:1:106). Deer hooves decorated the sheepskin shirts of leading men (Curtis 1907-30:6:156). Pipes were fashioned from the shank bones of deer (Grinnell 1972: 2: 208), and these were used in calling buffalo based on a tradition the Cheyennes learned from their culture hero, Sweet Medicine, when he returned from his journey to their Sacred Mountain, Bear Butte (Stands In Timber and Liberty 1967:38). Armlets made from the hooves and skins of whitetail deer were worn by Cheyennes for dances, medicine making, or war, and according to Grinnell (1972:2: 123-124), they conveyed the power of the deer to the wearer, making him able to run swiftly. He also wrote about deer tails serving as a means of protection. Cheyenne Elk Soldiers carried rattles made from a deer’s dew claws (Dorsey, G. 1905: 18) and so did members of the Arapahos’ Dog Men Society (Trenholm 1970:79). Deer skins were displayed in the Sun Dance because the Cheyennes believed that this animal belonged to the ceremony, and the tails of deer were worn by the dancers (Grinnell 1972:2:232, 266-267).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Lakota attitudes towards deer were highly ambivalent (Brown 1992:29-30). They were understood as powerful spirit helpers and potentially dangerous too. In some contexts, they were associated with the North Wind (Dorsey, J. 1894:422), but, more often, they were associated with the East or the West winds. Blacktail deer were considered sacred messengers of the thunder beings and linked to war (Densmore 1918:195; Beckwith, M. 1930:12n2; Powers, W. 1977:139). Members of the Sacred Bow Society attached tails of the blacktail deer to the heels of
their moccasins and also painted the insoles with designs of the animal’s tracks (Blish 1934:185). These deer were associated with endurance and the ability to withstand thirst (Densmore 1918:125). As Standing Bear wrote (1988:56):

Among our tribe there is a superstition concerning the black-tail deer. It is said that if this deer becomes aware of the hunter who is about to aim at it, the animal can deflect the bullets of the hunter and save itself. Many times I heard this story, then one day I had an amazing experience with this animal that puzzled me as it had other hunters. A friend and myself were hunting on horseback. The wind being right, we came close upon a black-tail deer before it saw us. I quickly dismounted to shoot while my companion held the reins of my horse. The deer did not run, but stood looking at me as I aimed, wagging its tail steadily back and forth. With every assurance of getting my game I fired. To my astonishment, the deer stood still and looked intently at me. I was a good marksman, the animal was only a short distance from me, and fully exposed, yet my shot had gone astray. Seven times I shot at this animal, missing every time, the deer never moving. The seventh bullet was my last and I could shoot no more. My ammunition was gone, and there the deer and I stood looking at each other. So close were we that I could see its lips twitching.

Blacktail deer dreamers, much like elk dreamers, were able to capture the reflection of others through mirrors or their sacred hoops and strike people dead through their glance (Wissler 1912:90; Powers, W. 1977: 58). They also received medicines for healing (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:137). Like elk dreamers, those who dreamed of black-tail deer held special ceremonies (Wissler 1912:90; Hassrick 1964:239; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:82). Unlike elk dreamers, deer dreamers used black rather than yellow pipes. Only young men seem to have performed these dances, although they also invited virgins to carry a pipe, hoop, and forked stick in their ceremonies (Wissler 1912:90).

Blacktail deer are also associated with the Double-Woman, Winyan Nupakapi, a figure who bestows on women the gift to excel at porcupine quill work, a skill that is considered highly wakan (Wissler 1912:92; Hassrick 1964:191, 230; Sundstrom, L. 2002). The dreams of this figure took on many different conventional forms (Wissler 1912:93). Women who had such dreams were believed to faint when a mirror was flashed upon them, but they were also known to be able to use mirrors to bring harm to others (Ibid:93-94). These women were imbued with power to make effective war shields and medicines (Wissler 1912: 94). Today, blacktail deer also commonly appear in Yuwipi ceremonies conducted by women (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:30, 184, 185, 198).

Whitetail deer, on the other hand, were linked to the East Wind and sexual danger (Powers, M. 1987:39-40; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:51). They're specifically linked to the figure of the Deer Woman, Tahca winyan (apparently different from the Double-Woman deer), who appears first as a human female but then transforms herself into a deer and disappears. She is featured in a well-known story recorded by Ella Deloria (1978:74-76). Unwary men who encountered this woman subjected themselves to grave danger (Dorsey, J. 1994:450-451; Wissler 1912:94-95). Thomas Tyon told James Walker (1980:166-167) why this deer was considered wakan:

A man loves a woman and he is always thinking of her. Perhaps when he has gone to shoot deer, the very woman he loves is sitting in the forest, laughing and looking at him, they say. So the man goes to the woman and suddenly he touches her (Iputaka) they say. And finally they lie together, they say. Then when he finishes, the man stands up and the woman too begins to stand, they say. So the man looks at the woman. And then the woman says as follows, ‘I am a White-tailed Deer Woman (con tarca winyela, the female woods deer), but I make myself look like a woman and the man is deceived,’ they say.
From that time, the man loves her (teriyaku) they say. The man who lay down with the deer returns home. The holy man tries had to cure him., they say. He is very deranged (knaxhinyan), they say. If the man is very strong (wakix’ake) he will be able to live they say. Some are not able to live and so they die, it is sad. Therefore, the white-tailed deer are very much feared.

More recently, Madonna Swan (in St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:52) gave a description of the beliefs surrounding this deer figure:

We believe that certain women can appear to men as deer. Sometimes this can be dangerous. If a man is out hunting alone and he sees a doe, he shouldn’t follow her. They can be tricky. She might be a spirit deer and try to fool him. She will smell very attractive and might even appear to him as a beautiful woman. she may make him follow her by using her deer perfume.

He will follow her a long way, and when they stop to lie down together, she will turn back into a deer and run off. This will make him confused, crazy, and he could wander until he freezes or starves to death.

According to Clark Wissler (1912:94-95), the power of the Deer Woman resided in the perfume she carried in her hoof.

While sometimes feared, deer were revered and associated with the origins of a number of different objects and rituals. They were linked to the origin of the bow and arrow (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984: 310-311, 314). When Takohe [the First Man who some believed emerged from Wind Cave] makes a young man a hunka and calls him sunk, he explains the sacred stories and rituals that involve the use of deer hooves and skins. He shows the young man how to place deer skins on an altar and make them sacred, and he tells him that only certain people who have undertaken special deeds have the privilege to have their hands painted red (Walker 1983:377-378).

The Cheyennes also carried ambivalent attitudes towards deer, whose power could be used for good or evil. Wesley Whiteman (in Schwartz 1988:55) describes them as “tricky” because they can turn themselves into other forms. The mule deer was considered a great spirit helper but also dangerous because it could shoot disease arrows from the cavities under its eyes. Doctors who carried the tail of a mule deer were able to afflict others with illness if they so desired (Grinnell 1972: 2:104). Wooden Leg told Thomas Marquis (1931:52) that the Cheyennes believed all deer had “strong spirit powers,” and he also recounted an incident where a Cheyenne man named Black Wolf encountered two beautiful women on a cliff’s edge. These women summoned him, but as he approached, he could smell a deer odor. While looking in a pool, he saw their reflection as they turned instantaneously back into their deer form (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:49-50). The association of deer with water is also indicated by the symbolic markings of the deer dancer in the Cheyenne Sun Dance, who is not only painted with the markings of dragonflies, tadpoles, and hail but carries a mirror (Powell 1969:2:796, 834, 844). In contrast to the Lakotas who associated love medicine with elk, the Cheyennes connected this kind of power to the whitetail deer (Grinnell 1972:1:134, 2: 104). As in Lakota beliefs, the female of this species was believed to be able to bring madness on a man, and Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:50-51) describes such an incident. Cheyennes who experienced difficulty in love matters wore deer tails tied with medicine on their shoulder belts (Grinnell 1972:1:134). Grinnell (1972:2:135-137) wrote a long story about a man named Black Wolf (this may have been the same person Wooden Leg talked about in reference to blacktail deer), who came upon a lodge of deer and received medicine from them that made him irresistible to women when he put his medicine on a looking-glass. He was also known as a skilled flute maker. These attributes are more typically associated with elk in Lakota traditions.
Deer figured prominently in the Cheyennes’ Massaum ceremony among the animals that were impersonated and enticed into the medicine enclosure where they were symbolically killed by the Contraries (Grinnell 1972:2:333-335). They are also represented in the Sun Dance by the mud figurines children made to place around the base of the center pole; they were imitated in the paintings of one group of Sun dancers; and they were physically manifested when their tails were worn by the dancers (Dorsey, G. 1905:49; Grinnell 1972:2:232, 266-267; Powell 1969:2:796, 832, 833, 834, 844). At one time, there was a special medicine society of deer dreamers similar to the Oglalas, but no information has been published on it (Anderson 1956:93). They also appear in some of the Cheyennes most sacred texts, representing the various animals that the culture heroes Sweet Medicine and Erect Horns brought up from underneath the earth (Dorsey, G. 1905:49).

THE ANTELOPE FAMILY
(ANTilocarpridae)

Pronghorn
[Antilocarpa americana americana]

Habitat & History

Only one species from this family, the pronghorn [Antilocarpa american americana], is found in North America. Historically, pronghorns were the ungulate species most closely associated with the long distance migrations of animals between the Black Hills and the surrounding grasslands. In 1803, Tabeau (Abel 1939:77) had this to say about the pronghorn:

The skin of the antelope, however, would be a very important article, if it should acquire some value. The antelope is found on the prairies in numerous herds that leave the Black Hills in the spring and return in the autumn. Thus they cross the Missouri twice. It is at these crossings that the Savages and particularly the Ricaras kill as many as they wish.

A year later, in 1804, the engage Gueneneville told Lewis and Clark that pronghorns migrated annually to their winter homes in the Black Hills, and later an Arikara man told Clark that other animals also wintered there (Moulton 1983-87:3:179-180). Clark witnessed these migratory movements (Ibid: 3:182, 222), and on 9 April 1805, he wrote:

...three miles above the mouth of this creek we passed a hunting camp of Minatrees who had repaired a park and were waiting the return of the Antelope; which usually pass the Missouri at this season of the year from the Black hills on the south side, to the open plains on the north side of the river; in like manner the Antelope repasses the Missouri from N. to South in the latter end of autumn, and winter in the black hills, where there is considerable body of woodland (Ibid:4: 16).

Later observers would confirm the migrations too. In 1862, Ferdinand V. Hayden (1862b:150) described these movements as follows:

In the beginning of the winter they may be seen for days following each other in files (if not disturbed) on their way towards the Northwest, leaving the prairie for the more rugged portions of the country near the Black hills, or the foot of the mountains. In the spring, usually about March, they may be seen returning again, and distributing themselves over the open prairie.

In 1874, George Bird Grinnell (1875:164) also reported the same pattern, and many decades later, Ernest Thompson Seton (1929:2:421) wrote, “...those on the open country about the Black Hills flock thither from all points of the compass.” According to White Bull (Vestal 1934:161), pronghorn were found in such abundance that single herds could stretch over thirty miles. By the 1890s, pronghorn were scare in the southeastern Black Hills, although Matthew Bingham apparently still hunted them and traded their skins to local Lakotas (Bingham 1973:150).
6). Alice Smith (1973:16), reported that at the turn-of-the twentieth century, pronghorn were no longer present on her family’s ranch near Wind Cave.

Other early writers did not describe their migrations, but they did report on some of the locations where these ruminants were hunted. In 1851, Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:17, 18) mentioned the Sicangus hunting them on the upper White River, and in the same area, near Cache Butte, Samuel Hinman (1874:93) described the remains of antelope at a large abandoned pit and corral. George Hyde (1961:19) also documented this area in his history of the Sicangu leader, Spotted Tail. Northwest of the Black Hills at the headwaters of the Little Missouri River near the outskirts of Belle Fourche, South Dakota, are two other pronghorn hunting locations commonly mentioned in the oral traditions of the Cheyennes (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:84-85; Grinnell 1972: 1:277; Sundstrom, L. 2000:119-124). Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:150) described a Sicangu Lakota pronghorn hunt on the upper reaches of the White River in 1863 as follows:

The animals, being surrounded by several hundred people are driven through some gap in the hills, beyond which is a perpendicular descent of many feet, enclosed around the base with logs and brush, raised to a sufficient height to prevent them from jumping over. The antelope, once through the gap or pass, cannot recede, and the pressure of those from behind forces those in front over the descent, the rear being followed up quickly by the pursuers.

Typically, pronghorn were driven over cliffs, into snow drifts, or into specially constructed enclosures (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:88; Hassrick 1964:167, 176; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:85; Grinnell 1972:277-290; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:27; Schlesier 1987:52-61; Sundstrom, L. 2000:119-124). Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:150) described a Sicangu Lakota pronghorn hunt on the upper reaches of the White River in 1863 as follows:

Single hunters or small parties also stalked pronghorn, White Bull (Vestal 1934:161) reported hunting them this way, and Black Elk (DeMallie 1984:155-156) described his father taking down pronghorn at the Buffalo Gap in the spring of 1874.

Pronghorn skins were commonly soft-tanned and used in making women’s dresses and leggings, men’s breech clouts and war shirts, and the upper parts of moccasins by both the Cheyennes and Lakotas (Grinnell 1972: 1:217, 221; Walker 1980:101). The warriors of these two tribal nations used pronghorn skin to make their shield covers (Grinnell 1972:1:189-190; Walker 1980:101). In a warparty’s encounter with a spirit wolf near the Black Hills, the participants were told the Tokalas and Cante Tinza should use pronghorn skins to cover their tipi doors (Wissler 1912:72). Cheyenne and Arapaho men made straight pipes from the shank bone of the pronghorn (Trenholm 1970:67; Grinnell 1972:2:208), and they
manufactured rattles from pronghorn dew claws (Dorsey, G. 1905:18). The Cheyennes were reported to use pronghorn udders to nurse infants (Grinnell 1972:1:106). Lakotas made medicine bags out of pronghorn ears (Densmore 1948: 177), and the Hunkpapa leader Sitting Bull was known to have possessed one of these (Densmore 1918:252). Pronghorn livers were also employed to absorb snake venom and used in the manufacture of poison arrows (Bordeaux 1929: 126).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Among the Cheyennes, the pronghorn was highly revered. Dreams of pronghorn were well-received and interpreted as a sign of good fortune (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:152; Grinnell 1972:2:104). Antelope dreamers were healers who often imitated the sounds and actions of this animal (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:153). There were elaborate ceremonies connected with catching pronghorn, which some Cheyennes remembered being performed near Belle Fourche, South Dakota (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:85; Grinnell 1972:1:280-285; Schlesier 1987: 52-61; Sundstrom, L. 2001:121-124). The antelope shaman who conducted this ceremony received his power from the Maiyun in a series of dreams, and using this power, he was able to determine where the pronghorn would be located (Hoebel 1960:65). On the fourth day of the Massaum or Animal Dance, women built a symbolic pronghorn corral into which they guided the antelope dreamers dressed in the skins of this animal (Hoebel 1960:17). In the Sun Dance, figurines of pronghorn were molded by children and placed around the base of the center pole (Dorsey, G. 1905: 49).

There is little information on the sacred significance and ceremonial role of pronghorns in Lakota culture, however. Clark Wissler (1912:95) reported that he heard about the presence of a society of antelope dreamers but received no direct information on it. Pronghorns were represented by fea-

**Carnivores**

In early historic times, many of the large carnivores, especially bears and mountain lions, were closely associated with the Black Hills. Like the ungulates on whose lives they depended, many of these carnivores were either extirpated from the Hills or their populations considerably reduced as a result of the systematic eradication efforts of European Americans whose livestock was threatened by their presence. Even the numbers of smaller carnivore species declined in the face of habitat changes brought on by the development of mining, logging, and ranching in the region. At least one of the smaller carnivores, the black-footed ferret, faced extinction.

In Lakota and Cheyenne cultural traditions and histories, with the exception of badgers and skunks whose meat was considered a delicacy, carnivores were not taken primarily as a source of food. Instead, they were hunted mostly for their skins and furs, which were highly valued for practical and ceremonial purposes. Like the ungulates, however, most carnivores were esteemed for the spiritual powers they possessed, and they represented animals with whom humans entered into important spiritual partnerships. The skins of many species in this order, however, could not be dressed by women without some form of ritual intervention, and in some cases, their contact with these skins was completely forbidden.

**THE CANINE FAMILY**

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The animals that represent the canine family, which includes coyotes, wolves, and foxes, were closely connected in the cosmologies of the Lakotas and Cheyennes and sometimes played interchangeable roles in sacred stories, songs, and performances. Wolves and coyotes were often found together near the buffalo and pronghorn herds upon whose meat they also fed (Grinnell 1972:1:288). They stood, therefore, in competition with humans. At least among the Lakotas, this resulted in some ambivalence in their attitude towards them. This was not true for the Cheyennes, however, who revered and often identified them with the great Maiyun in their earthly as well as celestial manifestations (Schlesier 1987:9).

### The Coyote

**[Canis latrans latrans]**

#### Habitat & History

The coyote is a common animal over the entire Black Hills. It is one of the carnivorous species that escaped the threat of extirpation, even though it was subject to bounties and various eradication measures (Turner 1974:123-124). One early European American observer, Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:141), described them as follows:

In the Prairie or Barking Wolf, or as called by the Indians, Medicine Wolf, there is but little variation in color or appearance. It is much more abundant on the Upper Missouri than the large wolf, and collects in larger bands, which seem to act in concert in taking their prey. They are said to station themselves, when in pursuit of the antelope, in such a manner, that when one becomes wearied, a fresh one appears and takes up the chase, until the antelope is captured. They are also said to be very expert in cutting the hamstrings of buffalo, deer, and not infrequently horses. They are great enemies of the prairie dog. Multitudes may be seen at all times in their villages, waiting patiently for the dogs to make their appearance.

Coyotes were certainly abundant in the Black Hills during the nineteenth century, but they were not reported in Grinnell or Dodge’s writings. Both observers, however, commented, on the presence of their relative, the wolf (Progulske 1974:122). The coyote is one of the carnivorous species still found at Wind Cave National Park. Some of the park’s early settlers remembered coyotes being numerous in the area in the late nineteenth century (McAdam 1973:18; Smith, A. 1973:16).

#### Tribal Taxonomy

Among the Lakotas, the coyote is known by many different names, some of which seem to be confined to ceremonial contexts or storytelling traditions. The common names are ma’sleca, maya’sleca or mi’yasleca (Buechel 1970:333, 334, 336). In certain situations, the coyote may also be addressed as sunkama’nitu (Ibid:469; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:370-371), mica (Walker 1980:121), or yasle, names also given to the wolf (Deloria 1932:29). The Cheyenne call the coyote o’?kohome (Petter 1913-15: 312; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:28).

#### Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

Coyotes are described as important prey of the Lakotas (Hassrick 1964:168); however, there is little mention of the uses to which they were put except that their skins were worn by Lakota Dog Soldiers and sometimes used for quivers (Wissler 1912:54; Lyford 1940:33). William Bordeaux (1929:126) emphatically stated that Lakotas only ate coyotes “when in sore need of nourishment.” Lakota children commonly kept coyote cubs as pets (Bordeaux 1929:172), and boys often trapped the animal in deadfalls (Vestal 1934:7). The Cheyennes are reported to have caught coyotes in deadfall traps similar to, but larger than, the ones used for foxes (Grinnell 1972:1:299). Young coyotes
were eaten by the Cheyennes just like puppies (Ibid:256), but George Grinnell (Ibid: 2:105) claims that in earlier times no one killed coyotes.

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Among the Cheyennes, the coyote was an animal the Great Spirit sent to wander over the earth, and it was one of the animals who could talk to people (Dorsey, G. 1905:20). Some men were able to interpret the coyote’s howl (Grinnell 1972:2:105). Grinnell (Ibid.) states that coyotes “have always been considered more sacred than wolves, possibly because they are more intelligent.” The Cheyennes once prayed to coyotes, asking them to lead, guide and warn them of danger. The Cheyennes’ sacred arrows were wrapped up in the skin of a coyote (Ibid: 2:106). Women were not allowed to handle the skins of this animal (Ibid: 2:105).

Coyotes were one of the animals that assisted Cheyennes in doctoring. Spotted Wolf told George Bird Grinnell (1972:2:151) how he once shot himself and afterwards built two fires in his tipi. While he was sitting there, a coyote entered the tipi, sat on his left side, and advised him to make a horse dance so that he could become a healer. They were also associated with warfare because of their powers of endurance and cunning. One of the Cheyenne warrior societies derived its name from this animal and used its hide, which was considered sacred, in their dances. The leader of the society carried a coyote hide with the hair left on (Dorsey, G. 1905:19).

Lakota attitudes towards the coyote were ambivalent. The coyote was considered a cunning and sly animal whose howls and droppings revealed the presence of enemies (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:213-214, 217, 335-336). In war, members of the Dog Soldier society painted themselves like coyotes, and four of their members carried coyote skins into battle (Wissler 1912:52-53). They are described in one source as the symbol of singers (Young Bear and Theisz 1994:73), and in another (Curtis 1907-30:3:74) as bearers of good news. Joe Flying By (in Ingram 1989:190), a well known religious leader from Standing Rock, talked about them as follows:

The coyotes are part of the *Sunka oyate*, the Dog nation. Dogs, foxes, wolves, coyotes, prairie dogs -- these are all relatives in the *Sunka oyate*. They were the last of the sacred people who came to the world.

In Walker’s version (Walker 1983:350-351) of the Lakota genesis story, however, coyote’s voice is described as “disagreeable,” and he is said to be unable to sing.

Historically, coyotes were known to give information on the whereabouts of bison and the location of sacred plants in visions (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:208, 225). Today, they are considered a source of healing power (Smith, D. 1949:137; Fire and Erdoes 1972:135-136; Ingram 1989:189). According to one of James Walker’s (1980:136) consultants:

One who dreams of a coyote must wear a coyote’s skin until he gets the Spirit of the Buffalo. He must cover the skin with weeds, and paint it white on the inside. He must wear it like a coyote and crawl close to the buffalo. He must have a whistle made of the bone from an eagle’s wing. He must blow carefully on this whistle and low like a bull. He must carry his bow in his right hand. When he shoots the buffalo, the Spirit of the Buffalo will be with him. He must leave the meat of the liver of the buffalo for the coyote. He must paint red around his mouth and on his hands when he is doing this. When he kills a buffalo, he may throw away the coyote skin.

Although the coyote could serve as a guardian and provide people important gifts and knowledge, he was considered mischievous, associated with theft, cowardice, treachery, and other shameful behavior (Tyon in Walker 1980:121; Walker 1983:350-351). In two important Lakota ceremonies, the *Hunka* and the *Pte San Lowampi*, the officiates warned participants against befriending the
Among many tribal nations of the West, the coyote is their trickster figure. Ella Deloria (1978:29) noted that he played this role in certain Lakota stories too, including one she collected entitled, “The Coyote and the Bear,” (Deloria, E. 1978:27-29). In some of the stories James Walker (1983:137, 144, 145, 147, 149-151, 152) recorded, he plays a trickster too. When coyote is not performing the role of Inktomi, the Lakotas’ central trickster figure, he is often depicted as Inktomi’s companion. Coyote and wolf once entrapped Inktomi in his nefarious schemes, but eventually Inktomi made them his allies with the promise that “he would do nothing to make them ashamed” (Walker 1983:296). Indeed, Old Horse told Walker (1980:129) that “Iktomi rides wolves and coyotes.” He is sometimes depicted as the son of Iya, a glutinous monster who acts as an adversary of the bison bull, Tatanka (Tyon in Walker 1980:121, 147, Walker 1980:222, 231-232, Herman in Walker 1980:249).

Wolf

[Canis lupus irremotus]

Habitat & History

The grey wolf was once a common animal in the Black Hills and surrounding prairies, where according to Tabeau (in Abel 1939:78), it followed the herds of bison. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, grey wolves remained common, shadowing the great herds of ruminants (Hayden 1862b:141). Feltskog (in Parkman 1969:419) quotes an early Kansas trapper and hunter, J.R. Mead, who wrote:

Lobo, the mountain wolf, locally known as ‘big gray,’ were congeners and associates of the buffalo, and lived almost exclusively upon them. Each wolf would kill in the course of the year, it is fair to assume, a dozen buffalo, many of them calves; but they with equal facility, could kill the strongest bull, and did whenever appetite or circumstances made it most convenient.

Wolves were still common in the Black Hills during the 1870s, as reported by Grinnell (1875:75) and Dodge (1965:176). Indeed, Grinnell (1875:75) noted “that hardly a day passed without my seeing several.” They were commonly sighted by early European American settlers in the area of Wind Cave National Park as well (McAdam 1973:18; Smith, A. 1973:16). Yet, within half a century, the animal became extinct as a result of various private and state-sponsored eradication efforts (Turner 1974:125). The descendants of early European American settlers in eastern Custer County recalled the days when local ranchers and government hunters set out to eradicate wolves on private and public land (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:253-254, 347, 676). According to Sven Froiland (1978:138), the last reported sighting of the grey wolf in the Black Hills took place in 1928. Since that date, no efforts have been made to reintroduce it to the area.
Tribal Taxonomy

In the Lakota language, there are many different names for the wolf, some of which also apply to the coyote, and they indicate that the two animals were understood as companions and closely related to each other. Some of the ascriptions probably identify species variations, but others appear to refer to alternate names used mostly in ceremonial contexts. Caksi, yak’e (Buechel 1970:115), huhatopa [four legged] (Ibid: 187), and sunkama’nitu tanka [large holy dog] (Ibid:469) are four of the Lakota names for wolf. Maca (generic) and its variants also refer to the coyote, ma’yaca or mi’yaca [denotes the prairie wolf, which is an old ascription for coyote], and ma’yasle [refers to a small species of wolf] (Ibid:327, 334, 336). The Cheyennes’ generic name for wolf is ho?nehe or ho?neheo’o, and then there are names that designate the coloration of a wolf’s hide, white, yellow, red, grey, or black. For example, Mo?ohtaaho?nehe is black wolf, and na?eho?nehe is red wolf (Petter 1913-15:115-116; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976: 122). There are also names in Cheyenne that distinguish other anatomical characteristics, like white faced wolf or that refer to a social status as in lone wolf (Petter 1913-15:115-116). The Cheyenne names reflect not only their high regard for this animal, but also the great variation within the species. Hayden (1862b: 141) wrote:

This animal varies so much in color that the traders on the Upper Missouri suppose that there are four or five species. I have seen them differing in color from an almost snowy whiteness to a dark brown or black, and was at first induced to attribute this difference to age and sex, but Mr. Zephyr, an intelligent trader, informed me that he had noticed the same variations of color in all ages.

Modes of Procurement
Preparation, and Use

Lakotas and Cheyennes hunted wolves regularly for their meat and skins (Bordeaux 1929:126; Hoebel 1960:64; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:168; Grinnell 1972: 1:256, 2:198). Wolf pups were also kept as pets, and according to Black Elk (in DeMal-lie 1984:318), a Lakota named Moves Walking trained the wolves he reared to become pack dogs. Before and even after the arrival of horses, dogs were vital to the Lakotas as beasts of burden, a means of protection, and also in hunting (Hassrick 1964:156-159).

The Cheyennes hunted wolves for their meat and their skins as well (Hoebel 1960: 64; Grinnell 1972:1:256, 2:198). Some Cheyennes reported that wolf meat was desirable, but a few claimed otherwise. Wooden Leg (Marquis 1931:90) and Iron Teeth (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9), for instance, reported that only the pups had palatable meat, and these were eaten only when other food was scarce. Wolves were trapped by the Cheyennes in deep holes, baited with meat and covered with leaves and twigs, although smaller wolves were sometimes caught in pens (Grinnell 1972: 297-299). They were also once hunted in the Black Hills area on horseback, according to the Cheyenne Wooden Leg (in Marquis 1931:7).

Among the Cheyennes and Arapahos, men wore wolf skins like ponchos on raiding and hunting forays (Grinnell 1972:1:300, 2:72; Trenholm 1970:66). The members of the Bow String society wore caps of wolf skin (Dorsey 1905:55), and strips of wolf fur were used to tie the antelope hunting pole to its hoop (Grinnell 1972:1:284). Wolf skins were attached to some of the vikuts that warriors used for carrying water (Grinnell 1972:2:24), and they were made into coverings on which wolf dreamers slept (Grinnell 1972:2:78). In another kind of vikut, the figure of a wolf was carved halfway down the staff, and the fork that carried the cup
was known as the “wolf’s road” (Grinnell 1972:2:78). Narrow strips of wolf skin were also used to tie a warrior’s hair in a top knot above his forehead, and also tied around his neck (Grinnell 1972:2:25). Wolf claws and teeth were affixed to shields for protection from enemies, and the hair of a yellow wolf was used in a treatment for women who experienced difficulty in childbirth (Moore, J. 1974a:176).

The Cheyennes would not allow women to handle wolf hides in earlier times, but in their more recent history, women underwent a special ceremony that enabled them to tan them without getting palsy (Grinnell 1972:1:105, 2:198-200). The Lakotas insisted that only virgins tan wolf hides for ceremonial purposes (Walker 1982:95).

Lakota men who dreamed of the wolf had the right to carry or wear the skins of this animal and act as scouts on war parties (Wissler 1912:90-91; Walker 1982:95). The lances of the Blotanka Society, for example, were covered with wolf skin, and these had to be made by men who dreamed of the wolf. Wolf skin was used in this context because the “wolf knows everything” (Wissler 1912:57-58). In an encounter with a spirit wolf near the Black Hills, a war party is told that the Cante Tinza, the Brave Heart Society, should place a wolf skin at their tipi door (Ibid:72).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

The Lakotas and the Cheyennes envisioned the wolf as a scout or spy, who was able to communicate with humans in various ways, warning them of danger and death as well as predicting the direction of enemies and animals (Densmore 1918:180; Grinnell 1972:2:17-18, 106-107; Walker 1982:160, 1982:95; Powers, W. 1986:187). Cheyenne men, who were able to interpret the howling of wolves, turned back on a war party if a wolf was killed (Grinnell 1972:2:105). According to the Lakota Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:121), the wolf “presided over the chase and war parties.” Wolf dreamers were especially important to the Lakotas in helping to locate bison because wolves often traveled in the shadows of the herds. They also played an important role in guiding war parties (Tyon in Walker 1980:121). According to William Powers (1986:186): “In the old days warriors about to embark against the enemy employed the Sungmanitu Kaga to ascertain the whereabouts of the enemy.” Members of the Hanskaska, Chief Society or Big Bellies, were also reported to receive special warnings and directions from wolves in military matters (Wissler 1912:38-39).

In the Sun Dances of the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, when the sacred cottonwood tree is cut down, a scout imitates the howls and actions of a wolf as he brings news of the “enemy” to the camp (Sword in Deloria 1929:394; Grinnell 1972:2:229, 248; Standing Bear 1975:116; Tyon in Walker 1980:178). The leader of a Hunka ceremony gave wolf howls when he searched for the children who were honored (Densmore 1918:74, 76). The act of making a wolf howl is called houya “to summon a voice” (Powers, W. 1986:186), but Pete Catches (1990:109) says this howling is called akisa [to shout or cheer on] (see also, Buechel 1970:75, 186).

Wolves were highly wakan to the Lakotas, and they were known as the messengers of Waziya (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101, Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:125, Tyon in Walker 1980:160) and able to produce wind or fog when they howled (Wissler 1912:91; Brown 1992:35). Warriors emulated wolves because they were hardy, fast, and agile (Densmore 1918:71; Wissler 1912:91). They were valued for their stealth and ability to come upon a camp unseen (Tyon in Walker 1980:160). Those who dreamed of wolves were given powers to create foggy weather conditions. A day of dense mist and fog was known as a “wolf”s day” (Wissler 1912:54, 91). Finally, wolves were considered wise and crafty (Wissler 1912:57-58; Brown 1992:36-37). As Charging Thunder Densmore (1918:183):
The old wolf said that by the aid of this pipe I would be able to outwit the wisest and craftiest of my enemies. I made the pipe as he directed and carried it on the warpath and had good success. It did not look any different from an ordinary pipe, but it had been ‘made sacred’ by a medicine man.

Wolf figures were highly respected as guardian spirits, especially by warriors (Densmore 1918:179-183; Hassrick 1964: 84; Tyon in Walker 1980:160). The men who dreamed of wolves constituted an informal association, Sunkmanitu ihanblapi or Sunkmanitu kaga, whose members performed ceremonies to demonstrate their visionary powers (Dorsey, J. 1894: 480-481; Powers, W. 1977:58; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:82). They wore wolf skins on their backs, arms, and legs, and covered their head with a rawhide mask. Their bodies were painted white and their appendages red. Warriors conducted wolf performances before going on raids, and only men who dreamed of a wolf twice were eligible to participate. Wolf performers piped on grouse whistles inserted through their masks, and they carried a rope called the Zuzeca kaga, which they moved in imitation of the slithering motions of a snake (Densmore 1918:179; Wissler 1912:90-91; Powers, W. 1986:186; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:195). Wolf Society members were able to cure various sicknesses, but they were most well-known for preparing war medicines and making remedies to remove arrows (Powers, W. 1977:158; Sword in Walker 1980:90-91; Standing Bear 1988: 103). Wolves are closely connected to the kinnikinick or bearberry plant, and it is through a wolf that the Lakotas learned of its use (Standing Bear 1988:103). Wolf dreamers also made highly effective protective wotawi (war amulets) and war shields (Wissler 1912:90-91; Walker 1982:95).

In the Lakota scheme of things, the wolf was considered the leader of the animals classed as “diggers” (Walker 1983:271), but in the gathering of the animals, it travels with other carnivores (Walker 1983:349). Like the coyote, the wolf was seen as an important ally and partner of Inktomi (Thunder Bear in Walker 1980:129; Walker 1983:168-170, 173). Indeed, the wolf played a very important role in helping Inktomi entice the Pte Oyate to the surface of the world in the Tokahe story associated with Wind Cave (Walker 1917:181-182). Also, like coyotes, Lakota sentiments about wolves were often ambivalent. On the one hand, they could be associated with nefarious activities as servants of Anog Ite, the Double Face woman, or the helpers of Inktomi (Walker 1983:376). In the Hunka ceremony, an elder woman goes to the top of a hill where she wails a song to keep the wolf away from the camp. In this context, the wolf, which is considered a helper to the North Wind, is associated with misfortune and sorrow (Walker 1980: 222). But on the other hand, the wolf could be represented as a guardian and protector of the people as in different renditions of the famous story of the Lakota woman who lived with the wolves (Deloria 1932:121-122; Hassrick 1964:138-139; Herman 1965b: 6; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:115-117). In one of the stories of Piya (a Stone Boy figure), the wolf, along with the turtle and the meadowlark, offer protective powers to the protagonist (Walker 1983:127-128, 130). Or in another story, a female wolf refuses to cooperate with Inktomi by giving him meat, which she says is only for her little ones who are hungry (Walker 1983: 349-350).

The Cheyenne held the wolf in high regard. They believed the wolf was the most tricky and cunning of all the animals and the friendliest one as well (Dorsey, G. 1905: 34; Grinnell 1972:2:125). Wolves were much respected as spiritual guardians (Grinnell 1972:2:112-113), and it was considered an honor for wolves and coyotes to eat the flesh of dead warriors who were left on the prairie (Ibid:2:163). Wolves were strongly
associated with warfare, and while on a war party, it was forbidden to point a knife in their direction (Ibid:2:125). The wolf served as a patron for the Bow String or Wolf Warrior Society (Ibid:2:72). In the origin story of this organization, it was told that Owl Friend once got caught in a blizzard and was rescued by wolves that brought him into their lodge. The wolves told Owl Friend that they are more cunning than any other animal and that they held the whole earth for their home. They blessed Owl Friend and spent four days teaching him the details of the warrior society he initiated (Dorsey 1905:28; Grinnell 1972:2:73-78). Wolves are also associated with romantic attraction, and Cheyenne love songs are often referred to as “wolf songs” (Moore, J. 1974a:176).

Although Lakotas revered wolves and coyotes, these animals did not occupy the same exalted status as they did among the Cheyennes who regarded them as one of the primary spiritual masters or game keepers of the animals (Grinnell 1972:1:334-336; Schlesier 1987:98). It was in the Cheyennes’ Massaum or Animal Dance that the wolf figured most prominently. This ceremony, which was historically practiced in the Black Hills, was the symbolic recreation of their origin story, in which the spirit of a male wolf saves the culture heroes of the Cheyenne, Mosteyev or Sweet Medicine, and the Suhtaio, Tomsi’vi or Erect Horns, and instructs them in the teachings of life (Grinnell 1972:2:285; Schlesier 1987:53-54, 76-80). The ceremony, which lasts five days, involves the making of a wolf lodge that represents the universe before creation and the home of the wolves and their assistants, the foxes, which represent the spirit masters of the animals released from hesze-voxsz (the underworld). These spirit masters control the hunting of predators, including humans (Grinnell 1972:287-291; Schlesier 1987:80-83, 90-92, 98). On the second day, wolf and fox skins were brought into the lodge and laid down on the north side near the sacred buffalo skull (Grinnell 1972:291-296; Schlesier 1987:92-96). On the third day of the ceremony, Ehyophstah (Yellow Haired Woman) was reincarnated and prepared the skin of Ma’heone honehe, the sacred male red (or yellow) wolf who was the manifestation of Nonoma, the Thunder. Later, an elderly woman of the Young Wolf Society was called into the lodge and instructed to bring the two men who were selected to prepare the Evevsev honehe, the sacred white female wolf, a manifestation of Esceheman, the Earth, and the kit fox, Voh’kis, a representation of Ehyophstah who acted as a servant of the two wolves. The male wolf’s hide was carefully prepared, stretched, combed and painted with an elaborate cosmological design, and the skins of the female wolf and the assistant kit foxes were attended to ceremoniously as well (Grinnell 1972:296-300; Schlesier 1987:96-98). The preparations of the skins continued into the fourth day. In the evening, the wolves marked their trails and set the four directions outside the lodge where the elderly female, “Young Wolves,” built a sacred pound and where the lodges of other animals were erected outside its periphery (Grinnell 1972:2:300-309; Schlesier 1987:99-103). On the fifth and final day, the wolf skins were displayed on a travois outside the lodge where offerings were made to them by children. Later in the day, the wolf impersonators and their kit fox assistants led the other animal impersonators into the enclosure where they were symbolically consecrated, hunted, and killed. At the end of the ceremony, the sacred coyote appeared and made the food available for distribution to the people (Grinnell 1972:2:309-334; Schlesier 1987:104-106).

Grey Fox
(Urocyon cinereoargenteus ocythous)

Red Fox
(Vulpis vulpes regalis)

Habitat & History

In 1803, Tabeau (in Abel 1939:81) wrote that the grey fox, Urocyon cinereoargentus
Ocythous, was very common in regions west of the Missouri River and that the red fox, while present, was not as common as its grey cousin. Sixty years later, Ferdinand V. Hayden (1962b:142) noted that the red fox, Vulpis vulpes regalis, was common to the area and that its fur was highly valued by local traders. Presently, the red fox is the only species reported in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park, although Lt. Richard Dodge (1965:123) saw both red and grey foxes in the area in 1875. The likelihood of the Swift Fox, also known as Kit Fox, Vulpes velox herbes, being in the Black Hills has been questioned by some writers (Froiland 1978:149). Nonetheless, Hayden (1862b) reported that it was very common near prairie dog villages at locations west of the Missouri River, and Decost Smith (1949:68) said it was one of the animals most affected by the poison baits Euro-Americans used to kill predators in this area.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

In Lakota, the fox goes by three different names, sungila (little dog, the fox generically), tokala (little enemy, specifically the small grey fox or kit fox), whose food is white and pink prairie clover, and wica-hanhan which refers to a small fox (Buchel 1970:468, 495, 577). In the Cheyenne language, the fox is called ma?ohoohohe or alternatively volkeso or vohkesoho [crooked], referring to the crooked manner by which the fox travels (Petter 1913-15:500; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:43), while the kit fox or small grey fox is known as wuh’kis (Grinnell 1972:2:301).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

The Lakotas and Cheyennes hunted foxes for their furs using pens, deadfalls, and a variety of other trapping techniques (Vestal 1934:7; Hoebel 1960:64; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:167, 168; Grinnell 1972:2:298-299). Fox skins were stripped into pieces for a Lakota game known as “fox choking” (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:325). Fox skins were worn around the neck of Lakota Kit Fox soldiers and adorned the Tokalas’ lances. Fox bones were also fastened to an otter skin and worn on the forehead, and rattles with fox skin guards were used by the Tokalas too (Wissler 1912:15 16, 72). The wearing of these regalia came directly from the society’s origin story as told by Thomas Tyon to James Walker (1980:268-269). The whips of the Wic’iska (White Marked Society) had fox skin on their guards (Wissler 1912:35), and the wrist guards worn by members of the Hanskaska Society were made of fox skin too (Ibid:38).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

The fox was much admired by the Lakotas for his persistent strength and courage, wily, clever, and cunning nature, as well as his gentleness, nimbleness, and swiftness (Wissler 1912:14; Standing Bear 1978:143, 215; Brown 1997:27). The fox was the symbol of one of the most important warrior societies among the Lakotas, the Tokala or Kit Foxes. This association has been reestablished among the Lakotas in recent years. In historic times, the society was formed to keep order and harmony in Lakota camps and to protect and oversee the movements of camps. Its members policed some of the hunts, and they went out against tribes who invaded Lakota lands (Wissler 1912:14-23; Standing Bear 1978:143-147; Walker 1980:193, 268). According to Luther Standing Bear (1978:143-147), the fox sacrificed himself so that men could wear his skin and acquire his qualities. Men who became kit foxes were expected to be reliable, active, and alert like foxes; they carried clubs rather than arrows. Their pipe bearer appealed to Waziyata for aid, suggesting that, like the coyote and the wolf, the fox was associated with the North Wind (Wissler 1912:19). Further details on the origins, functions, offices, ceremonies, and regalia of the Tokalas are found in James Walker (1980:260-263, 264-266, 268-270, 272-274), Clark Wissler (1912:14-23), and Royal B. Hassrick’s writings (1964:16, 18-21, 22-24, 133-34, 144).
The dances of the Tokalas were also believed to have healing effects because they induced rest and sleep among the participants. The men who dreamed of foxes, tokala in-hanblapi, played an important role in certain forms of curing, and they had knowledge of special herbs and roots too. As Standing Bear described this (1978:215):

The fox had knowledge of underground things hidden from human eyes, and this he shared with the dreamer telling him of roots and herbs that were healing and curing; then he shared his powers of swiftness and cleverness as well as gentleness. The fox would be holy to the dreamer who would wear in his ceremonies the skin of the animal, and the brotherhood being sworn, the Fox dreamer never hunted or killed the fox. He obtained the skin from those who did.

According to Francis Densmore (1918:314-316), the names for wolves, foxes, and coyotes were often interchangeable as were many of the ceremonial songs associated with these animals. Like other members of the canine family, the fox was regarded as highly wakan by the Lakotas (Walker 1980:101).

In the sacred stories of the Lakotas, the fox is often portrayed as one of the wisest animals. Fox asks the most important question concerning who should be appointed chief by Ksa, the Spirit of Wisdom in the Lakota genesis story (Walker 1983:278). He travels with the wolves, coyotes, raccoons, skunks, lynx, wild cats, and mountain lions to the gathering of the animals and presides over all the animals when the deception of Gnaski is revealed (Walker 1983:359, 362).

The fox also served as a symbol for one of the Cheyennes’ military societies, the Who-kesh’hetaniu, originally created by Sweet Medicine (Grinnell 1972:2:48, 374; Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:60). According to John Stands in Timber (1967:60), “The Swift Fox is a beautiful animal, fleet of foot, who never lets his prey get away from him.” As among the Lakotas, Cheyenne Fox Soldiers, who dressed in fox skins, maintained their own lodge and ceremonies, and they were noted for their bravery (Grinnell 1972:2:56-57). They also played an important role in the Cheyenne Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:231, 249, 250, 344). Wooden Leg told Thomas Marquis (1931:56) that the foxes were one of the three most important soldier societies among the Cheyennes.

In the Cheyenne Animal Dance or Massaum, along with the wolf skins placed at the altar, a fox skin was laid on top of the buffalo skull that stood at its center. Two men who dreamed of foxes impersonated the animal, entering the lodge adorned in fox skins that were later painted yellow and blue; they danced towards the altar and around the circle inside the lodge. In the ceremony, the foxes were closely affiliated with those who represented the wolves, and like the birds who were painted in the story of the Great Race, they represented the hunters rather than prey (Grinnell 1972:2: 300-301, 323-334).

THE FELINE FAMILY

[FELIDAE]

Bobcat
[Lynx rufus pallescens]

Lynx
[Lynx canadensis canadensis]

Mountain Lion
[Felis conncolor hippolestes]

Habitat & History

The feline family is represented by three species in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park: the bobcat [Lynx rufus pallescens], the mountain lion [Felis concolor hippolestes], and the lynx [Lynx canadensis canadensis] (Turner 1974: 133-134; Froiland 1978:148). Of these, the bobcat is very common in the Hills, while the mountain lion and the lynx are rare (Froiland
In the past, however, moun-
tain lions were listed as one of the animals
typically found in the Black Hills (Denig in
Ewers 1961:6). In 1862, Ferdinand Hayden
(1862b:140) made this observation about
wild cats:

Though seldom seen by the traveller, this
animal is not rare in any part of the country
drained by the Missouri and its tributaries.
It is very often caught in traps which the
traders set for wolves. The flesh of the wild
cat is not unfrequently used for food by the
Indians and its skin for ornamental purposes.
In the month of January, 1855, I attempted
to cross the prairie from Pinnau’s spring to
the Fur Company’s trading-houses near the
forks of the Shyenne river, a distance of
about thirty miles. Losing my course, I
wandered for two days...on the third day
came to a lodge of Sioux Indians who had
separated from their band, and were
subsisting on the products of each day’s
hunt. The old chief offered me kindly
the hospitality of his hut, which I gladly
accepted, and on entering the lodge found
the inmates quietly watching the carcass of a
large wild cat, which was roasting before the
fire. As soon as the meat was cooked, the
Indians ate of it with keen relish,
and placed
a portion before me, and though almost
famished with hunger, one mouthful was
sufficient to satisfy me, and I gladly turned
to the more palatable meat of Black
tailed Deer. These animals are caught every year
to a greater or lesser extent at Fort Pierre...

In the 1870s, mountain lions and bobcats
were still reported as common in the Hills,
but lynx were said to be rare (Grinnell 1875:
74; Progulske 1974:122; Turner 1974:133-
134). After European American settlers
homesteaded on lands in and around the
western border of Wind Cave National Park
in the 1890s, bobcats continued to be numer-
ous in the area, but mountain lions, while
sighted, were uncommon (McAdam 1973:
17-18; Smith, A. 1973:16).

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The Lakotas call the bobcat *igmu gleska* or
*igmu’ gleza* [spotted cat], the lynx, *igmu* hota [grey cat], and the mountain lion, *igmu’watogla* [wild or skiddish cat] (Bue-
chel 1970:215). In Cheyenne, the lynx is
named *moxkav* (Petter 1913-15:676) and the
cougar, *nanose’hame* [he’s the best of all]
(Petter 1913-15:794; Northern Cheyenne
Language and Culture Center 1976:63).

**Modes of Procurement,
Preparation, and Use**

George Bird Grinnell (1972:1:256) reported
that the cubs of various wild cats were
commonly eaten by the Cheyennes, but only
in times of starvation. The Lakotas also
hunted cats. White Bull (in Vestal 1934:
162) remembered seeing them in the Black
Hills, and another Lakota was reported in a
winter count to have killed four mountain
lions in the Hills during the year 1845 (Praus
1962:16). Some Lakotas were known to
have eaten them too, as Hayden reported,
but their consumption was considered very
dangerous (Bordeaux 1929: 126; Denig in

Whoever mutilates (*wicayupsun*) a mountain
lion or a wild cat or even a house cat will
have terrible things happen to him, it is said.
That man’s hand or foot becomes
completely dislocated (*iataya napxunpsun*),
it is said. Therefore, nobody eats cats, they
believe. They are very afraid of them...

Royal B. Hassrick (1964:199) also reported
that people had to take care when butchering
wildcats and not tear their joints; otherwise,
they would suffer joint pain. The Lakotas
and Cheyennes valued the skins of wildcats
for making quivers (Lyford 1940:33; Hass-
rick 1964; Grinnell 1972:184).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Although wildcats were known to possess
spiritual power, with mountain lions con-
sidered to be especially *wakan* (Grinnell
1972; Walker 1980:101), there is hardly any
information about them in ethnographic
sources on the Lakotas or the Cheyennes.
John Moore (1974a:240) claims the Cheyennes classed felines and mustelids together because of the strong smell of their urine. Neither family of animals had any religious significance, even though their various species were considered powerful. In the Lakota genesis story, the bobcat, lynx, and mountain lion were linked together with wolves, raccoons, skunks, and coyotes as traveling companions to the great council of the animals in the Lakota genesis story (Walker 1983:359), and the lynx is also mentioned earlier in the story and classified with the category of animals who possess claws (Walker 1983:271-272).

**THE BEAR FAMILY**

_[**URSIDAE**]_

**Black Bear**

_[*Ursus americanus americanus*]_

**Grizzly Bear**

_[*Ursus arctos horribilis*]_

**Habitat & History**

Two species from the *Ursidae* family were associated historically with the Black Hills: these are the black bear [*Ursus americanus americanus*] and the grizzly bear [*Ursus arctos horribilis*]. William Clark wrote in 1804: “The Black hills is Said to abound in Bear of every kind...” (Moulton 1983-87:3:482). Tabeau (in Abel 1939:163) recounted a year earlier that black bears were common to this region. A half century later, Edwin Denig (in Ewers 1961:6) also mentioned bears as common to the Hills and so did E. De Giradin (1936:62). Another Missouri River fur trader, Thaddeus Culbertson (1952:57), writing in 1851, stated:

Last night we had a good deal of talk around our fire about the Black Hills. Joe, an experienced hunter, tells me that they are covered with the finest pine timber so thick that a person on horseback cannot pass through it in some places. There is an abundance of fine water but no fish; plenty of other game. Grizzly bears are found there sometimes in bands like buffalo; they live on fruit, meat, and ants; to get to these they turn over the largest logs and eat them off the underside if there.

These reports, coming as they did from the vantage point of the Missouri River, or in the case of Culbertson, the outskirts of the Hills proper, might have been exaggerated. But even as late as the 1870s, Grinnell (1875:76) and Dodge (1965:132-133) described the populations of grizzly and black bear as common. By the late nineteenth century, the grizzly was no longer observed in the Hills (Turner 1974:127-128; Froiland 1978:138). The black bear survived but in considerably reduced numbers (Turner 1974:126-127). Today, the black bear has largely disappeared from the Hills and is no longer found at Wind Cave National Park (Turner 1974:126-127; Froiland 1978:139). At the turn of the twentieth century, Fannie McAdam (1973:17), who grew up on a nearby ranch reported that there were no bears in the Wind Cave area.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

In Lakota, the black bear is called *mato* and its cub is known as *matocincala* (Buechel 1970:334), while the grizzly is called by many names including *mato hota* [grey bear] and *sake'hansa* [long claw] (Ibid:334, 460). *Waonze* and *waowescia* are alternate names for the grizzly (Ibid:543). In the Lakotas’sacred language, the bear is addressed as *Hu nunpa* [two-legged] (Walker 1980:50, 94). Cheyennes have many names for the bear also. Their generic name is *nahkohe* or *nahkoheo?o*, and then there are gender and age names as well as names that represent coloration, such as *mato?otse-nahkohe* [a brown colored black bear] and *vohpahtse-nahkohe* [white-mouthed bear or grizzly] (Petter 1913-15:99-101; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:6).
 Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

Bears were hunted by the Lakotas and Cheyennes (Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Grinnell 1972:1:290), and at least among the Lakotas, they were typically captured in deadfalls (Hassrick 1964:167). Bear meat was eaten by the Cheyennes (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90) and by the Lakotas (Bordeaux 1929:126; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:157). James Howard (1965:41) reported the Poncas remembered hunting bears in the Black Hills during the winter months, and White Bull (in Howard 1998:24) also recalled hunting bears in the area when he was younger.

Bear skins were considered very sacred by both tribes. The Lakotas prohibited menstruating women from tanning them less they get hairy or acquire scabs and black splotches on their faces and hands. It was only after menopause that women took on this task (Hassrick 1964:249; Walker 1980:159). Similarly, Cheyenne women were prohibited from dressing the hide of a bear. It was believed that the soles of a woman’s feet would crack or her face would become hairy like a bear’s should she engage in such activity. This task was done either by men or by women from other tribes (Grinnell 1972:1:198, 2:105).

Among the Lakotas, bear skins were worn only by bear dreamers, Mato ihanblapi, in their ceremonies and healing rites (Walker 1980:159; Powers, W. 1977:58). Bear guts, which have an iridescent quality, were cut into strips to tie eagle feathers on to the lower end of the bows used by members of the Oglala’s Sacred Bow Society (Blish 1934:183; Brown 1992:18). Among the Cheyennes, they were tied to the bows carried by the Contraries (Grinnell 1972:1:81). The Lakotas also used bear claws in association with warfare because they were believed to offer protection to the wearer (Densmore 1918:267; Bordeaux 1929:112; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:167, 178-179, 230, 278), and in connection with healing to clean wounds (Densmore 1918:253; Standing Bear 1978:215). The Cheyennes took the skins of the black bears, which they considered sacred, to cover their war shields. They also attached bear claws to these shields (Grinnell 1972:188, 193, 194, 198-199, 290, 2:74) and tied them on the head of the yellow-painted dancer in their Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:280). The Cheyennes also used the hind leg bones of bears to make fleshers (Curtis 1907-30:5:156).

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Bears were highly revered by the Lakotas, who associated them with numerous qualities including strength, courage, and wisdom (Walker 1980:50-51, 53, 116, 121, 128, 227; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:109-110). The grizzly bear was considered the principal guardian of wisdom (Walker 1980:50-51, 94). With respect to courage, Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:53) had this to say: “The bear is not only a powerful animal in body but powerful in will also. He will stand and fight to the last. Though wounded he will not run but will die fighting.” The black bear, matosapa, was believed to preside over bravery, but also fun and mischief as well as the emotions of love and anger (No Flesh in Walker 1980:116; Tyon in Walker 1980:121). The bear was associated with success in warfare, and it was approached to insure the proper conduct of sacred ceremonies, including the Sun Dance and the Hunka (Walker 1980:227, 231, 232). Both species of bears, especially the grizzly, were closely linked to herbal medicine and healing (Dorsey, J. 1894:495). As Siyaka told Francis Densmore (1918:195):

The bear is quick-tempered and is fierce in many ways, and yet he pays attention to herbs which no other animal notices at all. The bear digs these for his own use. The bear is the only animal which eats roots from the earth and is also especially fond of acorns, junee berries, and cherries. These three are frequently compounded with other herbs in making medicine, and if a person is fond of cherries we say he is like a bear. We consider the bear as chief of all animals in
regard to herb medicine, and therefore it is understood that if a man dreams of a bear he will be expert in the use of herbs for curing illness. The bear is regarded as an animal well acquainted with herbs because no other animal has such good claws for digging roots.

As a matter of practical observation, Standing Bear (1988:49-51) wrote about the bear as follows:

The bear is very sensitive to the presence of man or other creatures and relies upon his nose a great deal to warn him. Standing up on his hind legs, he will thrust his nose in the air and sniff in all directions. In this way he keeps apprised of the things about him. In the matter of food the bear eats everything that the Indian eats. He likes the wild turnip that we used to dig up for food. With his long claws he digs up this plant and enjoys it very much. All the wild fruit that we ate, he ate also. For meat he would catch small animals and deer. He has a very clever way of hiding if he wishes to surprise a deer. He selects a spot along the deer path and burrows into the ground a hole large enough to cover his body. He gets into the hole and carefully spreads himself with grass and leaves until he is hidden. Here he is until the deer comes along, and out he jumps with a swish and is upon the surprised deer. Always he strikes with the left paw, for he is left-handed.

In many ways he is so much like a human that he is interesting to watch. He has a large amount of human vanity and likes to look at himself. Before we had looking-glasses, we would look at ourselves in a clear pool of water. This the bear does, too, and I suppose he thinks, ‘Well, I’m not such a bad-looking fellow,’ for he walks away after an inspection of himself quite satisfied, and as for myself I do not see why he should not be. He is wise and clever and probably knows it. He likes to beautify himself by painting his face with earth mixed with water. He finds a clear pool in which he can plainly see himself, then takes some earth in his paw and mixes it with water until he has a paste. This he spreads on the left side of his face, never on the right side. Then he looks at himself in his mirror of water. If not satisfied with his first attempt at beautifying, he repeats his work until he has the side of his face fixed up as he should have it.

He hides himself away in some safe cave or hollow log and sleeps through the winter when other animals are braving the storms trying to get food enough to pull through until spring.

In Lakota cosmology, the bear was classed by James Walker (1980:50-51, Lone Bear in Densmore 1918:128) as a supreme spiritual figure among the Tobtob (4x4), standing in the third rank of subordinate gods, which included Tatanka, the Four Winds, and the Whirlwind. The bear was highly wakan (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101:101), and one of the messengers of the Thunders (Beckwith, M. 1930:12n412). The bear is another animal who embodies the power of the whirlwind (Wissler 1905:262). Although the bear is associated in some contexts with the Thunders and the West Wind, he is also mentioned as coming from the direction of the North Wind, Waziyata, in a healing song recorded by Francis Densmore (1918:197). As Lone Bear (in Walker 1980: 128) said of the bear’s sacredness:

Hunonp is the language of the shamans. It is the Spirit of the Bear who is of the Tobtob. He taught the shamans all their secrets. No one can talk with Hunonp without understanding the language of the shamans. The Bear knows all things about Tobtob. He knows all things about medicines. He took pity on the Sioux when the spirits were angry with them. The spirits were angry with the Sioux because they left the middle of the world.

This idea was reiterated by Two Shields (in Densmore 1918:195) who said:

The bear is the only animal which is dreamed of as offering to give herbs for the healing of man. The bear is not afraid of either animals or men and it is considered ill tempered, and yet it is the only animal which has shown us this kindness; therefore
the medicines received from the bear are supposed to be especially effective.

The Lakota who dreamed of bears were expected to become healers (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:105). Establishing a spiritual relation with bears was highly regarded by the Lakotas because it allowed healers to treat “all ordinary diseases” (Tyon in Walker 1980:161). William Bordeaux (1929: 109) indicates that these healers had knowledge of roots to treat severe forms of pleurisy, and they had the ability to “suck” illnesses out of their patients. In addition, these healers were also able to treat the wounded (Wissler 1912:88; Walker 1980:90, 91; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:178-179, 278; Ingram 1989:182). Indeed, only people who received bear medicine were allowed to treat most kinds of wounds (Walker 1980:105, 161).


     At the feast the medicines are displayed. Sometimes a shaman displays his abilities by suddenly hitting the earth upon which a turnip or a small cedar tree springs up. An informant heard of a shaman putting up a plum tree, a juneberry, or cherry tree, and when the singers were singing and beating the drum, he sat there with his face painted up wakan and suddenly shook the tree upon which the fruit fell to the ground.

He then went on to say:

Bear dreamers may dance at the time of their feast and parade around, often donning a bear skin. They may run about camp growling and chasing people. They may sit about like bears, and feeling around upon the ground, dig up a turnip and eat it with grunts like bears. They may even fall upon a dog, tear it to pieces, eat the liver and some of the flesh raw. Also in battle they may attempt to frighten the enemy by such actions (Wissler 1912:89).

Lakota men who dream of bears still practice their healing powers in modern times. Although some appear to do so independently, many use their spiritual talents in the context of making herbal remedies or conducting Yuwipi ceremonies (Fera 1963:40; Fire and Erdoes 1972:153-154; Lewis, T. 1990:108). Among the various plants that Fools Crow, the famous Lakota medicine man, used in his pharmacopeia was one associated with bears. Thomas Mails (1991: 165) wrote of this as follows:

     A certain root bears used was ground up and made into a tea that relieved bowel pains. This one Fools Crow told me he learned about by watching bears, but I doubt that he had any way of knowing what their exact problem was. He must have tested the root, and found out what it would do.

In court testimony, Fools Crow had this to say about the relationship between bears and healing:

     To all the different medicine men, or medicine powers, the bear is the most powerful. The bear holds the secret of the roots and herbs that can cure a lot of diseases the medicines [Euro-American pharmaceuticals] cannot. This is why Bear Butte is especially important and sacred for the medicine men who use herbs and roots.
and other forms of plant life to cure diseases and who have to go to Bear Butte regularly to renew their power to cure diseases and sickness (quoted from Forbes-Boyte 1996:106).

The figure of the bear appears in many Lakota stories of Piya and the Stone Boy (Walker 1983:128-129, 137, 144-145, 147, 148-151, 152). In the Lakota genesis cycle, the bear is placed in the class of those with claws, and because he foiled Inktomi’s plans at the great gathering, he was given leadership over all the animals (Walker 1983:269-274, 359-361). He is ranked with the tobiob, teaches the buffalo a dance that pleases higher order deities, like Taku Skanskan, and instructs the first man, Tokahe, on how to heal with herbs (Walker 1983:297-300, 350, 375).

More so than the Lakotas, who associated the bear mostly with healing, the Cheyennes appear to have placed equal emphasis on its relation to warfare. The bear’s strength and courage and its death-defying abilities were much admired by Cheyenne warriors who painted their shields with bear imagery and covered them with bear skins too (Grinnell 1972:1:188, 193). When their shields were wrapped in bear skins, offerings were made to the bear for protection in battle (Ibid:198-199), and when bears were killed, the Cheyenne counted coup on them (Ibid:2:30). Still, Cheyennes received medicine from bears for healing (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:152-153). The bear was believed to be a great medicine animal because it was not only able to heal itself but also heal other bears (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:105). Bears and their power were associated with the spiritual strengths of the earth and underworld, and as among the Lakotas, there was a spiritual bear figure, who was white and known as voxpenakao (Moore, J. 1974a:163, 239). Cheyenne Contraries were believed to receive their healing powers from grizzly bears (Powell 2002a:69). People with bear guardians took on some of the traits of a bear when they doctored (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:112), and, at one time, they participated in a dance called the Nakoyosuisto [Bear Dance] (Hayden 1862b:281). Wooden Leg told Thomas Marquis (1931:101) about a bear healer who used the tusks of the animal in his healings. Bear images were also sometimes carved onto the mouthpieces of Cheyenne flutes, suggesting an association with love and courting (Grinnell 1972:1:205). In general, the bear was considered to possess great spiritual power and was once represented in the Massaum ceremony (Grinnell 1972:2:334-335).

THE MUSTELID FAMILY
[MUSTELIDAE]

Several mustelid species, especially badgers and skunks, are very common in the Black Hills and in the area where Wind Cave National Park is located. Some of the species, notably badger and skunk, were reported as common in the 1870s too, although mink and other fur-bearing mustelids were not as numerous (Grinnell 1875:75; Progulske 1974:122). Most of the fur-bearers declined considerably in subsequent decades, and one, the black-footed ferret, has probably been extirpated from most areas of the Hills. Another species, the otter, was common on some of the larger waterways surrounding the Hills, but its historic presence at locations inside the Hogback is doubtful. With the exception of badgers and skunks, which were valued as food, most of the other mustelids were taken for their furs which were highly valued as adornment for various kinds of ceremonial regalia. Most of them were sacred and connected in varying degrees and ways to healing.

**Badger**
*(Taxidea taxus taxus)*

**Habitat & History**

While uncommon at the higher elevations of the Black Hills proper, the badger is very abundant in the lower elevation foothills and around the Race Track especially at Wind
Cave National Park (Turner 1974:132). It was also reported as abundant in the general region in earlier times (Hayden 1862b:143).

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The badger is known as *hoka* in Lakota (Buechel 1970:195) and *ma?hahko?e* in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:82; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center: 5).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

Badgers were hunted by the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, and their meat was considered good food (Bordeaux 1929:126; Beckwith 1930:381; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:169; Grinnell 1972:1:256). A common method of hunting was to trap them in specially made pens (Hassrick 1964, 168). According to Royal B. Hassrick (1964:169): “Some hunters were so nimble they could kill a badger by jumping on its back with both feet. Others never could do this, but instead landed on the badger’s chest, for badgers turn over quickly. These men got badly bitten.” Lakota boys also kept young badgers as pets (Ibid:172).

There is not much information on the use of badger skins, however, although an elderly Cheyenne woman, Iron Teeth, told Thomas Marquis (and Limbaugh 1973:7) that badger skins were used to carry dried berries. The Arapahos are reported to have offered a pack of badger skins to the center pole during their Sun Dance (Trenholm 1970:73). The Lakotas are known to have made medicine pouches out of badger paws (Densmore 1918:253), and Lame Deer (Fire and Erdoes 1972:133) noted the use of the animal’s pizzle as an awl.

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Badgers were regarded as very powerful by the Lakotas and the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:105;Tyon in Walker 1980:169). Iron Shell told Royal B. Hassrick (1964:168):

The badger is very strong. When a man kills a badger, if he turns it on its back, cuts open its chest and carefully removes its insides so that no blood is lost, when the blood thickens, by looking in the hunter can see his image. Should he see himself as he is, he knows he will die young. But if he sees himself as an old man with white hair, he cries, ‘Hye, hye,’ thanking the spirits. Now he knows he can risk getting many coup and will live long to die with a cane in his hand.

Lame Deer (Fire and Erdoes 1972:133) and Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:170) also reported how the Lakotas forecasted the future by reading a dead badger’s blood.

The same kind of divination practice was described for the Cheyennes (Petter 1913-15:74; Grinnell 1972:2:26-27; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:29). Petter (1913-15:74) writes about this divination as follows:

> As with the Romans the Cheyenne priests would foetell future events by the state or position of the entrails of animals, foremost the badger; also by the images represented in his coagulating blood. The animal was cut in two halves while alive. The fur of the badger enrwraps the sacred arrows of the Cheyenne and those are also used as omens for the tribe.

Among the Lakotas, badgers, like bears, were closely associated with herbs and healing. Eagle Shield told Francis Densmore (1918:266) whenever he dug for certain kinds of roots, he left some tobacco to the badger. The badger was especially connected with treatments for children. Its fat was used sometimes for treating baldness (Fire and Erdoes 1972:172) and also to heal scrofula (Tyon in Walker 1980:169-170). The Cheyennes used badger claws in making medicines, and they also used their skins in doctoring (Grinnell 1972:1:134, 146). Badgers also appeared as spiritual guardians to assist Cheyennes in healing (Grinnell 1972:2:151). The badger represented the feminine principle of the earth, and its skin once wrapped the Cheyennes' sacred arrows (Moore, J. 1974a:163). The
Cheyennes prayed and smoked to the badger, and they often offered a portion of their food to the animal. When a pipe was offered to the earth, it was thought that it was dedicated in part to the badger (Grinnell 1972:2:105).

The badger served as a spiritual guardian for Lakota and Cheyenne warriors as well (Grinnell 1972:114-115; Brown 1992). The Cheyennes believed that badgers cleansed the blood spots from their Sacred Arrows when they were renewed. They thought of the animal as a wise counselor (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55). This animal stood as the symbol of one of the Lakotas’ most important military societies, the Ihoka (Walker 1980:260, 265; Densmore 1992:325-326). Among its many roles, the society was entrusted with policing the communal buffalo hunts, supervising the distribution of meat, and keeping order in the larger hunting encampments (Hassrick 1964:16, 173,203; Walker 1982:32). Clark Wissler (1912:31-32) described some features of this society’s rituals, which were believed to have originated with the Crow tribe.

In the Lakota story in which the animals try to choose a chief the badger is linked to the community of diggers which includes wolves, prairie dogs, and gophers (Walker 1983:270-271), but in the story of the gathering of the animals, the badger is connected to the prairie dogs, gophers and rabbits but not to the wolves (Walker 1983:358-359). The badger is also one of the animals that punished G lässtki for his deceit; the badger’s weapons were his claws (Walker 1983:362).

**Striped Skunk**

* [*Mephitis mephitis husonica]*

**Habitat & History**

The striped skunk is commonly found in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park, and in historic times it was reported as abundant on the plains west of the Missouri River (Hayden 1862b:143; Tabeau in Abel 1939:82; Progulske 1974:122).

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The skunk is called *manka* in Lakota (Buechel 1970:328) and *xao?qo* in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:978; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976: 102).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

Skunks were hunted by the Lakotas, who considered their meat good for making people fat (Bordeaux 1929:126; Left Heron in Beckwith, M. 1930:380-381,420; Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964: 168). The Lakotas cut their fur into strips for neck decorations and used entire hides for pouches to keep tobacco (Standing Bear 1978:34). Young skunks were also kept as pets by children (Hassrick 1964:172). The Cheyenne considered skunk meat good food as well (Grinnell 1972:1:256), and women were reported to hunt them with clubs (Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9). The Cheyennes used skunk skins for a variety of different purposes: they were sewn into robes, their tails were tied to a horse’s tail in war, and warriors, known as the Dog Soldiers, wore belts made of four skunk skins prepared with the heads intact (Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Dorsey, G. 1905:21). Images of skunks were also painted on robes and lodges, and they were engraved on seeds that women used in a gambling game (Grinnell 1972:2:104).

The Lakotas kept the scent bags of skunks and smeared its musk on the body as a preventive medicine and also to treat colds. It was considered a good medicine (Bordeaux 1929:109; Beckwith, M. 1930: 420; Standing Bear 1978:34). The Cheyennes also believed that skunks possessed healing power (and put their medicine in bags made from the skins of skunks (Grinnell 1972:2:104) One Cheyenne healer was known to doctor with a skunk skin (Grinnell 1972:1: 146).
Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Although skunks were associated with both healing and war, there is little about them in the literatures on either the Cheyennes or the Lakotas. According to Joseph Eppes Brown (1992:34), the Lakotas associated the skunk with the earth in a manner similar to the badger because of his courage and “no-flight” qualities. In the Lakota genesis story, the skunk is not grouped and classified with other animals but stands by itself and battles against the porcupine during a general state of disharmony created by Inktomi and Gnaski (Walker 1983:269-272.), although later in the genesis cycle, skunks travel with foxes, coyotes, wolves, wild cats, the lynx, mountain lions, and raccoons to the great gathering of the animals (Walker 1983:358-362).

Otter

[Lutra canadensis canadensis]

Habitat & History

There is some question whether otters were ever present in the Black Hills (Froiland 1978:149). Even in the early nineteenth century, otter were apparently rare, inhabiting only the larger watercourses like the Cheyenne River (Tabeau in Abel 1939:83). Although otters remained common in streams that flowed into the Missouri from the north in the 1860s, their skins were imported to the region every year to trade with local tribes who placed great value on them (Hayden 1862b:143).

Tribal Taxonomy

In Lakota, the otter goes by two names, ptan and hepan [word used for it in sacred discourse], and skeca (Buechel 1970:47, 464), and in Cheyenne, it is called naene (Petter 1913-15:780; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:77).

Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

Otters were hunted by the Lakotas and Cheyennes largely for their furs which were favored for their thick and soft texture (Standing Bear 1988:60, 61). Cheyennes reported the meat was not good (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90; Grinnell 1972:1:256), and at least one Lakota claimed they were never eaten (Bordeaux 1929:126). The Cheyennes often shot them as they came out of the water in the same way beavers were killed (Grinnell 1972:1:296).

Otterskins were wrapped around men’s hair braids, and they were highly valued for quivers (Standing Bear 1988:23,60, Curtis 1907-30:3:29, 105, 137; Hassrick 1964:199). The otter was a sacred animal to the Lakotas (Walker 1980:101), and its pelts adorned many different kinds of sacred implements and regalia. Indeed, otterskins were so powerful that women who touched them while they were menstruating were likely to become ill and even die (Walker 1980:168). Sun Dancers wore otterskin capes which signified the power of water and land (Walker 1980:177, 183). The Wic’iska (White Marked Society) used otterskin in their regalia and so did members of the Beaver Society (Wissler 1912:34-35; Walker 1980:277). The Tokala fastened fox bones to an otterskin which was worn on their forehead (Wissler 1912:15-16), and they wore wristlets and leg garters made of this pelt (Walker 1980:272, 274; Brown 1992:17). Miwatani members wore buffalo robes adorned with two strips of otterskin (Wissler 1912:47), while the Winyan tapika (Praiseworthy women) wore bands of otterskin around their forehead (Wissler 1912:76). The whips used by the Brave Hearts had guards made of otterskin (Wissler 1912:26), and their lances were wrapped with otterskin from instructions given by a wolf spirit to a war party near the Black Hills. Those of the Kangi yuha [Crow Owners] were similarly wrapped (Wissler 1912:24, 72; Walker 1980:280; Brown 1992:17). Hoops used in the Sun Dance were covered
with otterskin and represented the sun (Walker 1980:182), and medicine sacks were also made from this pelt (Brown 1992:17).

Cheyenne men also wrapped their braids in otterskin and prized the pelt as a covering for bow cases and quivers (Grinnell 1972:1:184, 196, 222). Otterskins were attached to some of the vikuts that Cheyenne warriors used for carrying water (Grinnell 1972:2:24), and the hohktsim’ or wheel lance’s shaft was covered with this fur (Grinnell 1972:1:187). The Cheyenne had no prohibitions against women preparing otterskins, although they did prevent them from processing beaver peltries (Grinnell 1972:2:104, 198).

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Although the Lakotas and Cheyennes considered the otter sacred, there is little in the literature about the qualities that made this animal special. Decost Smith (1949:331) offered one possible explanation for its importance:

The otter is especially ‘medicine’ in that it is supposed, when under water to surround itself with a glistening mist or cloud, which makes it invisible to both prey and its enemies. This, of course, the Indians ascribe to the animal’s supernatural powers, but it probably refers to the film, or bubble of air which adheres to the dry fur, or feathers, of such diving creatures as the muskrat and grebe while swimming under water. The pressure of the water forces out the air contained in the fur, or feathers, to the surface of which it clings in a silvery film, so that the animal emerges from the water dry.

Standing Bear (1988:60) also made some general remarks about what he observed of this animal when he was a young boy:

We seldom saw the otter in the summer time, but in the winter he is out in considerable numbers and much more lively and playful than in the summer. He is not a fast runner, but has a way of combining running and sliding in order to make speed if he is being pursued. He can flip himself over on his back and slide over the snow at a good pace. In shape he has a long body and short legs. He is a good swimmer, but makes more speed on land, where he can throw himself on his back for a swift slide.

In the gathering of the animals described in the Lakota genesis story, the otter was placed with the beaver and other fur-bearing animals (Walker 1983:359, 360).

Weasels and Associates

[H]Mustela]

Habitat & History

Four different Mustela species are identified in the Black Hills: these are the ermine [Mustela erminea muricolor], the long-tailed weasel [Mustela frenata allen], the black-footed ferret [Mustela nigripes], and the mink [Mustela vison letifer]. The ermine and weasel are largely confined to higher elevation locations in the Hills, while the weasel is common throughout the area in a wide variety of riparian environments. Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:142-143) described the weasel as common in the region and an animal whose fur was highly valued by local tribes. Mink were also present in the region in the 1870s, but they were not numerous (Progulske 1974:122); the same is true today. The black-footed ferret is an endangered species. Even though the park contains a habitat well-suited for its existence, including the presence of prairie dogs, its primary prey, the last reported sighting was in 1977 (Turner 1974:129-132; Farrell 2002 Personal Communication).

Tribal Taxonomy

In the Lakota language, weasels and ermines are identified by the same name, (h)jtun-kasan, which refers to their tendency to show their teeth (Riggs 1968:148; Buechel 1970:178), while the black-footed ferret is called itopitsa sapa because of the black stripe across its face (Buechel 1970:272). Another name reported for it is pisipiza etopita sapa [black-faced prairie dog], suggesting its
close relationship to the rodent (Clark 1975: 73). Its special food is the spurge, *Euphorbia margenta* or snow-on-the-mountain, which the Lakotas believe commonly grows in the neighborhood of the prairie dog towns that ferrets typically frequent (Buechel 1970:272). The mink is called *ikusan* [white chin] (Ibid:223). The Cheyennes call the weasel, ermine, and mink by the same name, *xaa?e* (Petter 1913-15:440). There is little substantive information on the use of these small animals or their place in Cheyenne cosmology, although Grinnell (1972: 2:122-123) reported that weasel tails were attached to special charms used in warfare, and Rudolphe Petter (1913-15:440) states that their name derives from their peculiar smell (this includes the skunk too). They appear, however, as characters in a number of Cheyenne stories (Grinnell 1926).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

These small fur-bearing animals were never eaten by the Lakotas (Bordeaux 1929:126). They were highly valued, however, for their peltries. The Lakotas employed many different kinds of devices to trap them (Hassrick 1964:167). Weasel skins were used to wrap sacred bundles and amulets (Lewis 1990:110). Among the Lakotas, the skins of these small mustelids were worn only by special people, such as the walowan or singer, who conducted a *Hunka* or a *Pte San Lowanpi* ceremony (Walker 1980:223, 246). The sashes worn by the sash bearers of the Miwatani society were adorned with bits of weasel fur (Wissler 1912:46). Medicine bags were also made from the entire skins of minks, weasels, and ferrets (Densmore 1918:253, 1948:177; Smith, D. 1949:331). Outside of ceremonial contexts, ermine, mink, and weasel skins were sometimes cut into strips as decoration for men's shirts, dresses, and headdresses (Lyford 1940:33; Brown 1992:18). William Bordeaux (1929: 113) wrote that weasel skins were sewn on war shirts to protect their wearers from being wounded, and their tails were used in treating the sick. According to Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:168), however, the skins had to be handled and worn with great care. Men could not touch them after being with a woman, and women were not allowed to come near them while menstruating; if they did, they would suffer pain or serious illness.

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

In Lakota belief, weasels, ermines, and black-footed ferrets were considered highly *wakan* (Bordeaux 1929:113; Buechel 1970: 242; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, Sword, and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980: 101; Tyon in Walker 1980:168). Indeed, Father Eugene Buechel (1970:242) reported that people did not kill ferrets because such an act would bring death to the killer. Mustelids were classed with beaver and muskrat in the story of the gathering of the animals (Walker 1983:359, 362). But other than this information, there is little about them in the ethnographic literature on the Lakotas. They apparently do not have any special religious significance among the Cheyennes (Moore, J. 1974a:240).

**The Procyons**

*Procynidae*

**Racoon**

*Procyon lotor hirtus*

**Habitat & History**

The only species of the *Procyonidae* family found in the Hills is the raccoon. Today, it is located throughout the area in riparian habitats (Turner 1974:128; Froiland 1978:148). According to Ronald Turner (1974:128), the pelt of this species is still a marketable commodity, although he does not specify whether or not coon hunting remains an economic endeavor for any of the European Americans who live in the Hills. This species appears to have come to the Hills with the advance of the “American Frontier,” as its presence is not recorded in the accounts.
of naturalists who were in the region from the 1850s to the 1870s (Grinnell 1875; Dodge 1965; Turner 1974:128), nor is it mentioned in an earlier account with exhaustive descriptions of the region’s faunal landscape (Tabeau in Abel 1939). Indeed, Ferdinand Hayden (1862:143) wrote that it was not observed beyond the mouth of the White River in the 1850s.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

In the Lakota language, the raccoon is called *wica* or *wiciteglega* [spotted face] (Buechel 1970:576), while in Cheyenne, it is named *matseskome* (Petter 1913-15:881; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:88). There is hardly any mention of this animal other than its name in the ethnographic literature on the Cheyennes, although it does appear in a number of Cheyenne stories (Grinnell 1926). There is more about this species in writings on the Lakotas, but it is still small compared to what has been written about many of the other animals presently located in the Black Hills.

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

The Lakotas hunted raccoons for their meat as well as fur (Denig in Ewers 1961:6; Hassrick 1964:167; Standing Bear 1988:61). They were trapped in pens (Hassrick 1964:168) and caught in other ways too. According to Iron Shell (in Hassrick 1964:169):

> In winter, if a man found raccoon tracks at the foot of a hollow tree, he would put hay and sticks in the hole, stuffing them in, set fire to it and wait. When smoke appears, either the raccoon will fall down through the fire, dead and half-cooked, or will climb out the upper hole and jump. When he lands, he can be killed with a club.

Raccoon fur was used in the making of hunting caps (Standing Bear 1978:34), and the tail of the raccoon was placed as a decoration around the necks of a ponies (Standing Bear 1988:61).

Standing Bear (1988:61) described some of the unusual habits of the raccoon:

> If a coon happened to be making his home in a tree, it was rather easy to catch him, but he had another home where he was hard to reach. The entrance to this home was under water. From the bank under the stream he burrowed up above the water-line to his den. Foxes and other animals could not reach him here, so he was safe. The coon can do something that no other animal can do, and that is walk, trot, or gallop on the bed of a stream under water just as any other animal does on land. All other animals must swim when in the water.....In the winter-time his tracks could be seen in the snow leading to the hole in the ice through which he went to his burrow in the river banks.

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

In the Lakota genesis saga, the raccoon is a central figure in a tale where it is likened to humans because, it often walks on two legs. In this story, it serves as the assistant and friend of *Iktomi* who adopts two of their babies but is unable to care for them. He tries to give them to *Anog Ite* who refuses to take them and in the process curses all women and little children with pain and fear. The babes are then taken to *Wakanka* who agrees to take them under her tutelage, but in the process tells *Iktomi* that the infants will grow up to be tricky like him and that they will be linked to the *Can Oti* [Tree Dwellers] and have no spirit (Walker 1983:287-289). Unlike many of the other animals, who consistently get put together in the same taxonomic classes, the raccoon is included along with the beaver, squirrel, and mouse among the animals known as the “builders” (Walker 1983:271). However, in another segment of the Lakotas’ creation story, it gets linked with the carnivores (Walker 1983:359). Other than this, there is little information about Lakota beliefs surrounding raccoons, and none that would suggest this animal was highly significant in spiritual or religious terms.
Rabbits
[Lagomorpha]

The members of the Lagomorpha order had practical and symbolic value for both tribes, although some of the meanings behind their uses in ceremonial contexts are not always well articulated in ethnographic sources.

THE RABBIT FAMILY
[LEPORIDAE]

Habitat & History

The *Leporidae* family is represented by four species native to the Black Hills, the desert cottontail [*Sylvilagus audubonii bailey*], the eastern cottontail [*Sylvilagus foridianus similis*], Nuttall’s cottontail [*Sylvilagus nuttallii grangeri*], and the white-tailed jack rabbit [*Lepus townsendii campanius*] (Turner 1974:59). The desert cottontail and the jackrabbit are the most common at Wind Cave National Park (Ibid:60), but eastern and Nuttall’s cottontail are also present here (Ibid:60-63). Since rabbits and hares are ubiquitous to the region, they were not singled out for special mention in many early historical reports or specifically linked to the Black Hills. Pierre Antoine Tabeau (in Abel 1939:81-82), however, does give a description of the jackrabbit, and Ferdinand V. Hayden (1862b:148) reported the distribution and habitat of three species in the area.

Tribal Taxonomy

The Lakotas call rabbits *mastinca, mastinka, or mastinsapela* (Buechel 1970:333-334) with the latter name probably referring to hares. In Cheyenne, they are known as *vohkooho* (Petter 1913-15:881; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:87).

Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

All rabbits were commonly taken by the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, and they were considered a good source of food (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90; Denig in Ewers 1961:13). They were an especially popular prey for Lakota boys in their formative years of hunting; their typical mode of hunting was to surround the animal and kill it with clubs (Hassrick 1964:168; Standing Bear 1988:13-15; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:158-159). Not surprisingly, they are often the prey of magical orphan boys, such as Falling Star and Stone Boy, who appear in tribal myth cycles (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:399). They were also commonly hunted by women (Hassrick 1964:168). The Cheyennes caught rabbits with baited hooks attached to horsehair lines, or by twisting them out of a hollow log with a forked stick (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:89).

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Rabbits were respected for their industry and their ability to travel at night (Beckwith, M. 1930:380), and thus, they were sometimes associated with warfare. Clark Wissler (1912:95) mentions one Lakota who was noted for his war medicine having had dreams of a rabbit. Before the Sun Dance, a member of one of the Cheyennes’ soldier societies kills a rabbit; this is believed to bring good fortune in counting a coup in his next battle (Grinnell 1972:1:218). The skins of jackrabbits are used in various contexts during the Cheyenne Sun Dance; for example, strips of their fur are tied to the Sun Dance leader’s robe because this animal is believed to “belong” to the dance (Ibid:1:218, 263, 2:232; Powell 1969:2:859). In Lakota Sun Dances, bands of rabbit fur are tied around the wrists and ankles of Sun dancers (Densmore 1918:125; Sword in Deloria 1929:391). As Black Elk (in Brown 1971:85) describes this use: “The men also put rabbit skins on their arms and legs, for the rabbit represents humility,
because he is quiet and soft and not self-asserting -- a quality which we must all possess when we go to the center of the world.” The Lakota Wic’iska (White Marked society) wore a headdress with strips of rabbit or eagle down (Wissler 1912:34), and the sash bearers of the Miwatani Society adorned their sashes with rabbit ears (Wissler 1912:46). The symbolic significance of these uses, however, was not identified. Also, the Cheyenne tied strips of rabbit skin around the hoop of an antelope hunting pole (Grinnell 1972:1:284). The soft fur of the rabbit was commonly used as a decorative ornamentation outside of ritual contexts (Lyford 1940:33).

Another symbolic association linked rabbits and twins, who were thought to ride a jack-rabbit as they searched for a mother (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:380). Twins were viewed as highly sacred by the Lakotas, and according to James Owen Dorsey (1894:482-483), they were believed to have a “superhuman origin” and strong spiritual powers. Like blacktail deer, rabbits carried qualities associated with pairing, mirrors, and reflections in water. Before birth, twins purportedly rode jackrabbits to the place where their prospective mother went for water (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:482).

Rodents

The Rodent Order, according to Ronald Turner (1974:63), is the largest order in the Black Hills both in reference to the number of its different species and in terms of the sheer size of the populations identified with these species.

THE PORCUPINE FAMILY

[EREThIONIDAE]

The Erethionidae family of rodents is represented by one species in the Black Hills, the porcupine.

Porcupine

[Erthizon dorsatum bruner]

Habitat & History

In reference to the porcupine, Tabeau (Abel 1939:82) remarked “The porcupine abounds on the banks of all the little wooded rivers; but this little animal, so delicious elsewhere, is not eatable here, so thin it is in every season.” This species remains very common today on the plains, in the Black Hills, and at Wind Cave National Park (Turner 1974:143, 144).

Tribal Taxonomy

The porcupine is known as pahin in Lakota (Beuchel 1970:425) and as heskovestse [thorny-one] in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:842; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:83).

Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

The porcupine was widely hunted by the tribal nations of the northern plains for its meat and quills (Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Lyford 1940:42). John Ewers (1938:59) asserts that capturing porcupines was “men’s work.” Later ethnographic descriptions, however, reveal that both men and women hunted porcupines in gender specific ways. Women and men twisted and tangled their fur by using sticks and killed them with clubs after they were dragged from their dens (Ewers 1938:59; Hassrick 1964:168), but men appear to have been the only ones who pursued them with bows and arrows (Ewers 1938:59; Lyford 1940:42).

As Standing Bear (1975:16-17) wrote, referring to his childhood in the nineteenth century: “In those days we used to eat porcupine. Every portion of the body was used.” The Lakotas and the Cheyennes made combs and hairbrushes from the tail of a porcupine (Densmore 1948:177; Grinnell 1972:2:211,255, 310; Standing Bear 1975:
16-17, 1978:34, 188; Walker 1982:52), and they used the animal’s hair to make head roaches (Standing Bear 1975:16-17, 1978:34). But their most important application was the use of their quills in embellishing a wide range of material objects. Among the Lakotas, these included: moccasins, cradleboard covers, warshirts, armlets, hair ornaments, buffalo robes, moccasins, saddle bags and blankets, navel amulets, pipe bags, pipestems, bladder cases, knife cases, and gauntlets (Wissler 1904:234-235, 242-245, 250-251, 1910:235, 238, 242, 244, 252, 260, 265; Ewers 1938:61; Lyford 1940:14, 21, 27, 29, 41-55; Standing Bear 1975:16-17, 1978:3). Among the Cheyennes, quills ornamented dresses, warshirts, hair wrappings, robes, baby cradles, moccasins, saddles, lodges, backrests, flutes, buckskin bags, and pipestems (Grinnell 1972:1:56, 60, 99, 147, 161, 168, 204-205, 207, 224, 243, 245, 346).

Dyed porcupine quills also decorated sacred objects used in ceremonies. Among the Lakotas, for example, Sun Dancers wear a feather wrapped with red dyed porcupine quills (Sword in Deloria 1929:391; Walker 1980:179), and invitation wands for the Hunka are made of eagle feathers decorated with dyed porcupine quills (Walker 1980:221). The preparation of quills for embroidery and wrapping are described in Carrie Lyford’s work (1940:41-55), but there are other descriptions as well (Ewers 1938:59-61; Hassrick 1964:191-193; Grinnell 1972:164, 166-167, 218-220).

Cheyenne women formed a quilling society, the Me e no’ist st, which included only the most prolific and talented quillers. The society was divided into grades reflecting the quillers’ levels of accomplishment and difficulty. George Grinnell (1972:1:159-169) describes this society and the prestige it accorded to its members in great detail. Among the Cheyennes, the origin of quillwork came from the same man who married a buffalo woman and raced against his in-laws in the famous story of the Great Race (Grinnell 1972:1:163-164, 2:385-391). The buffalo woman story came from the Suhtaio division of the tribe, and, in some renditions (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:19-24; Powell 1969:472-480), it is related to the the Buffalo Gap.

Quillworkers or members of the Lakota Double-Woman Society, previously discussed in reference to the mule or blacktail deer, also derived great prestige for their talents and accomplishments in quilling. These women held quilling displays and contests where they exhibited their creations and competed with each other on the skill, productivity, and artistic excellence of their work. They kept counts of their accomplishments on robes and on the dew cloth of the Red Council Lodge (Wissler 1910:92-94; Hassrick 1964:42-43, 272). According to Royal B. Hassrick (1964:191), “quilling was probably the highest attainment in the female arts” and a primary area of female artistic contribution as well.

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Although porcupines appear throughout the storytelling traditions of the Lakotas, little has been written about their spiritual significance. The only information found on the Lakotas is the association of the porcupine with Yanpa, the East Wind (Walker 1983:354, 404 n72), and its connection to the Sun (Brown 1992:102, Sundstrom, L. 2002:108). Like the tail feathers of an eagle, porcupine quills were identified with the Sun’s rays (Brown 1992). Similarly, this animal is featured in many Cheyenne stories, but little about its spiritual significance is recorded in ethnographic sources (Grinnell 1926).
THE CASTOR FAMILY

[CASTORIDAE]

Beaver

[Castor canadensis missouriensis]

Habitat & History

Although native to the Black Hills, the beaver’s presence declined considerably as a result of commercial fur-trapping in the area (Froiland 1978:143). Some of the first European and American trappers who arrived in the Black Hills at the turn-of-the-nineteenth century came in search of this animal, and many stream names in the area, notably French Creek and Beaver Creek, are evidence of their presence. The relative abundance of this fur-bearing animal in the Black Hills, however, was a subject of some debate in the early nineteenth century. Tabeau (Abel 1939:83-84), for one, was not very optimistic about the success of beaver trapping in the Hills when he wrote:

The Ricaras, to whom mice are mountains, say, of course, that in all the little rivers and on the land, which separates them from the Black Hills, the beaver is plentiful; but it is evident that, when asked to enter into details, they regard as an immense number dwellings which they meet with, scattered here and there, and that if they knew and wished to hunt there they would destroy in a year all those that exist in a circle of two hundred leagues (in Abel 1939:84).

Around the same period of time, Lewis and Clark were told by a trader named Jon Vallé, who wintered and spent considerable time in the area, that while there were few beaver on the Cheyenne River, many were to be found in the Black Hills (Moulton 1983-87:3:133). Whatever their supply, it is clear that a number of traders and their engages trapped in the Black Hills during the early half of the nineteenth century, and they did so along many of the waterways that flowed from the Hills. As late as the 1850s, these animals were trapped by European Americans on the streams of the Black Hills (Bettelyoun and Waggoner 1988:28-29). Even after the 1870s, beavers were still described as abundant along many of the streams that fed the Missouri River from the west, and during the same period, they were noted in the Black Hills by the members of several exploratory expeditions (Grinnell 1875:77; De Girardin 1936:62; Progulske 1974:122; Turner 1974:88). Indeed, Ferdinand Hayden (1862b:146) wrote: “The streams that issue from the Black hills are favorite resorts of them, and I have often known them to strip the streams of all the timber which skirted their borders.” At the dawn of the twentieth century, a new wave of European American commercial trappers led to the extreme decline of local beaver populations. Even local ranchers and their children trapped for extra cash in the early decades of the twentieth century (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:402, 419). In the 1930s, several streams in the region, including Cold Springs Creek at Wind Cave National Park, were restocked but with populations from outside locations (Turner 1974:88-89). By the 1950s, beaver had become so numerous that they were in danger of starvation, having denuded much of their riparian food base (Progulske 1974:124).

Also under debate is the issue of how much trapping was conducted by the tribal nations who lived in the region. There is no question that the Cheyennes and Lakotas traded beaver and other peltries, many of which were probably acquired in the Black Hills, but it is also clear that this was largely a supplementary activity. In the late eighteenth century, Perrin du Lac described the Cheyennes as expert beaver hunters who traded their furs to the Lakotas. However, in the same time period, Truteau claimed that the Cheyenne did not take any furs (Grinnell 1972:1:297-298). The same was probably true for the Lakotas who ventured west of the Missouri, although their eastern Dakota-speaking relatives were active beaver trappers (Albers 2001:763-764). Whatever the case, most of the tribal populations in this part of the plains do not appear to have
developed a specialized trapping pattern characteristic of some of the Ojibwes who moved onto the Plains in regions farther north.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The beaver is called *capa* or *cap*’ in Lakota (Buechel 1970:127) and *homa?e* or *hom-a?ne* in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:103; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:7).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

According to George Grinnell (1972:1:296), the Cheyenne did not make any serious effort to trap beaver until this animal became valued as a trade item after white contact. Typically, the Cheyennes used dogs to drive them out of their dams, after which they clubbed or shot them (Grinnell 1972: 1:296). Lakotas smoked the animals from their holes and then clubbed them to death (Hassrick 1964: 168). According to Standing Bear (1978: 34), they were a common prey for older boys.

The meat and fur of the beaver was highly prized by both tribes (Bordeaux 1929:126; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9; Grinnell 1972:1:296). As Standing Bear (1988:63) wrote: “The meat of the beaver is quite good, the tail being entirely of fat. When cooked, this tail tastes something like cheese, and we ate it with our lean meat like bread.” The Cheyennes used beaver skins for clothing and ornamentation (Grinnell 1972:1:296). The Lakotas did so as well: for example, members of the White Badge Society carried a wand decorated with beaver fur (Walker 1980:262). Just like otterskins, beaver skins were worn as a wrapping on a Lakota man’s braids (Curtis 1907-30:3:137). Curiously, Cheyenne women were prohibited from dressing or handling beaver skins, a rule that did not apply to otterskins (Grinnell 1972:2:104, 198). There appears to have been no prohibitions of this kind among the Lakotas for whom the handling of otterskins by menstruating women was taboo.

Standing Bear (1988:61-63) describes Lakota knowledge of the beaver in some detail:

An animal that we observed a good deal was the beaver. We noticed that wherever there were beaver and turtles, there was plenty of water, and that if the beaver left a stream, it would not be long before the stream went dry. Little animals like this told us many things, so we watched them. The dams that the beaver builds are great things. they are built so perfectly that they do not wash away, as do the white man’s dams, which sometimes go to pieces and do lots of damage. The beaver starts his dam by cutting good-sized timbers and placing them deep in the mud like piles. Then limbs of trees are laced in and out, showing that the beaver puts in an immense amount of work on a single dam. Cutting down large trees and dragging them to the water is a dangerous job, but never does a workman get killed at his labor. Whatever their system, it is a good one. Sometimes we discovered that a beaver colony had moved to another creek, but we never saw a beaver on land, nor did we ever catch a colony of these animals on the march moving their town site. That was something of a mystery to us; also the fact that as sure as the beaver moved, the stream that they left would go dry.

We admired the beaver, for he is very industrious. Just the same he likes to play. They like to splash water over each other with their tails. Then they build slides of earth and mud, and carry water up on them with their tails until the slope is smooth and shiny. When the game is going big, even the old ones join the young ones, and everybody has a good time. I have seen many wild animals fight, but I have never seen one beaver battle with another one, so I take it that they are inclined to be peaceful. The beaver ponds were always beautiful spots, fresh and green, and we were sure to see many other kinds of animals lingering about that liked the water and the trees.
Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Beavers were considered sacred by the Lakotas (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101), and they were believed to be guardians “of work, provision, and of domestic faithfulness” (Tyon in Walker 1980:121). They were also identified as messengers of the Thunders (Beckwith, M. 1930:12n412) and probably the West Wind. James Walker (1980:277) also refers to the existence of a Beaver Society, which would suggest an association of people who dreamed of this animal, but other than this reference, virtually nothing has been written about it in the literature.

There is some parallel evidence among the Cheyennes that in earlier times beaver may have been a source of spiritual power and a focus for some kind of ceremonial association, since certain individuals were known to have made beaver drums and some were able to make people sick by shooting beaver cuttings into their bodies (Grinnell 1972:2:145). Like the Lakotas, the Cheyennes considered the beaver to be highly industrious and intelligent, and they admired its ability to construct dams and build houses to live in (Grinnell 1972:2:104).

THE SCURID FAMILY
[SCIURIDAE]

In the Black Hills, the scurids include prairie dogs, yellow-bellied marmots, chipmunks, and a variety of squirrels. Of these animals, only the prairie dog and the squirrel appear to have carried much importance in the lives of the Lakotas and the Cheyennes.

Prairie Dog
[Cynomys ludovicianus ludovicianus]

Habitat & History

In 1803, Tabeau (in Abel 1939:82-83) indicated that there were “swarms” of this animal in the region in the early nineteenth century especially on the upland prairies east of the Black Hills, and during the 1850s, Ferdinand V. Hayden (1862b: 145) wrote about a prairie dog town north of the Cheyenne River near the Black Hills that covered an area of more than fifty square miles. This well-known inhabitant, and now popular tourist attraction, of the American West is found at many locations in the prairies, including at Wind Cave National Park. The earth thrown up by the prairie dogs around their towns favors the growth of certain forbs. The Lakotas recognized this fact and named one their more highly valued medicinal plants, the fetid marigold [Dysodia papposa], as pispiza ta’wote, “prairie dog food” (Buechel 1972:444).

Tribal Taxonomy

The black-tailed prairie dog is called pispiza in Lakota, which is the same name given to the ground squirrel (Buechel 1970:444). In Cheyenne, the animal is known as ononevoneske [taking off with teeth disappearing] (Petter 1913-15:847; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:84).

Modes of Procurement, Preparation, & Use

Prairie dogs were hunted by the Lakotas and typically shot with arrows (Hassrick 1964:168), although White Bull told Stanley Vestal (1934:7) that he snared the animals with a noose. Cheyenne women also hunted prairie dogs and considered their flesh good meat (Moore, J. 1974a:164). Iron Teeth (in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9) relayed the following:

I have caught lots of prairie dogs. they are wary and quick, so they are hard to catch. The best way is to hide beside a hole. If the hunter keeps very quiet and waits long enough the prairie dog finally will creep out from the hole. Then it may be grabbed and beaten to death.

William Bordeaux (1929:108, 113) indicates that the skins of prairie dogs were used
in the manufacture of medicine bags for keeping roots and herbs. Other than this application and their role as a supplementary food source, there is little information in the ethnographic literature about other practical uses for this animal.

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

According to Standing Bear (1988:158-159):

Prairie-dogs were known as ‘little farmers,’ for they cleared the ground about their dwelling places and soon after there began to grow a plant upon which they lived. Whether they had a system of planting or not we never found out, but it was noticeable that wherever these little animals took up their abode their food plants soon took the place of weeds. Neither did we ever see a prairie-dog ‘town’ in the process of changing location though it was done quite often. If these animals traveled overland they left no trails, though within their ‘towns’ the trails were numerous, so it was supposed that they dug tunnels through which they traveled in a body. Yet at that we were mystified when they moved their towns from one side of a stream to the other. The deserted towns of the prairie-dog seemed to be refertilized, no doubt on account of the air and water that got into the soil, for they soon were covered with grass that afforded excellent feed for our stock. These grassy places we traveled with care, for when the prairie-dogs moved out, the rattlesnakes moved in.

Standing Bear (1978:215) also notes that the clean soil found around their towns was used to heal wounds. William Powers (1982:13) explains that soils brought up from underneath the earth by prairie dogs and other burrowing animals contain the purifying properties of the underworld, and, as a result, these soils are considered especially efficacious for healing and religious activity. He also notes in another publication that animals who burrow in the earth are held sacred because they transverse the space between subterranean environments and the earth’s surface in a manner that mirrors the Lakotas’ own story of emergence from the underworld (Powers, W. 1986:113, 162).

Because of their burrowing habits, prairie dogs were considered especially wakan by the Lakotas (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear and Blunt Horn in Walker 1980:101). As one unidentified Lakota shaman put it, “Everything has a spirit. A prairie dog has a spirit. A prairie dog has two spirits: one the spirit like a tree and one the spirit like the breath of life, which is given by Wakan-skanskan” (Walker 1980:118). This power of movement, which the prairie dog shared with the deer and the grouse, prevented hunters from hitting them (Standing Bear 1988:57). Prairie dogs were closely associated with herbal medicine, and according to William Bordeaux (1929:108), the people who dreamed of this animal possessed secret medical knowledge on the use of certain plants.

The Cheyennes associated prairie dogs with corn because both emerge from under the earth on small mounds. Corn kernals and prairie dog teeth were equated because of their yellow color. This same coloration is also linked to bison calves (Anderson 1958; Moore, J. 1974a:164).

**Yellow bellied marmot**

*Marmota flaviventris dacota*

While the marmot is found throughout the Black Hills in rocky habitats, it is rare in comparison to many other rodent species (Turner 1974:68). It also appears to have been rare in the region in earlier times (Hayden 1862b:146). Native names for this animal have not been uncovered in the literatures on the Cheyennes or Lakotas. A closely related species, the ground hog or woodchuck, is called seavoneske [into-disappearing] in Cheyenne (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:122). Although no Lakota name was found for this animal, it is probably the same as the one for woodchucks in the Dakota dialect, hankasa (Riggs 1968:123). Woodchucks
were commonly hunted by Dakota women in regions east of the Missouri River (Landes 1968:191), but there is no evidence for this practice among the Lakotas.

Squirrels

[Spermophilus tridecemlineatus pallidus, etc.]

Habitat & History

Four species of squirrels are reported in the Black Hills, the thirteen-lined ground squirrel [Spermophilus tridecemlineatus pallidus], the fox squirrel [Sciurus niger rufiventris], the red squirrel, [Tamiasciurus hudsonicus dakotensis], and the northern flying squirrel [Glaucomys sabrinus bangsi]. Of these, the first two are the most common in the southern Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park (Turner 1974:71,76). The red squirrel and the grey flying squirrel may be seen on rare occasions in the south, but they frequent the northern reaches of the Hills (Turner 1974:77, 81). Hayden (1862b:144) reported that he had seen red squirrels in abundance in the eastern neighborhoods of the Black Hills especially among stands of oak trees.

Tribal Taxonomy

In Lakota, the stripped ground squirrel was called tasnaheca (Buechel 1970:483), the fox squirrel was known as pispiza (the same name given the prairie dog), (Buchel 1970 444), and the red squirrel was named zica or zicahota (Buechel 1970:658). The Cheyenne name for the squirrel is no?kee?e, no?ee?e, or no?keeho (Petter 1913-15:1005; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:107).

Modes of Procurement, Preparation, & Use

Like rabbits, squirrels were a popular prey in the hunting forays of young Lakota boys who killed them with bows and arrows (DeMallie 1984:158-159; Standing Bear 1988:15). They were a favorite food of older Lakota women who boiled the meat until it was so tender it did not have to be chewed and who also tanned their hides to make small robes to sit on (Hassrick 1964:168).

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Although squirrels are mentioned in Lakota storytelling traditions (Walker 1983:271, 371), no special symbolic or spiritual significance appears to have been attached to them in the sources we reviewed on the Lakotas. The same holds true for the Cheyennes.

Least Chipmunk

[Eustamias minimus pallidus]

The pallidus species is very common especially in the southern Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park, while the subspecies silvaticus is ubiquitous in the region (Turner 1974:63-64) and has been so since the 1870s (Progulske 1974:122). The Lakota call these chipmunks, hetkala (Buechel 1970:173), while the Cheyenne named them neske?esta or nestse?esta [perked ears] (Petter 1913-15:20). There are no reports in the literature on any use for them, nor are there any discussions of their spiritual significance. Among the Cheyennes, along with squirrels and mice, they are mentioned primarily in stories told to children (Grinnell 1972:1:149). Among the Lakotas, the same appears to be true. It is worthwhile mentioning, however, that they are one of the animals who stored their food in the cave in which Tokahe and his people sought shelter after coming to the earth’s surface (Walker 1983:371).
THE GEOMYID FAMILY

[GEOMYIDAE]

Pocket Gopher

[Thomomys talpides nebulosis]

Habitat & History

The northern pocket gopher is widespread and common throughout the Black Hills especially in open pastures, meadows, and parklands (Turner 1974:83). It was also abundant in the region during the nineteenth century (Hayden 1862b:146-147). This animal has long been considered a pest to European American farmers and ranchers because of their burrowing habits, and over the past century, there have been many different systematic attempts to eradicate them (Turner 1974:83). The pocket gopher is also not looked upon very favorably by the Lakotas and Cheyennes, who consider it a dangerous animal and a source of power.

Tribal Taxonomy

In Lakota, this animal is called itignila (Buechel 1970:240) and wahinheya [probably refers to the notion (see below) that it shoots people with its whiskers or a hairlike grass] (Buechel 1970:517). The word, wahin' heya, was also applied to a species of milkweed the Lakota called wahcahca hu bloka, which they used as a treatment to cure swollen glands caused by gophers. Wahin’ heya opi [literally gopher shot] is the name for scrofulous swellings (Buechel 1970:517). The Cheyennes call this gopher heszema (Petter 1913:15:519), and, like the Lakotas, they believe it causes scrofula, and as a result, they avoid camping in areas near gopher hills.

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Pocket gophers are considered wakan and feared because they are believed to shoot people with the tip of a certain grass, causing scrofulous lesions to appear on the neck (Dorsey, J. 1894:496; Bordeaux 1929:113; Standing Bear 1978:62). As Thomas Tyon told James Walker (1980: 169),

Men, women, boys, girls, and babies all get scrofula, which they believe is caused by gophers. For you know, where those gophers are, the earth is entirely pulverized. This is why people think about gophers as they do and why they so believe. Holy men doctor them and extract gophers’ whiskers from them Then they cure people. Some are not treated quickly so these develop scrofula of the throat, it is said. Hence no one goes near to where gophers burrow in the earth. They fear that perhaps the gopher will shoot them. Those who go to where gophers live hide their throats. They still believe in this custom.

Standing Bear (1988:62) also described the dangers of the gopher and noted:

The little pockets at the side of the gopher’s neck we called quivers, and in them the animal often carried pieces of dry grass an inch or so in length and sharply pointed at one end. These arrows the gopher shot at anyone coming near, and if the person chanced to be hit he was sure to become afflicted with wahinheyao which means ‘wounded by the gopher.’

Possibly related to this belief, the pocket gopher was also associated with warfare. The pulverized dirt found around gopher holes was used as a war medicine. Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:135 n25, 337, 340) reported that the famous Lakota medicine man Chips gave some of this dirt to Crazy Horse for protection in battle, and he also told about his own vision of a gopher that transformed itself into a herb used in war that was able to “destroy a nation” (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:135, 137). Cheyenne horse doctors, who sometimes were called upon to assist in battle and in horse races, reputedly used magical dirt from a gopher’s hole to cause an enemy or competitor’s horse to trip and fall (Grinnell 1972:1:140). The Cheyennes believe that the loose soil around the gopher’s hole is highly dangerous and capable of causing cancer and other diseases (Whiteman in Schwartz 1955:...
55). The idea that the dirt around gopher hills is powerful is connected to a wider belief applied to other animals who burrow in the ground, discussed briefly in relation to prairie dogs.

**MICE AND ASSOCIATES**

**[CRICETIDAE, HETEROMYIDAE, AND ZAPIDAE]**

**Habitat & History**

A wide variety of the smallest rodent species are found in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park, but only a few of them have been differentiated in the faunal taxonomies of the Lakotas and Cheyennes -- a fact that may reflect their general insignificance symbolically and as a source of food.

The Zapodidae family includes the Jumping Mouse, *Zapus hudsonius campestris*, which is common in the Black Hills in rich riparian habitats, especially in their northern reaches, but apparently absent from much of the southern Hills. In general, they are more abundant along waterways that cut across the grasslands east of the Black Hills (Turner 1974:120).

The Cricetids are represented in the Hills by a wide range of different species, but only one of these, the muskrat [*Ondatra zibethicus cinnamoninus*], was taken regularly as a source of food by local tribes. Although more typically associated with prairie drainages east of the Black Hills, it does occur in small numbers along many local streams (Turner 1974:118). Several species of voles (sometimes popularly referred to as moles) are reported in the Hills and at Wind Cave National Park (Turner 1974:105-118). The Prairie vole, *Microtus ochrogaster haydenii*, is especially common in the park with its characteristic runways (Turner 1974:112), but the meadow vole, *Microtus pennsylvanicus insperatus*, is present too (Turner 1974: 114-116). Also in the Cricetid family are a number of species of mice that frequent the Black Hills, including the white-footed mouse [*Peromyscus leucopus aridulus*] and the one most common at Wind Cave, the deer mouse [*Peromyscus maniculatus nebrascensis*] (Turner 1974:94-102). Finally, the bushy-tailed wood rat [*Neotoma cinerea oreolestes*] is a Cricetid species located in the Black Hills especially in their northern reaches (Turner 1974:103).

**Tribal Taxonomy**

In Lakota and Cheyenne nomenclatures, there appears to be no distinctions between these families and the Muridae whose species were introduced to the Hills from Europe. The Jumping mouse is called by the same Lakota name as the grasshopper, *psipsicala* [jumping] or *hitunpsicala* (jumping mouse) (Buechel 1970:446). The muskrat was known as *sinkpe* in Lakota and *seavonsceo* in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:729). The Cheyennes named the vole *estsema?e* (Petter 1915:69), while Lakotas called it *hitunkala sapa* [black mouse] or *pangi gnakapi* [falls off artichokes] (Buchel 1970:178). In the Dakota dialect, voles were known as *napeheyatahedan* [little hands, far back] (Williamson 1970:109). In Cheyenne, voles are given the same name as gophers, *ezemae* (Petter 1913-15:715). All varieties of mice were given the generic name *hitunkala* by the Lakotas (Buechel 1970:178) and *hohkeehe* or *hotseehe* by the Cheyennes (Petter 1913-15:723; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:70). The Lakotas call rats *hitunkanka* or *itungtanka* (Buechel 1978:178), and the Cheyenne know them as *no?ketse* (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:89).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, & Use**

Muskrat were widely hunted by the Lakotas (Denig in Ewers 1961:13; Hassrick 1964:168). The skins of the species were fastened to the lances of the *Sotka Tanka* (Wissler 1912:61). Little else is written about the animal or its uses among the Lakotas,
however, and nothing appears in the sources surveyed on the Cheyennes. Other related families of crenids and rodents do not appear to have been taken by either tribe as source of food. Meadow voles, however, are known for their habit of caching large quantities of wild beans in their dens. Cheyenne and Lakota women often looked for these dens to get their own supplies, and they were careful to leave a gift in return so as not to offend the voles (Gilmore 1919:96; Ewers 1961:11; Hassrick 1964:179; Grinnell 1972:1:254; Standing Bear 1978:57). Indeed, there is a well-known story among the Lakotas, often told to children, about a woman who failed to gift these voles (Gilmore 1925:183-184). Only one manufacturing use has been reported, in which mice ribs were reported being taken to make fishing hooks (Bordeaux 1929:130).

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Like prairie dogs and gophers, the earth around the burrows of voles and mice was revered because, as William Powers (1986:160) puts it, “the dirt brought to the surface of the earth by moles is regarded as sacred when used in curing ceremonies because it is untainted by humans and those who tread the earth’s surface.” Among the Lakotas, mice were located in the class of diggers and traveled together with the gophers, prairie dogs, and badgers to the great gathering of animals as told in one segment of their genesis story (Walker 1983:269-272, 358-362). Along with gophers, they were believed to eat away at the moon each month (Walker 1980:126). According to Royal B. Hassrick (1964:276), children were cured of bedwetting by threatening to feed them mice (Hassrick 1964:276). Mice could also be a source of spiritual assistance as told in a story of Julia Brave Eagle, who prayed to and received aid from the Ithunkala Oyate, the Mice Nation (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:117-118). No cultural information was uncovered on mice in the literature that was reviewed on the Cheyennes. Although some of the smallest rodents appear as background figures in Lakota and Cheyenne stories, many of the ones in which they appear are directed at children (Gilmore 1925:183-184; Hassrick 1964:139-140; Grinnell 1972:1:149; Deloria 1932:18-20).

Bats

[Chiroptera]

There are ten different species of bats in the Black Hills from the family Vesperitilionidae, and many of these are located at Wind Cave National Park. As Turner (1974:43) writes, the region holds many favorable locations for bats to retreat including ledges and caves. Notwithstanding the existence of numerous species, only one tribal name was found for them, and that is the Lakota word, hupa’kiglake (Buechel 1970:196). This word could mean “wing” [hupa] “that stands apart” [glake], but it could also refer to their behavior of returning to a roosting site as in the Lakota word that means “return home” (kiglake). Buechel (1970:196) suggests that the name refers to the part of a bird that is used as a wotawe or protective amulet. The bat was certainly linked in Lakota taxonomy with other animals who fly and not with mammals and other four-legged creatures. In particular, it was viewed as a “helper” of the West Wind and the Thunders (Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:125; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:111). Like other birds who are linked to these two spiritual forces, bats were associated with war and the warriors, who commonly wore them as wotawe when they entered battle. In Cheyenne, the bat was called mosiskaneenona [the brown leather winged] (Petter 1913:93). George Grinnell (1972:1:120) reports that Cheyenne warriors sometimes tied the skins of bats in their hair when going to war to avoid detection and to ensure their safe travel at night. In battle, when an enemy shot at a warrior wearing a bat, he was not supposed to be shooting at the warrior in actuality but rather at the spiritual presence embodied in the amulet of the bat.
**Insectivores**  
*Insectivora*

The insectivore order is represented by the shrew family, *Soricidae*. Although shrews are found at Wind Cave National Park, throughout the Black Hills and the neighboring grasslands, they had little if any significance to the Lakotas and Cheyennes. There are no references to them in any of the sources studied for this report other than the name *wakiges’a* found in the closely related Dakota dialect of the Sioux language (Williamson 1970: 204).

**II. Birds**

More than two hundred species of birds have been identified in the Black Hills, and of these, 139 are reported as common in the region, appearing as permanent year-round residents or regular seasonal inhabitants (Froiland 1978:107). Eighty-seven species are listed as occasional in the reportings of experienced observers. Although the vast majority are western species, eastern and northern varieties are found here as well. As with plants, this is an area of hybridization for a number of species from different parts of the continent. The Hills are the western and eastern limits for a number of birds and also outlier zones for some boreal species that nest in the region (Ibid:106-107).

Many of the birds identified with the Hills have been sighted at Wind Cave National Park, but most of them are uncommon or rare in their appearance. Only forty-one species, or approximately twenty percent of the total number, are commonly sighted in the park (Pisarowicz 2001b). Here, again, unless otherwise indicated, all future references to bird populations in the park are based on information drawn from the park’s own website. More than half of the birds found in the park are reported to have names in Lakota and Cheyenne ornithological nomenclatures, and nearly ninety percent of the common birds are so recorded. Some of the others may be represented by tribal names that have not been linked in a definitive way with any species identified in scientific nomenclatures. Many more may not carry any name at all. In reference to the Cheyennes, John Moore (1986) writes that several species of small birds went unnamed because they carried no functional use or symbolic meaning.

**BIRDS OF PREY**

**Raptors**  
*Falconiformes*

**EAGLES AND HAWKS**  
*Accipitridae*

**Golden Eagle**  
*Aquila chrysaetos*

**Bald Eagle**  
*Haliacetus leucocephalus*

Of the raptors, the eagle was clearly the most significant bird to the Lakotas. It ranked as the “chief” of the “wingeds” because it “flies higher than all other birds” and “moves through the skies in the sacred form of a circle” (Black Elk quoted in Brown 1992:42). According to Luther Standing Bear (1988:78), eagles symbolized “the greatest power.” Eagles ranked high among the birds in Cheyenne traditions too (Moore, J. 1986:182).

**Habitat and History**

Of the two species of eagles, the golden eagle is the most prevalent in the Black Hills. It is widespread throughout the region, occurring most frequently in the neighborhood of Wind Cave National Park and Custer State Park near rocky cliffs and over open prairies. It remains in the Hills over the entire year. In the summer, it is found most often at high elevations, but in fall and winter, it seeks lower elevations to feed on...
rabbits, prairie dogs, and gophers (Froiland 1978:109-110, 121; Melius 1995:31). Bald Eagles, on the other hand, are uncommon in the Hills. They stay in the Black Hills over the winter months near open waters where they are drawn to the fish and local waterfowl. They are especially prevalent in the bottoms of local river valleys with cottonwood groves (Froiland 1978:134; Melius 1995:31).

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The Lakotas call the golden eagle *wanbli gleska* and the bald eagle *anukasan* (Buechel 1970:82, 540), while the Cheyennes refer to them respectively as *meheonevecess* and *to?too?he* (*netse* was their generic name) (Petters 1915:35; Moore, J. 1986:182). As with bison, the Lakotas have many different names for eagles that not only separate them by species but also by their age and coloring, such as *huya* [mature golden eagle] and *anukiyan* [immature golden eagle or cross-breed] (Buechel 1970:82, 196; Powers, W.1986:148-149;St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:111). The Cheyennes have a complex naming system for eagles as well (Moore, J. 1986:183-185; Petter 1913-15:420). The golden eagle is referred to by seven different names: *moeoniz* [war eagle] indicates the juvenile stage and *enskiniz* [striped eagle] designates the immature phase, while *niz* [ordinary eagle], *heoveniz* [yellow eagle], *totoniz* [spotted eagle], and *maeniz* [red eagle] describe varieties of golden eagles in their mature stage (Moore, J. 1986:183). Another name, *Ma?heonevecess* [bird father], is also applied to the golden eagle.

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

Of all the species of birds found in the area, eagles are the ones most consistently associated with the Black Hills in tribal cultural traditions. Historically, this area was a prime location to trap eagles. The Mandans and Hidatsas considered the Hills one of their favorite spots for eagle trapping (Bowers 1963:209-210). John Stands in Timber (and Liberty1967:51-52) and Father Peter Powell (1969:415,427) reported that areas near Bear Butte were favored by the Cheyennes for this purpose, while Iron Shell (in Hassrick 1964:171-172) mentions the Hills as a general location for Lakota eagle trapping but does not cite specific sites for the activity. Two locations are referenced in the literature: the Coloff Winter Count (Powers 1963) describes the region of Bald Mountain as a place for eagle trapping, and Samuel Hinman (1875:93) noted the presence of numerous “pits” beyond the White River on the southeastern edge of the Hills.

No matter where Cheyenne eagle trapping took place, it was considered a sacred endeavor that was based on the teachings of their culture hero, Sweet Medicine (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:38). Among the Cheyennes, only certain spiritually gifted people were allowed to catch eagles (Grinnell 1972:1:299). Eagle trapping was typically practiced in the spring when the eagles first appeared and then in the fall when the eagles began to head south. Older men, who no longer went to war, were the ones who trapped eagles. These men were required to keep themselves ritually pure prior to trapping: they had to remain out of contact with other people, sleep alone, touch no one, and purify themselves in sweat lodges before pursuing an eagle (Ibid:1:299-300). Traditionally, an eagle catcher dug a pit large enough to sit down in and covered it with sticks and grass. He baited his trap with a wolf skin and a bit of rabbit, antelope, or deer meat (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1969:51-52; Grinnell 1972:1:301). Before sunrise, he entered the pit and awaited the arrival of an eagle. When the bird landed, he grabbed its feet and strangled it (Grinnell 1972:1:302). After the eagles were taken, the trapper conducted further acts of propitiation (Ibid:1:302-303). According to Grinnell (Ibid:1:300), eagles were the only birds which had a ceremony attached to their hunting. The Cheyenne also took eagle feathers from nests and from fledglings that they captured and raised in captivity (Ibid: 2:107). In later years, the Cheyenne built

Eagle feathers are associated with a complex language that symbolizes the valorous accomplishments of their wearers especially in warfare (Brown 1992:43). Luther Standing Bear (1975:85-88; 1988:84-88), James Walker (1980:232, 263, 270-272, 273, 274, 275-276, 277, 278, 280, 281, 1982:103-105), and Royal B. Hassrick (1964:90) describe in some detail how, historically, the number of eagle feathers and their positioning on the head marked different kinds of honors among the Lakotas. Eagle feathers stood for the killing of an enemy in battle, and therefore, they were worn primarily by men who achieved distinction in battle (Curtis 1907-30:3:23, 30; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:389-390). Only men with an exceptional record of war deeds were allowed to wear a warbonnet made with these feathers (Walker 1982:103). Luther Standing Bear (1988:89), however, claimed that anyone who was brave enough to capture eagles could make a headdress and wear it. Lakota Sun Dancers also wore eagle feathers and plumes (Walker 1982:98).

Among the Lakotas, only certain women are permitted to carry or wear eagle feathers. These include women whose kinsmen died in war. In fact, there was once a special society of Lakota women whose male relatives were lost in battle. In addition to the plume of an eagle, which these women wore upright at the back of their head as a badge of their membership in the society, they also wore the feathers their deceased kinsmen were entitled to wear (Walker 1982:63,106). Women for whom a Pte San Lowanpi ceremony was conducted were also allowed to wear eagle plumes in their hair (Standing Bear 1988:88).

The Lakotas use eagle feathers and plumes for a wide variety of other purposes as well. Eagle feathers are attached to war shields, pipes, lances, and staffs (Wissler 1912:15, 67-72; Blish 1934:183; Walker 1982:95; Standing Bear 1988:87-88). The wing feathers of eagles are still used in fans to whip the flames of ritual fires and to smudge sage, cedar, and other incenses during ceremonies (Bordeaux 1929:157; Standing Bear 1988:90; Brown 1992:43). Historically, the small feathers were used in making arrows (Densmore 1918:438-439), an application also practiced by the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:1:306). Today, as in the past, eagle plumes are attached to ceremonial equipment used in the Wiyanyan wacipi, the Hunka, and the Pte San Lowanpi (Curtis 1907-30:3:74, 75, 78, 81, 82, 87, 94, 95; Densmore 1918:71, 72, 104, 125-126; Sword in Deloria 1929:398; Walker 1980:187, 190, 191, 202, 213, 217-218, 230-231, 234, 244, 245, 251-252). In making buffalo medicine, an eagle feather is symbolically equated with the bison (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:240-241). In the past, eagle feathers were also tied to the hoops carried by elk dreamers in their performances (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:242-243), and they were attached to Lakota horses to enhance their speed (Bordeaux 1929:113). The body of an outstretched eagle was placed on top of a bear skin when bear medicines were made (Ibid:179). Finally, eagle down was placed opposite the entrance of a tipi before a child was born and also when a boy reached manhood (Dorsey, J.1894:482). The down was used in other sacred contexts too (Bordeaux 1929:179).

The Cheyennes also place a high value on eagle feathers; the most prized feathers are those of the golden eagle (Grinnell 1972:2:107). Historically, they traded them to other tribes (Ibid:1:299). The straight quills from the tail were especially valued in adornment and commonly worn by older men who tied them to their hair at the base of the scalp lock (Ibid:1:222, 299). In the past, according to John Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:52-53), eagle feathers
were the insignia of the chiefs, and they were worn only by leaders and noted warriors. By the mid-twentieth century, however, everyone, even women, took to wearing them for dances and parades. War bonnets were gifted at marriage (Grinnell 1972:1:138, 2:27), consecrated and carried (or worn) into battle (Ibid:2:10, 121), and displayed at the funeral rites of a warrior (Ibid:2:161). The Cheyennes still use eagle feathers and plumes in a wide variety of different contexts during their Sun Dance (Ibid:2:215, 232, 233, 234, 243-244, 262, 263, 265, 267, 268). In preparing the plumes for the Sun Dancers’ whistles, coups are counted over them (Ibid:2:232-233). When embellishing the pins that surround the altar, they are said to stand as a symbol of the thunderbird (Ibid:2:263). Each Sun Dancer also wears a yellow painted eagle feather, which stands for the breath of life (Powell 1969: 2:796, 806, 833, 834, 844).

Eagles are considered highly sacred or wakan among the Lakotas (Sand in Walker 1980:102). In some texts, the golden eagle is described as the “epitome of the powers of the north” (Buechel 1970:540) and the messenger of its wind, Waziyata (Curtis 1907-30:3:77), but in others, this bird is described as an akicitca or soldier of the West Wind and the Wakinyan or Thunders (Sand in Walker 1980:103). Thomas Tyon told James Walker (1980:122) that eagles presided over councils, hunters, war parties, and battles. The eagle was also represented as the akicitca of the sun, and the sun’s tonwan (essence) is carried in the eagle’s tail quills (Walker 1980:230-231, 232; Brown 1992: 43). According to Francis Densmore (1918:111-112), the eagle was mentioned in the prayers of the Sun Dance leader before the center tree was felled because it is the “boldest of birds.” In the Hunka ceremony, the officiate equates the eagle with the buffalo and tells how it stands for virtue and integrity (Walker 1980:234). Similarly, in the puberty ceremony for a young girl, the use of an eagle plume symbolizes “constancy and virtue” (Walker 1980:217-218). Mark St. Pierre and Tilda Long Soldier (1995:111) write that eagles serve as important spiritual messengers because “they can fly into the pure, rarefied air where the sacred can communicate with them away from the contaminating influences of earth.” Their feathers and plumes represent “the breath of the living being” (Brown 1992:43) and highly potent guardians and protectors against danger as revealed in many episodes of the Falling Star story cycle told by Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:397-398, 400, 407, 408-409).

The Cheyennes also believe that eagles possess great power and that they are the “strongest bird that flies” (Grinnell 1972:2: 107-108). Father Peter Powell (2002a:69) claims that the golden eagle is the holiest of the Northern Cheyennes’ birds. One group of dancers in the Northern Cheyennes’ Sun Dance represents the bald eagle, and they...
are painted with designs signifying lightning (Powell 1969:1:79). Eagles are generally associated with the second highest level of the Southern Cheyenne cosmos, the Seto-voom, the near sky space (Moore, J. 1984: 298), but there are some indications that they may have been included among the birds of the highest blue sky space too, the Otatavoom (Moore, J. 1986:182; Schlesier 1987:8).

The Cheyennes strongly associate eagles with protective powers relating to war (Grinnell 1972:2:108; Moore, J. 1986a:184-186). Only some individuals were able to make eagle medicine for protective purposes, however (Grinnell 1972:1:299). John Stands in Timber (and Liberty 1969:52) wrote: “They say an eagle can take in nearly the whole world with his eyes, and see it as clearly as a man looks at the ground by his feet.” This might have been why only leaders and warriors among the Cheyennes were able to don their feathers (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1969:52).

Encounters with eagles are the subject of many Lakota visionary stories, and some of these take place in the Black Hills (Hassrick 1964:232-233; Bordeaux in Kadleecck and Kadleeck 1981:90-91; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:115, 117-118, 121, 136, 140-142, 216, 218, 228-229, 261, 263, 265; Black Elk, W. and Lyon 1990:120-137; Lewis, T. 1990:93-94; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:30-31, 142-143, 147). Eagles also appeared in many of Nicholas Black Elk’s visions (in DeMallie 1984). Among the Lakotas, some eagle dreamers became healers, practicing a special ritual that was similar in many respects to a Yuwipi ceremony (Bordeaux 1929:109; Lewis, T. 1990: 93-104). Eagles were among the birds that helped Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:235) find his special medicinal herb and practice healing. They are also among the spiritual figures appealed to in healing songs, including those sung at Yuwipi ceremonies (Densmore 1918:193-194; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:156).

Hawks

[Buteo, Accipiter, spp.]

Habitat and History

Besides eagles, many other raptor species are resident in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park. Some of these species are rare or uncommon migrants, including the osprey [Pandion halisetus] and the marsh hawk a.k.a. Northern Harrier [Circus cyaneus], the rough-legged hawk [Buteo lagopus], and the ferruginous hawk [Buteo regalis] (Froiland 1978:132, 133, 134; Melius 1995:33, 35). Others are permanent residents but not often sighted: these include northern goshawks [Accipter gentilis], and Cooper’s hawks (also known as chicken hawks) [Accipter cooperi] (Froiland 1978: 121, 125; Melius 1995:33). The red-tailed hawk [Buteo jamaicensis], the most frequently sighted hawk in the Hills, is a common summer resident of Wind Cave National Park.

Tribal Taxonomy

There are many different names for hawks in the Cheyenne language. John Moore (1986:185-186) claims that this diversity speaks to their importance in Cheyenne naming practices, and it also reflects the sexual dimorphism and changing color phases of these birds of prey. The Cheyennes include most hawks within their class of “great” birds, which is associated with predatory behavior, war, and certain kinds of healing (Moore, J. 1986:184). Some Cheyenne names for hawks include moehenoxe for the northern harrier, hoestom for red-tailed and ferruginous hawks, and tota-menaeno for northern goshawks (Moore, J. 1986:183).

In Lakota, there are two generic names for hawks cetan and canska. Cetan is specifically applied to the chicken hawk or Cooper’s hawk, while cetan gleglega [spotted hawk] refers to the sharp-shinned hawk. Cetan sala [red like hawk] designates the
red-shouldered hawk (Buechel 1970:130, 531). Also included in the cetan taxon are two non-hawk species, the shrike, cetan watapela, and the evening grosbeak, cetan watapela zi (Buechel 1970:130). In the Lakota taxon canska, the rough-legged hawk, is the representative bird of the class. Other species included in this group are the red-tailed hawk, known as canska’unpigi, and the ospry, canska hoyazela [fish eater hawk]. There are three other species in this taxon: canska gi [brown or grey hawk], canska sapila [little black hawk], and canska’wanblila [little eagle hawk], which have not been matched with species names in scientific taxonomies (Ibid: 123). Finally, the northern harrier is called ptegopec (Buechel 1970: 448).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

The ethnographic literature is largely silent when it comes to revealing how hawks were captured by the Lakotas and the Cheyennes. It does, however, describe the uses to which hawk feathers were put.

While the Lakotas used hawk feathers in their hunting arrows (Densmore 1918:438-439; Standing Bear 1988:19; Brown 1992: 18), the Cheyennes put them on their ceremonial arrows. They were not attached to hunting and war arrows because the Cheyennes believed they were easily damaged by blood (Grinnell 1972:1:181). Hawk feathers decorated the lances of the Lakota Brave Hearts (Wissler 1912:72), and they adorned the war regalia and paraphernalia of other military societies too.

Among the Lakotas, hawk feathers were symbolically important in many ceremonial contexts. The wearing of hawk feathers, however, was restricted to persons with spiritual powers and entitled to conduct sacred performances (Walker 1980:223). The walowan, the one who sings over the initiates, in the Hunka ceremony wore a buffalo horn headdress adorned with hawk feathers and weasel skins, and the wicasa wakan who conducted the Pte San Lowanpi (The White Buffalo Calf Ceremony) wore a skin cap of hawk feathers and weasel skins (Walker 1980:246).

The Cheyennes adorned the lances they used to count coup with hawk feathers, and they hung them from the bows of the Contraries (Grinnell 1972:1:137,2:82,105). Hawk claws were used in war charms to inspire daring and courage (Ibid:2:124). Cheyenne healers fan their patients with hawk wings to cool them when they are treated, and they attach their feathers to the sage-wreath worn by the swift hawk dancer in the Sun Dance (Powell 1969:2:843). Hawk down is tied to the ceremonial request sticks used in the Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:131, 251).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

The Lakota believe that hawks bring luck, and that they rule over endurance and swiftness (Dorsey, J. 1984:500; Black Elk in Niehardt 1959:133-134; Tyon in Walker 1980: 122). They are considered the helpers, tonweyapi, of Wiyohpeyata or Yata (the West Wind), who dwells with the thunders on Harney Peak (Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:125; 1983:82). Although all hawks are respected because they are considered among the surest birds of prey (Densmore 1918:139), the northern goshawk was considered especially sacred (Sword in Walker 1980:102). As Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:317) remarked: “The life of an Indian is just like the wings of the air. That is why you notice the hawk knows how to get its prey. The Indian is like that. The hawk swoops down on its prey, so does the Indian.” At the Sun Dance, tobacco is placed in the pipe as an offering to the hawk “who makes life difficult for other winged peoples” (Black Elk in Brown 1971:78). Standing Bear (1988:89) also observed that hawks were “cruel” and feared by other birds. Hawks were among the birds associated with storms and thunder in the ceremonies of the Sacred Bow Society (Blish 1934:186).
Hawks are also prevalent figures in Lakota visions (Hassrick 1964:234; DeMallie 1984:228-229) that confer war power. They have important connections to Lakota healers and healing (Dorsey, J. 1894: 495; Bordeaux 1929:109), and they appear in many sacred Lakota stories including those about Falling Star, Stone Boy, and the Four Winds (DeMallie 1984:397, 400, 405, 409; Walker 1983:53, 82, 96, 378-379).

Among the Cheyennes, hawks are also associated with war powers (Grinnell 1972:2:105). Cheyenne warriors, who received war powers from hawks, sometimes tied a hawk skin to their hair in battle, and Contrary warriors made their dance whistles from the wing bones of a hawk (Stands in Timber 1967:90; Grinnell 1972:2:120; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:44). The Lakota war leader Crazy Horse was reported to have done this (Standing Bear 1988:88-89).

FALCONS
*[FALCONIDAE]*

Of the species in the falcon family, prairie falcons [*Falco mexicanus*], also known as swifthawks, are permanent residents in the Black Hills but not often sighted. The most frequently sighted member of the falcon family, the American Kestral or sparrow hawk [*Falco sparverius*], is a common summer resident of the Hills and Wind Cave National Park (Froiland 1978:109, 125; Melius 1995:35).

In Cheyenne, *siskeeno* is the generic name for falcons, while *aenohes* is the ascription for the American kestral or sparrow hawk (Moore, J. 1986:183). In the Lakota language, falcons are merged taxonomically with hawks: the American kestral is called *cetan tanka* (Buechel 1970:130). The names for other falcon species have not been identified by name in the sources we studied, even though the Lakotas often associated the prairie falcon with courage in battle (Hassrick 1964:200). Historically, among the Cheyennes, sparrow hawks, were linked with the thunders, bestowed powers of swiftness and agility, while other falcons conferred powers that kept warriors from being hit in battle (Grinnell 1972:2:108; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:44). The stuffed skins of prairie falcons were often worn by Cheyenne Contrary warriors, and their feathers adorned the lances of these warriors (Powell 2002a:69). The prairie falcon is one of the birds that plays an important role in the Great Race of the animals that took place on the Race Track, which crosses sections of Wind Cave National Park. It is also one of the birds represented symbolically in the Cheyennes’ Sun Dance (Powell 1969:1:79).

VULTURES
*[CARTHARTIDAE]*

Habitat and History

The turkey vulture [*Cathartes aura*] is a common sight in the Black Hills, appearing over the entire area from early spring through mid-autumn. It ranges most commonly in open areas at low elevations and nests on steep rocky slopes and cliffs (Froiland 1978:108; Melius 1995:31). It is not a frequent summer visitor to the area around Wind Cave National Park, however.

Tribal Taxonomy

The Lakotas call the vulture *heca* [no translation given] (Buechel 1970:169), while the Cheyenne know it as *moxtavovetas* [black whirlwind] or *oo?he* [bare of feathers] (Moore, J. 1986:189).

Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

Vulture feathers were once considered the best for fletching arrows because blood does not diminish their effectiveness (Densmore 1918:438-439; Grinnell 1972: 1:181; Brown 1992:18). Buzzard feathers, hung vertically, were worn by Lakota men as a sign for counting the fourth coup in battle (Hassrick 1964:90).
Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

The Lakotas believe the arrival of vultures means the end of winter. According to Lame Deer (Fire and Erdoes 1972:167), these birds can forecast the weather. Although the vulture is present in one of the stories from the Falling Star cycle and in an Inktomi tale (Beckwith, M. 1930: 431; DeMallie 1984: 397), it is not an especially significant figure in Lakota cosmology.

This stands in contrast to the Cheyennes who consider it a member of their most “holy” class of birds. Along with dragonflies and nighthawks, it moves in the fashion of a whirlwind, as evidenced by the funnel-shaped configurations it makes over cliff faces when it seeks thermals or circles carrion (Moore, J. 1986:189). The vulture is connected with death, twilight, and the west (Moore, J. 1986:182). Vultures are acknowledged symbolically in the Sun Dance as one of the “holy” birds. In the context of healing personal illnesses, however, they are identified with the class of “great birds” whose feathers are used to make fans for curing the sick (Moore, J. 1986:189). One incident where a vulture brought a person back to life was related by Grinnell (1972:2:153). Cheyennes once considered it a great honor to have eagles and vultures devour the corpses of their warriors left on the prairies (Grinnell 1972:2:163).

Owls
[Strigiformes]

Habitat and History

Although not typically identified as birds of prey, owls are predatory animals. Six different species of owls are reported as rarely seen residents of Wind Cave National Park, and all, except one, are present at the park year round.

Tribal Taxonomy

The generic name for owl in the Lakota language is hinhan (Buechel 1970:176), but there are many species specific names that are listed below. In Cheyenne culture, owls are called mestaa?e (Petters 1913-15:77). They are not considered natural birds. Instead, they are believed to be mista or night spooks, and in some cases, the ghosts of known persons (Moore, J. 1986:186). According to George Bird Grinnell (1972: 2:100), Cheyennes who hear an owl hoot are sometimes able to tell whose ghost is speaking.

Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

We found no information in the ethnographic literature on how owls were taken for their feathers. Owl feathers were important to both the Lakotas and Cheyennes, and they were used mostly in ceremonial contexts associated with healing and war.

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

The Lakota consider owls to be the helpers and messengers of the unktehi, water spirits, but they are also believed to be the aids of Wiyhiyanpa, the East Wind, because, like this wind, they are lazy and prefer to sleep during the day. The white owl, however, is the assistant of the north wind, Waziya (Beckwith, M. 1930:412n2; Walker 1980: 118, Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:125, 1983: 340, 344-345). The owl’s hoot forewarns of death and discontent, and as a result, it is sometimes feared (Red Rabbit 1980: 125; Walker 1983:340, 344; Brown 1992: 44). Owls are much respected by the Lakotas for their wisdom, courage, and gentleness, all of which are considered important character traits of a wicasa wakan or medicine man (Standing Bear 1988:72). Healers usually receive their powers from the owl in visions and use them in doctoring and conducting Yuwipi ceremonies (Brown 1992:44, 61; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:30, 31, 109,
One Lakota told Frances Densmore (1992, 181):

The owl moves at night when men are asleep. The medicine-man gets his power through dreams at night and believes that his dream is clear, like the owl’s sight. So he promises that he will never harm an owl. If he did so, his power would leave him. For this reason some medicine-men wear owl feathers. The medicine-man also regards the owl as having very soft, gentle ways, and when he begins to treat the sick persons he is supposed to treat them very gently. So in night wisdom and in the manner of carrying itself the owl is greatly respected by the medicine men of the tribe.

Two healing songs with owl motifs were also recorded by Francis Densmore (1918: 180, 186-187), including ones that Brave Buffalo and Siyaka received in visions. Among the Cheyennes, the owl was also considered an important medicine helper, and a number of stories mention their healing powers and their connections to lightning (Grinnell 1972:1:125; 2:109, 156).

In Lakota culture, owls were also associated with war. The Owl Society, Miwitani (also called the Hinhanshun Wapaha [Owl-feather Headdress], was a warrior association that did not perform as other akicita societies (Curtis 1907-30:3:139; Wissler 1912:41-42); its members were known to have keen eyesight like the owl and risked their lives to gather information on the whereabouts of the enemy, often traveling at night to obtain it (Walker 1980: 273; Standing Bear 1988: 72). The leader of the Miwitani wore a cap of owl feathers and a scarf called Wanzciicaske, which was draped around his neck and hung down the back (Dorsey, J. 1894:463; Standing Bear 1988: 72). The members of this society also wore hats with owl feathers, they tied owl feathers to their whistles, and they wore an owl leg or foot on their robes for every wife they abandoned (Wissler 1912:47). Thunder Bear told James Walker (1980:273) about the war insignia of the members of this society, including the practice of painting dark rings around the eyes to indicate a willingness to perform deeds in the night. Other Lakota warrior societies used owl feathers too. The Wic’-iska (White Marked Society) whip bearers wore bunches of split owl feathers on their heads (Wissler 1912: 35), and the Iku sapa [Black Chins] made headdresses that contained owl feathers (Wissler 1912: 28). The lances of the Blo-tanka, the Sotka Tanka and the Cante Tinza were decorated with owl feathers as well (Wissler 1912:58, 61, 72).

The Cheyennes also linked owls with warfare (Grinnell 1972:2:105). Contrary Warriors carried bows to which owl feathers were attached, and they wore stuffed screech owls on top of their head. Their leaders wore caps with owl feathers (Dorsey, G. 1905:25; Grinnell 1972:2:89). When owl feathers were tied to a shield or worn on the head and arms, the owner received the owl’s power to see and move silently in the dark undetected (Grinnell 1972:1:188, 2:109).

The Lakotas and Cheyennes had more specific ideas about particular species of owls. The grey screech owl [Otus asio], known alternatively as osniko, popotka, or unngagicala in Lakota (Buechel 1970:445, 606) and megascop in Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972: 2:100), was able to foretell the coming of cold weather. As James Dorsey (1894: 500) wrote of the Lakotas: “When the night is very cold this owl cries out, so the Teton say, just as if a person’s teeth chattered. When its cry is heard, all the people wrap themselves in their thickest robes and put plenty of wood on the fires.” Lakota women imitate this owl in a certain dance, called the popotka, where they pagla hotonpi or wail “lilililili.” (Buechel 1970: 445).

The Northern saw-whet owl [Aegolius acadicus], the smallest of the owls in the Black Hills, is called pagla or cehupa gliagla in Lakota, but it also goes by the names unngagicala and popotka, a name used for the grey screech owl too (Buechel 1970: 423). When this owl arrives in the Hills in the spring, it is commonly heard but rarely
The Lakotas say that the evening call of this owl is the first to be heard in the spring and thus it is a sign of seasonal change (Buechel 1970). This owl is also associated with spiritual figures known as the “Little People” and specifically with stories that surround Castle Rock and Harney Peak in the Black Hills (Howard, J. 1955).

The short-eared owl [Asio flammeus] is one of the more common owls in the open habitats of the Black Hills and surrounding plains. It is a permanent but rare resident at Wind Cave National Park (Melius 1995:39). It goes by the name sesemimista [snake-eating owl] in Cheyenne, and it as the only owl in their three classes of birds (Moore, J. 1986:183, 186). Because this owl is diurnal and eats rattlesnakes, which are an object of interest for the Cheyennes, it holds a special position in their cosmology different from the other owls, which are not considered birds but spooks (Moore, J. 1986: 186). The feathers of this owl were worn by Cheyenne Contraries to enhance their ability to move quietly and strike quickly (Powell 2002a: 69). The Lakotas call this owl, hinhangi, but no special cultural information has been reported for it (Buechel 1970:76).

The burrowing owl [Athene Cunicularia] is commonly found around prairie dog towns where it makes its nest sites in burrows (Melius 1995:37). Although this owl appears at Wind Cave National Park, it is an uncommon summer visitor. The Lakota call it hinhan makotila [little earth owl] and know of its connection to prairie dogs (Buechel 1970:176). No other cultural knowledge about it was uncovered. Nor was any cultural information specific to the Lakotas found on the great horned owl [Bubo virginianus], hinhan sa, hinhan hetonia, or hinhan tanka (Ibid:176). The only reference to this owl in the Cheyenne literature indicates that it had protective powers (Grinnell 1972:2:109).

**WATERBIRDS AND SHOREBIRDS**

A great variety of waterbirds temporarily stop in the Black Hills during their annual migrations, but their appearance in the region of Wind Cave National Park is rare (Progulske 1974:123). Only a few of the waterbirds, including the mallard and northern pintail, are commonly sighted at the park. Similarly, many shorebirds visit the Black Hills at the time of their migrations, but only a few, notably the killdeer and upland plover, stay in the area for an extended season.

**Ducks, Geese, Swans, and Grebes**

[Anseriformes] and [Podicipediformes]

**History & Habitat**

The snow goose [Chen caerulescens], Canada goose [Branta canadensis], wood duck [Aix sponsa], northern shoveler [Anas clypeata], American wigeon [Anas americana], canvasback [Aythya valisineria], redhead [Aythya americana], ring-necked duck [Aythya collaris], lesser scaup [Aythya affinis], and bufflehead [Bucephala albeola] are among the migrating waterbirds sighted only rarely at Wind Cave National Park, while the gadwell [Anas strepera], and various varieties of teal [Anas crecca and Anas discors] and the Western grebe [Aechmophorus occidentalis] are reported as uncommon in their seasonal appearance. Only the mallard [Anas platyrhynchos] and northern pintail [Anas acuta] are commonly sighted migrants at the park.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

Many varieties of duck, geese, and grebe species are identified and distinguished in Lakota ornithological nomenclatures. The generic name for the duck is si’yagla (Buechel 1970:463) and for the goose it is maga
The swan, which is called *magaska*, and a variety of ducks, known generically as *magaksica*, are connected in Lakota naming systems: these include the gadwell [*magasni-yanlahota*], wigeon [*magasniyanlapato*], and various species of teal [*magasniyanla nawate to* for the green-winged variety and *magasniyanla istohlate ska* for the blue-winged] (Ibid:327). Another Lakota taxon has the mallard duck, *pa-gon'ta*, as its chief representative: it also includes the shoveler [*pagon'ta pa to*], merganser [*pagon'ta nawate ska*], northern pintail [*pagon'ta pa sapa*], and wood duck [*pagon'ta ista sa*] (Ibid:424). The western grebe is called *si'yla* which is an alternate name given to the teal (Ibid:463).

Among the Cheyennes the generic name for duck is *se?se* (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:46), while other names for ducks are green-winged teal, *o-ha'mishish* and blue-winged teal, *hamishish*’ (Hayden 1862b: 291). Names for goose [hena?e], swan [voestaso], mallard [maaxta], and flat billed [*paposeses*] are also recorded in Cheyenne dictionaries (Petter 1913-15:416, 519; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:46, 110).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

Ducks and geese were a source of food for the Cheyennes and the Lakotas, but none of the standard ethnographic sources explain how they were taken. Ducks and their eggs were important in tribal diets too. At least among the Lakotas, goose eggs were avoided because they were believed by some to cause carbuncles (Hassrick 1964:170). A special arrow, called *wisimahi yeyapi* [sending arrow], was made for bringing ducks and geese down from a great distance (Hassrick 1964:169).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Among the Lakotas, ducks and other waterfowl are associated with fertility and *Itokaga*, the South Wind (Curtis 1907-30:3:77; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:127; Walker 1980:217-218, 252). They are considered a source of medicine (Standing Bear 1988:70-71), and the people who dream of them often became healers. According to Francis Densmore (1918:274), Old Buffalo hung mallard feathers on the pipe he used in healing. As Luther Standing Bear (1988:71) reported:

> The duck is a bird that means a good deal to the Sioux people. I told you about the bear dreamer and how the bear helped the Sioux by telling the medicine men about a valuable herb that would cure the sick. So we have a duck dreamer. Long ago, while a medicine man fasted, the duck came to him in a vision and told him about a plant that grew only in the water. The root of this plant is good for those who have nervous troubles, and we all use it to this day. The duck also showed the Sioux how to dig for the lily roots that grow in ponds. The women of the tribe boil these roots, which are something like sweet potatoes and are very nourishing. In some of our most sacred and religious ceremonies we use the beautiful green breast of the duck in this way, showing our thankfulness to this bird. On the peace pipe there is a bit of the neck feathers, and in the confirmation ceremony a duck feather is worn with the eagle feather which is put on the head of the one being confirmed. The duck is considered very wise for his knowledge of the air and of the water as well.

Standing Bear (1988:71) also noted that ducks flying at night warned of the presence of enemies nearby.

Geese are also associated with healing and protective powers, and their directional bearing is north. They appeared in Black Elk’s most important vision, flying above the rider from the north (in DeMallie 1984:95, 98, 114), and they also came to him in other visions (in DeMallie 1984:109:137-138). They are a sign of hope, and they represent the end of a winter’s hardship when flying north in spring (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:117, 277-278).
Duck feathers were commonly used for making arrows (Standing Bear 1988:19), and they played many different symbolic roles for the Lakotas. The head feathers of the wood duck, for example, were known to be “wakan seleecce” (Buechel 1970:424). The green feathers from the head of the mallard drake were also highly regarded; they were emblematic of generosity and hospitality and could be worn either by a man or a woman (Walker 1982:106). In a song from the Hunka [Making Relatives] ceremony, the drake’s feathers represent the South Wind, Itokaga (Walker 1980:234). The wand used in this ceremony was made from a rod of plum wood to which an ear of corn (symbol of the earth) was attached. An eagle plume and the largest quill of an eagle’s wing were hung from the rod, and the skin from the head of a mallard drake was wrapped around the quill (Curtis 1907-30:3:75; Densmore 1918:71,74; Walker 1980:234). A similar wand was used in the Pte San Lowampi, a girl’s coming of age ceremony, with an eagle plume and quill wrapped in a skin from the head of the mallard drake (Walker 1980:244). In this ceremony, the singer or walowan says “the spirit of the eagle and the duck will be with you. They will give you many children” (Walker 1980:252).

Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:216-218) tells about a white goose wing carried by the virgin representing the north in the Horse Dance and about references to geese in the songs associated with this dance. The practice of seeking donations or “begging from house to house” was called “maga” wa-pa’ha,” which refers to the wearing of a duck feather headdress (Buechel 1970:327).

Ducks, geese, and swans played central roles in Cheyenne and Arapaho creation stories (Grinnell 1972:2:337; Harrod 2000:31; Trenholm 1970:3), but there is little published evidence on the significance of their feathers in sacred ceremonial contexts. George Dorsey (1905:95) mentions goose feathers in connection with the headdress worn by the Cheyenne Sun Dance leader, and John Moore (1986:187) points out that some of the brightly colored ducks like mallards, teals, and redheads have connections with war. Some Cheyenne courting flutes were carved in the image of a duck’s head, which suggests a symbolic association to fertility (Grinnell 1972:1:205). This is also true for the Lakotas. According to Moore (1986:184, 186, 187), ducks and geese are among the Cheyennes’ eatable and unmarked species included under the “ordinary” class of birds.

**Herons and Pelicans**

[Ciconiformes] and [Pelecaniformes]

A wide variety of other waterbirds and shorebirds appear in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park during their seasonal migrations but those in the heron and pelican orders are rare. Among the species reported at Wind Cave are the double-crested cormorant [Phalacrocorax auritus], the American white pelican [Pelecanus erythrorhynchos], and the blue heron [Ardea herodias]. The double-crested cormorant, called huntka in Lakota, was known to be able to release an arrow by diving and returning to the surface, repeating their calls as if they had never been injured (Buechel 1970:189). The lower jaws of pelicans, blo’za or ble’ga, were used by the Lakotas to make medicine bags and their feathers were considered among the best for fletching arrows (Densmore 1918:439; Buechel 1970:110). The Cheyennes called the pelican voa (Petter 1913-15:804).

**Cranes, Killdeers, and Sandpipers**

[Gruiformes] and [Charadriiformes]

**Habitat and History**

During their seasonal migrations, the American coot [Fulica americana], the sandhill crane [Grus canadensis], and the long-bill-
ed curlew \([\text{Numenius americanus}]\) are sighted occasionally in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park. Killdeers \([\text{Charadrius vociferus}]\), which return to the Black Hills in March, are widely seen in the summer, feeding on damp grasslands and meadows (Froiland 1978:125; Melius 1995:23). They are common summer residents of the park. Upland sandpipers \([\text{Bartramia longicauda}]\) are also frequent at the park over the summer months.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

Of these birds, the crane has the greatest symbolic significance for the Lakotas and the Cheyennes. The crane is named \textit{pehan} in Lakota, and the sandhill crane is called \textit{pehan}'\textit{gila} (Buechel 1970:438). In Cheyenne, the sandhill crane is known as \textit{ne?pottase} (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:28).

Other waterbirds and shorebirds are named in Cheyenne and Lakota taxonomies, but they appear to have little symbolic significance. Among the Cheyennes, most of these birds are considered a part of their “ordinary” class, which as Moore (1986:184) points out, means that they are birds in a stable state rather than full of energy and excitement. This class is further divided into three groups, one identified as “\textit{mahpevekseo}” [water birds]. Within this group, the American coot (\textit{oxcem}) is an example of a bird that paints and has symbolic value. The Cheyenne call the killdeer \textit{tohtaanotowah\textit{e}} (all around neck), and they are known to have a distinctive way of running along the ground. They are associated with rainfall too (Moore, J. 1986:184, 186).

For the Lakotas, many of their names for these species of birds are listed, but only a few are reported to have any specific cultural meanings or uses (Buechel 1970:182, 835). The Lakota associate the nocturnal flights of the upland sandpiper, \textit{slo}s\textit{lola}, with a rolling and forelorn sound (Buechel 1970:465), while the long-billed curlew, \textit{ti'canica}, is said to call “\textit{mniswu, mniswu}” [no translation given but possibly refers to small droplets of water] (Buechel 1970:489). The American coot is called \textit{hin'hicala} or possibly \textit{canti’ pan}, but no special uses or meanings have been associated with it other than the observation that it is a “noisy” bird (Buechel 1970:125, 177, 799, 802). The killdeer is known as \textit{pehin’cicila} or \textit{ptehin’cicila} [curly calf] in Lakota (Buechel 1970:439, 438), and it is said to call “\textit{Tblo wewe, tblo wewe}” [bloody elder brother, bloody elder brother], the meaning of which is not specified.

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

There is no indication in the literature whether the flesh of any of these birds was taken as food, although crane eggs were considered a delicacy by the Lakotas (Hassrick 1964:169).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Among the Lakotas, cranes are associated with the night, and they are considered messengers of the South Wind, \textit{Itokagta} (Densmore 1918:139; Beckwith, M. 1930:402-403; Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:127; Walker 1983:243, 239, 273-274). Standing Bear (1978:158) wrote:  

..the crane foretold wet weather by flying high in the air and coming down whistling all the way. These birds were not water birds but were prairie inhabitants having the common name of sandhill cranes. Their songs or whistled notes were quite soft and melodious and their bills were not the lance-like ones of the water heron. This bill was copied in the construction of the wooden love flutes of the Plains people.

Among the Cheyennes, the sandhill crane was considered an important medicine bird. Even though it was associated with the “ordinary” class of birds, it was probably connected to a much earlier symbolic com-
plex linked to the *Massaum* (Moore, J. 1986: 178,186). The Cheyennes believe that cranes possess strong protective powers especially in matters connected with lightning. They also believe that this bird takes pity on people (Grinnell 1972:2:109, 110). In the past, Cheyenne warriors sometimes attached the heads or feathers of sandhill cranes to their shields because this bird’s voice was alarming to its enemies (Grinnell 1972:2:195). War whistles were made from the wing-bone of a sandhill crane because they were esteemed as powerful war helpers. It was considered a bird of great courage, and if wounded and unable to fly away, it would fight hard and even attack a man who approached it. Courage of this sort was greatly admired in a warrior (Grinnell 1972:1:204). The crane’s voice was thought to alarm the enemy, and so the Cheyennes believed if a warrior imitated the cry of the crane in a fight, he would not be hit by a bullet (Grinnell 1972:2:109). The sandhill crane's courtship dance served as a model for some of the Cheyennes' public dances (Moore, J. 1986: 186).

The killdeer appears in a famous Lakota story about the blue jay (Beckwith, M. 1930:403), and many other waterbirds and shorebirds play roles in Lakota and Cheyenne stories too (Moore, J. 1986:186-187). However, there is little direct information available on their symbolic significance among either tribe.

**GAMEBIRDS**

Several different species of gamebirds are found in the Black Hills, although only three are reported for Wind Cave National Park: the ring neck pheasant (a naturalized emmigrant from Asia), the sharp-tailed grouse, and the wild turkey. None of these birds, however, are common in the area.

### Fowl-Like Birds

#### [Galliformes]

**Sharp-tailed grouse.**

*[Tympanuchus phasianellus]*

This grouse is an uncommonly sighted but permanent resident of the park. Although not reported in the Black Hills or at Wind Cave National Park, two other types of small game birds, quails and bobwhites, are listed in tribal ornithological nomenclatures.

#### Tribal Taxonomy

In Lakota, the sharp-tailed grouse’s name is *can siyo*, while its close relative the spruce grouse is called *wazi’ siyo*, and the prairie chicken is called *siyo’ka* (Buechel 1970: 123, 425, 463, 825). Grouse were called *vakohease* in Cheyenne, and they were members of the “ordinary” and unpainted class of birds, which could be taken for food. Other than serving as a source of food, this family of birds appears to have had little symbolic importance among the Cheyennes (Moore, J. 1986: 184, 186). Names for specific varieties include: *henenevahoas* (sage grouse), *sistatovahoas* (ruffled grouse), and *moxtavsenevahoas* (Franklin grouse), and (Petter 1913-15:526).

The Lakota classified the quail as a grouse and called it *siyo cik’ala* [little grouse] (Buechel 1970:267), while the Cheyenne named the quail *koohkova’e* [squatting down] (Petter 1913-15:155; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976: 86). The Lakotas call the bobwhite *johotonia*, which refers to the whistling sound it makes (Buechel 1970:463), and the Cheyennes know it by the same name as a quail (Petter 1913-15:155).

#### Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

Luther Standing Bear (1988:68) said of these birds:
They were fine to eat, and when we picked them, we saved the wing feathers for our arrows. These birds, began to travel south with the cold weather, but there were always a few that lingered behind until after snow fell. They would feed on buffalo berries and on the rosebuds that ripened in the fall.

He also describes how boys hunted them (Standing Bear 1988:15). William Bordeaux (1929:200) offers some additional details on Lakota methods of capturing fowls. Grouse meat and eggs were among the Lakotas’ favorite foods (Hassrick 1964:169), and in the testimony before the U.S. Senate (1904), the Black Hills were reported as a location for hunting these birds. Their feathers were valued for fletching arrows (Densmore 1918:438–439; Standing Bear 1988:19; Brown 1992:18), and they adorned the lances carried by the officers of the Tokala or Kit Fox Society (Wissler 1912: 15). Their wing bones went into the making of whistles used by wolf dreamers and warriors (Wissler 1912:90-91; Densmore 1918:179).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Standing Bear (1988:57, 60) describes how grouse inspired a certain style of dancing among the Lakotas, and he further notes that they have special powers which prevent hunters from hitting them. Furthermore, he writes they are one of the birds that make sounds that match Lakota words. Severt Young Bear (Theisz 1994:31-33) gave a lengthy description of how a Lakota man learned a particular kind of singing vocalization in a vision he received from a grouse in the Black Hills.

**Wild turkey**

*Meleagris gallopavo*

The wild turkey is also an uncommon but permanent resident of the park. It was first reported in the written record on September 17, 1804 by Lewis and Clark, who learned of its existence in the Black Hills from the trader Jon Vallé, who wintered in the area with the Cheyennes (Moutlon 1987:3:85, 482). Although it remained abundant in the Hills throughout the nineteenth century, its numbers gradually declined. The varieties now present in the region are not from the old eastern stock but represent a southwestern subspecies reintroduced to the region from 1948 to 1950 (Progulske 1974:124). In Lakota, the turkey is called *wagle 'ksun* (Buechel 1970:515). Standing Bear (1988:19) wrote that the Lakotas considered turkey feathers among the best for fletching arrows, but since they were hard to acquire, they were used only by adult warriors and hunters.

The Cheyenne call the wild turkey *ma?xe?ne* (Petter 1913:15:1071; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:115), and like the Lakotas, they valued the bird’s feathers for arrows because they were not damaged by blood (Curtis 1907-30: 6:156; Grinnell 1972:1:181). Turkey feathers were also attached to Cheyenne lances used in ceremonies or in battle to count coup (Grinnell 1972:1:187), and the bird’s beard was used in making certain medicines (Ibid:134). Like the grouse, the turkey is classed with ordinary birds, which are considered edible and thereby hunted for food by the Cheyennes (Moore, J. 1986: 186).

**LAND BIRDS**

This group includes a wide variety of different species, many of which are neither named nor symbolically marked in Lakota and Cheyenne ornithological nomenclatures. Among the Cheyenne, most of the birds in this category are included in the class of birds known as *xamaeveskeo* or “ordinary” birds, and in the subclasses *vekseohes*, which contains small birds who build tree nests and inhabit riparian forests, and *hoevekseo*, a name that refers largely to edible ground birds (Moore, J. 1986:184, 186). Among the Lakotas, where symbolically significant birds tend to be classified according to their affiliation with one of the four winds, only a few species of land birds are definitively identified in this way. For
the vast majority, their symbolic positions are not recorded in the published literature.

**Doves & Pigeons**  
[Columbiformes]

**Mourning Dove**  
[Zenaidura macroura]

The mourning dove is another common summer resident at Wind Cave National Park. The other member of the Columbidae family reported in the park, the rock dove [Columba livia], is not common. The mourning dove is known as wakin‘yela in Lakota (Buechel 1970:531), and given its name, it may very well be associated with the thunders. In Cheyenne, the dove is called hemene or hemeneo?o (Petter 1913-15:405; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:72). Lakotas believe that when the female of the species wails its song, she warns of the presence of ghosts in an area (Buechel 1970:531; Fire and Erdoes 1972:167). Other than this, no other reports on the cultural significance of doves have been found in the ethnographic literature on the Lakotas or the Cheyennes.

**Goatsuckers**  
[Caprimulgiformes]

**Common Nighthawk**  
[Chordeiles minor]

This member of the goatsucker order is a nocturnal summer resident in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park. At the end of the summer, nighthawks gather in large flocks for their annual migration (Froiland 1978:126; Melius 1995:43). It’s name in Lakota pi’sko (Buechel 1970:444). Like owls, it is considered a helper or tonweyapi of the East Wind, Wiyiyanpa or Yanpa (Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:126), but in some sources (Hassrick 1964:214), it is identified with the Thunderbirds and the West Wind (Black Elk in Niehardt 1959: 133-134). Like the swallow and horned lark, it is a bird that appears in the dreams of the Heyoka or Contraries (Hassrick 1964: 214). The bird is thought to bring news, and it is known as the last bird to return to the region in the spring when the buffalo grow fat and the grass is green. Its arrival signaled the time when the Lakotas made preparations for their large summer bison hunts. It was also known as the last to leave in the fall after the other birds migrated south (Dorsey, J. 1874:500; Buechel 1970: 444).

The Cheyennes classified the nighthawk with the vulture as a black whirlwind, moxtavetas, a member of their highest and most “holy” class of birds, but its common name was pe’e. Like the vulture, it is associated with death, twilight, and the west (Moore, J. 1986:182-184). Because of the bird’s associations with the Thunders, its wing bones were once made into whistles that Cheyenne Contraries used in their dances (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:44).

**Whippoorwill**  
[Caprimulgus vociferus]

The whippoorwill is also a common summer resident at Wind Cave National Park. The Lakota call it pako’skala (Buechel 1970:429). When the whippoorwills sing together at night “Hohin, hohin,” one says in reply, “No.” If the birds stop singing, it is a sign that the person listening will die soon; when they continue to sing, the person is predicted to live a long life (Dorsey, J. 1894: 500). The whippoorwill’s song is associated with true love in a story in the Four Winds cycle where Uktomi tries to deceive Itokagata, the South Wind, by disguising himself as a whippoorwill (Walker 1983, 203, 345-347, 367). Whippoorwills were considered edible by the Lakotas, and they were caught by slowly approaching them with outstretched arms (Hassrick 1964:170). Except for their name, ai’sto-mo-pi (Hayden 1862b: 291), no information about them was uncovered in the literature on the Cheyennes.
**Kingfishers [Coraciiformes]**

Many of the species in this order of birds occupied important symbolic positions in Lakota and Cheyenne ceremonies and healing practices.

**KINGFISHERS [ALCEDINIDAE]**

The belted kingfisher \([Megaceryle alcyon]\) was called *hoya'zela cik'ala* [the little one who fishes with his mouth] (Buechel 1970:186) in Lakota and *matsenestse* [eyes with matter in them] in Cheyenne (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:59). It is a common bird in the Black Hills (Froiland 1978:122), but it is a rare migrant in the area of Wind Cave National Park. The Lakotas and the Cheyennes associated this bird with warfare. Its fighting qualities were greatly admired, and it is one of the birds whose body parts were used as a *wotawe* or amulet. The Heyoka or Contraries, for example, used the bird’s cones in a *wotawe*, which they attached to the ends of their spears (Buechel 1970:186). Cheyenne warriors were known to use the kingfisher as a protective medicine, tying the skins of the bird into their hair when they went to war (Grinnell 1972:2:120).

The belted kingfisher was also an important spirit guardian for Lakotas who became healers (Tyon in Walker 1980:161), and it appeared in this role in one of their Stone Boy stories (Walker 1983:96-97). Among the Cheyennes, the kingfisher, *nepotaz* (Petter 1913-15:634), was considered an important medicine bird (Moore, J. 1986:178). The Cheyennes believed that kingfisher feathers have the ability to treat wounds from bullets and arrows in the same way that water is able to heal (Moore, J. 1986:186). George Bird Grinnell (1972:2:151) gave an example of doctoring with the assistance of a kingfisher.

**Woodpeckers [Picaformes]**

**WOODPECKERS [PICADAE]**

Seven different species from the family, *Picidae*, are located in Wind Cave National Park and some of these birds are identified in the ornithological nomenclatures of the Lakotas and Cheyennes. Both tribes believed that woodpeckers possessed great powers, and as a result, their feathers were used in a variety of different ceremonial contexts.

**Red Headed Woodpecker [Melanerpes erythrocephalus]**

The red-headed woodpecker is an uncommon summer resident at Wind Cave National Park.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The common Cheyenne name for the redheaded woodpecker is *voo?kooma* [white blanket], and its sacred ascription is *memaevecress* (Moore, J. 1986:182). The Lakotas address this bird as nephew and call him *wagnu’ka* (Buechel 1970:516, 670).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

For the Cheyennes, the red-headed woodpecker was a bird with great power, a symbol of the sun, and associated with male fertility and the agnatic side of the social structure (Moore, J. 1986:184). For the Lakotas, the bird was symbolic of holiness and sincerity (Walker 1982:106). It was associated with *Wiyhiyanpa*, the East Wind (Curtis 1907-30:3:77), and featured in many sacred stories (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:398; Walker 1983:274, 371).

Among the Cheyennes, the feathers of the red-headed woodpecker were worn as talismans, and they ornamented war clubs be-
cause of the bird’s spiritual power (Grinnell 1972:2:109). The Cheyennes associate this bird with their Sun Dance and use its skin and body parts throughout the ceremony (Ibid:109, 232-233, 265, 268). The willow wreaths are decorated with its feathers (Ibid:266), and the leader of the dance once wore a headdress adorned with the scalp of this bird (Dorsey, G. 1905:95).

Among the Lakotas, red feathers from the red-headed woodpecker were worn only by the wicasa wakan (holy men) (Walker 1982:106). The Lakotas attached the head feathers of this bird to a wide variety of implements used in their social dealings (Walker 1982:106). This followed the practice for the use of feathers from the pileated woodpecker, known as kanke’ca (Densmore 1918:70; Buechel 1970:284). The head of a red-headed woodpecker was placed on the hunkatacanunpa, the wooden staff and its feathers were hung from the wands used in the Hunka ceremony (Densmore 1918:70-71; Curtis 1907-30:3:75; Buechel 197:516). Densmore (1918: 70-71) wrote this bird was important in the Hunka ceremony (also known as Alo’wanpi) because it was considered:

a simple, humble bird, which stays near its nest and is seldom seen. The bird seems to have been considered especially appropriate because children who underwent this ceremony were more closely guarded and protected than others. They usually belonged to well-to-do families, in which girls were seldom seen in public until they were grown up.

This woodpecker’s skin was also one of the objects placed in the bundle for the Sacred Pipe as instructed by the White Buffalo Calf woman (Curtis 1907-30:3:58), and it was one of the birds addressed in the Sun Dance (Sword in Deloria 1929:396-397; Black Elk in Brown 1971:78). It is known to have been a spiritual helper to the famous medicine man Frank Fools Crow (Brown 1992:61).

**Yellow and Red-Shifted Flickers**

*Colaptes, spp.*

The yellow-shifted (a.k.a. yellow hammer or northern) flicker [*Colaptes auratus*] and red-shifted flicker [*Colaptes cafer*] are also important symbolically to local tribes. Both are summer residents in the Black Hills. The yellow-shifted flicker is common at Wind Cave National Park. The red-shifted variety, while uncommon in the park, is the most numerous of the woodpeckers in the Black Hills where it is found in pine and deciduous forests at all elevations (Froiland 1978:126).

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The yellow-shifted flicker, called *sunzi’ ca* by the Lakotas, is reported to say “*anpetu waste, anpetu waste*” [good day, good day], and it is one of the birds represented in the visionary drawings of the Lakota artist Black Hawk (Berlo 2000:140). The Cheyenne call the northern flicker *ve?eeh,o* or alternatively, *ehoesetto* [literally, lightning thing] (Moore, J. 1986:182-183).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

The Oglalas believe that when storms approach, the flicker gives a shrill call similar to an eagle bone whistle, and as a result, it is associated with the Thunders (Brown 1992:45). The bird is addressed in the prayers of the Sun Dance leader before the center pole is cut because, as Densmore (1919:111-112) wrote, this bird “cannot overcome its enemies in open flight but is expert in dogging them, darting from one side of the tree-trunk to another.” Its feathers adorn the eagle bone whistles used in the Sun Dance, helping the dancers communicate with the Thunders (Brown 1992: 45). The Lakotas, who call the red-shifted variety *sun’luta*, believe it is a harbinger for the arrival of good weather (Buechel 1970: 470). Unlike its yellow-shifted relative, no other symbolic connections have been reported in the literature on the Lakotas.
Flicker tail feathers are said by the Cheyennes to have been burned and painted by lightning, and they are used in the Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:232). More than any other bird, the flicker is associated with complex symbolism. The Cheyenne identify the yellow-shafted flicker with the moon because it has a crescent on its chest and because the wave-like patterns of its flight suggest the waxing and waning of this celestial body. The rich yellow color of its tail feathers signal fertility and the sharp black tips mark powers that can deflect illness and evil (Moore, J. 1986:182-183). Men who possessed strong spiritual power sometimes wore the feathers in their hair as protection. If the feathers were sent magically into another person’s body, they could cause a lingering illness and even death unless the afflicted individual secured relief through proper treatment (Grinnell 1972:2:145). Finally, its yellow-painted cheeks, representing ‘peace,’ are associated with female symbolism. The red-shafted flicker’s cheeks, by contrast, signify ‘blood paint’ and masculinity (Moore, J. 1986:182-183).

**Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers**

[**Picoides, spp.**]

Two other woodpecker species, the Downy [**Picoides pubescens**] and Hairy [**Picoides villosus**] woodpeckers, are called *cansin’-kahpu* in Lakota, a term that also refers to the ponderosa pine sap used as a chewing gum (Beuchel 1970:799). Both of these species, which are common permanent residents at Wind Cave National Park, also have important connections to healers and healing in Lakota traditions (Dorsey, J. 1894:495). These and other woodpeckers were called *kokohohe* in Cheyenne, and unlike the flicker and redheaded variety, they are considered ordinary birds (Moore, J. 1986:184).

**Songbirds**

[**Passeriformes**]

Many songbirds are named in Cheyenne and Lakota nomenclatures, and several of them have important positions in tribal cosmologies.

**Larks**

[**Alaudidae**]

The horned lark, *Eremophila alpestris*, is a fairly common and permanent resident of grassland areas in the Black Hills, including Wind Cave National Park. In Lakota, it is called *mastekola*, which means “the friend that desires warm weather” (Buechel 1970:333). Whenever the horned lark soared straight up into the air singing *masteko,* “I like warm weather,” it forecasted the coming of good weather (Buechel ibid.; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:167). The people who dreamed of this bird became *Heyoka* or Contraries (Hassrick 1964:214). Like the swallow, it was associated with the Thunders (Black Elk in Niehardt 1959:133-134). It was the hero in a race narrative, very similar to the Race Track story, which explains how various animals were marked and painted (Walker 1917:219-221).

**Corvids**

[**Corvidae**]

The Corvid family contains two species, the crow [**Corvus americanus**] and the magpie [**Pica pica**], both of which occupy important symbolic positions in Lakota and Cheyenne cultures. Both are also ubiquitous residents of the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park. The crow is most prevalent in spring and summer, transient in the fall, and less common in winter (Froiland 1978:123; Melius 1995: 53). The magpie maintains a permanent residence in the area throughout the year, especially in open forest environments (Froiland 1978:123). Various species of jays are common and permanent residents
of the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park, including the pinon jay [Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus], the blue jay [Cyanocitta cristata], and grey jay [Perisoreus canadensis].

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The crow is called *kangi* in Lakota (Buechel 1972:283) and *okohke* in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:317; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:29). The crow was widely recognized by the Cheyennes as one of the brightest of the bird species. It symbolized freedom from oppression and obstruction (Petter 1913-15:3117). It was one of three bird species the Lakotas believed made sounds intelligible in their language (Standing Bear 1988:60), and it was often kept as a pet and taught to speak Lakota words (Hassrick 1964:172; Buechel 1970:283). According to Buechel (Ibid:283): “The crow cries out in the morning, ‘wakalya, wakalya’ (boil, boil, which refers to the boiling of coffee or any liquid). The Cheyennes also believe that crows can communicate with certain people (Grinnell 1972:1:256). Unlike the Lakotas, the Cheyennes never ate magpies, not even when facing hunger and starvation, because they were so highly respected (Grinnell 1972:1: 256). Crow feathers were commonly used by the Lakotas in making arrows for hunting and war (Standing Bear 1988:19).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use**

The Lakotas sometimes took crows for food, and the Cheyennes did so as well but only in times of hunger and starvation (Hassrick 1964:172; Grinnell 1972:1:256). Lakota hunters trapped crows by hiding under pine boughs to which small pieces of fat were affixed (Hassrick ibid.). The Lakotas also trapped magpies for food in the same way they caught crows, and they also consumed their eggs (Hassrick 1964:172). In the Great Race, the crow took the side of humans and so this bird is highly respected by the Cheyennes and the Lakotas (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:24). It was the magpie, however, who won the race for humans, and as a result, this bird is even more revered by the Cheyennes (Stands in Timber 1967:24; DeMallie 1984:397, 403-404). In the nineteenth century to demonstrate the importance of his trip (Petter 1913-15:317). Lakota attitudes toward the magpie are more ambivalent. Nevertheless, the magpie and crow were honored by the Lakotas in their prayers at the Sun Dance (Black Elk in Brown 1971:78).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

In the Great Race, the crow took the side of humans and so this bird is highly respected by the Cheyennes and the Lakotas (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967:24). It was the magpie, however, who won the race for humans, and as a result, this bird is even more revered by the Cheyennes (Stands in Timber 1967:24; DeMallie 1984:397, 403-404). Images of both of these birds were beaded and quilled on Cheyenne footwear and buckskin coats. One Cheyenne reportedly wore one of these coats to Washington, D.C. in the nineteenth century to demonstrate the importance of his trip (Petter 1913-15:317). Lakota attitudes toward the magpie are more ambivalent. Nevertheless, the magpie and crow were honored by the Lakotas in their prayers at the Sun Dance (Black Elk in Brown 1971:78).

In the Lakota language, the pinon jay is called *zintka’topi’ska* and the blue and grey jays are both known as *zintka’togleglega* (Buechel 1970:658). The Cheyenne call the blue jay *honeyhevecess* [wolf-man] (Petter 1913-15:134; Moore, J. 1986:184). The magpie is known as *halhate or un-kce’kiha* by the Lakota who say that it calls “halhata, halhata, hal, hal, hal” (Beuchel 1970:507). Magpies are known as *mo?e?ha* in Cheyenne, a name that refers to their wave-like flying pattern (Petter 1913-15:678; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:65).

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Crows also figure prominently in other sacred stories, including the Lakotas' Falling Star cycle and their Inktomi (Trickster) stories (Beckwith, M. 1930:388; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:397, 403-404, Walker 1983:173). In James Walker’s work (1980:125) crows are associated symbolically with the North Wind, Waziyata, but William Powers (1986:139-140) links them to Wyihiyapa, the East Wind. They are believed to have keen vision and the ability to forecast the future, often appearing in visions that gave warnings of future events. Today, their powers are closely connected to Yawipi practitioners who are able to foretell the future (Walker 1982:43; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:385-386; Densmore 1918:186-188; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:111-112). Historically, camp sentinels fixed crow skins to a girdle worn behind their back or wore a crow skin split in two with the beak projecting from their forehead (Densmore 1918:71, 319).

Crow feathers hung from the war pipes carried by Lakota men who dreamed of the bird (Walker 1982:95). One of the Lakota akicita or soldier societies was known as the Kangi yuha (Crow Owners); its defining symbol was the crow (Blish 1924:87), and its members wore necklaces made from crowskins (Densmore 1948:183). Many of the functions of this society paralleled those of another warrior association, the Wolf Society (Brown 1992:43, Walker 1980:260, 1982:32, 37). Crow feathers were connected to the actions of warriors in other societies as well: the members of the White Badger Society, for example, carried a wand decorated with a crow’s feathers (Walker 1980:262), crow skins were kept by the leaders of the Omaha Dance Society (Walker 1980:266), and members of the Miwatan Society wore a tanned buffalo skin with crow feathers attached on each side (Wissler 1912:46). Crow feathers were part of the bustle, called kan’gi’ha mig-na’ka, worn by Omaha dancers (Beuchel 1970:283). They were also tied to the lances carried by the officers of the Kit Fox Society or Tokala, by the Blotonka, and by the Cante Tinza (Wissler 1912:15, 58, 72).

Among the Cheyennes, crows were believed to possess powers concerning war. Their feathers were often attached to shields, and warriors sometimes tied their stuffed skins to scalp locks, believing the spirit embodied in the skins would warn them of danger (Grinnell 1972:2:105). One of the vikuts used by Cheyenne warriors to carry water had crow feathers tied to the end of its prongs (Ibid:23-24). The feathers of these birds were particularly important in the ceremonies and adornments of the Cheyenne Dog Soldiers (Moore, J. 1986:183). The Cheyenne believed that crows were able to locate bison. When bison were scarce, the direction hunters traveled to find them was often determined by the path a crow followed when it flew into a Cheyenne camp (Grinnell 1972:1:110). In their antelope hunting ceremonies, the Cheyennes used a pole-like implement called an antelope arrow to which a single crow feather was attached (Ibid:1:284). They also tied crow feathers to the seams of their ceremonial rattles (Ibid:1:203).

The magpie was one of the major birds featured in the sacred stories of the Lakotas, but it occupies a very ambivalent cultural position in these texts (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:397, 403-404; Walker 1983:85, 127, 128, 273-274, 335-336, 354, 371). The magpie is regarded as the messenger of Waziyata, the North Wind (Powers, W. 1977:191; 1986:139-140). It is a much revered culture hero in its associations with war, but it is also considered a dirty, defiling bird (as the reference to defecation in one of its names suggests) and linked to the duplicitous behavior of the trickster, Inktomi (Beckwith, M. 1930:388, 434; Walker 1983:335-336). Magpie feathers were not widely used: they did decorate the lances carried by the officers of the Kit Fox Society or Tokala, however (Wissler 1912:15).

Among the Cheyennes, by contrast, magpies were included among the “holy” class of
birds along with the golden eagle, night-hawk, crow, flicker, and red-headed woodpecker (Moore, J. 1986:182-183). Moore (Ibid:181) writes: "The magpie is said to be a sacred messenger to the high god because it comes near to human habitation and overhears their conversations. It was a messenger to Sweet Medicine, the culture hero of the Cheyennes." The Cheyennes believed that magpies, like their crow cousins, possessed great powers in matters of war. Their feathers frequently adorned the shields of Cheyenne warriors, and they decorated the bows of the Contraries (Dorsey, G. 1905:25; Grinnell 1972: 2:105). Stuffed magpies were sometimes tied to the headdresses of warriors for spiritual protection (Grinnell 1972: 2:124). When a magpie flew into the camp of a war party, the Cheyennes would watch the way the bird flew away to learn the direction from which their enemy would come (Ibid:2:110). The Cheyennes also attached magpie feathers to the seam of their rattles, and they tied them to the pole used in their pronghorn hunting ceremony (Ibid: 1:203, 284). The Cheyennes believed that, like crows, magpies were able to converse with some humans (Ibid :2:107).

None of the jays are reported to have had any special symbolic associations or uses, although the blue jay does appear in a popular and widespread story among the Lakotas and the Cheyennes (Kroeber 1905: 186-187; Beckwith, M. 1930:399-408).

**SWALLOWS**

*Hirundinidae*

Various species in the swallow family, *Hirundinidae*, including the bank swallow [*Riparia riparia*], the cliff swallow [*Hirundo pyrrhonota*], the tree swallow [*Tachycineta bicolor*], the northern rough-winged swallow [*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*], the violet-green swallow [*Tachycineta thalas-sina*], and the barn swallow [*Hirundo rustica*] appear during the summer months at Wind Cave National Park. Of these, only the barn, cliff, and violet-green swallows are common in occurance.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

*Upi-jata*, which refers to a forked tail, is a generic ascription for the swallow, but there are many species-specific names in the Lakota language (Buechel 1970:508). The generic name is also used to denote swifts, which have forked tails, including the white-throated swift [*Aeronautes saxatalis*], an uncommon summer resident at Wind Cave National Park. The bank swallow is called *hupucansakala* (Ibid:190). Another swallow whose name has a common root is *hupu’-wanblila*, which Buechel (Ibid.) identifies as a swallow-tailed kite. The identification is unlikely since this kite is confined to the Gulf Coast. This is more likely the name for the cliff swallow, whose habitats and habits are closest to the bank swallow. The tree swallow is named *icapsinpsin-calaikpi ska* and the barn swallow is known as *icapsinpsincalaikpi sa* (Ibid:202). The Cheyennes called the swallow *mesoke* and include it among their ordinary class of birds (Petter 1913-15:1033; Moore, J. 1986:184).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

All species of swallow are considered very holy or *wakan* by the Lakotas (Sword in Walker 1980:102; DeMallie 1984:84), and they are featured in many sacred stories, including ones associated with the Falling Star cycle, the Four Winds, and Iron Hawk (Beckwith, M. 1930:388; Walker 1983:81-82, 319-321, 328, 333, 353-354, 355-356, 357, 363; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:397-398, 407-408). They are admired for their swiftness in flight and their ability to escape harm from lightning and hail (Black Elk in Niehardt 1959:133-134). Standing Bear (1978:158) wrote about the swallow as follows:

When the swallows, which were called *icapsinpsin-cella*, on account of their swift and bold darting here and there, came in flocks flying audaciously about, we knew a show was coming our way. While it rained...
we saw no swallows, but as soon as it had gone, again would come the swallows more hilarious than ever. There is no literal translation for the word *icapsinpsinica*, but it was a war term used by the warriors in describing their quick movements and crisscrossing maneuvers in battle, which were similar to the flying of the swallow.

Here a connection is made between the swift movements of swallows and the actions of men and horses in warfare. As Lone Man told Densmore (1918:118) “what a warrior desires most for his horse is that it may be as swift as the swallow in dodging the enemy or in direct flight.”

Swallows are messengers of the Thunders, *Wakinyan*, and the West Wind (Densmore 1918:118; Hassrick 1964:214; Powers, W. 1977:192, 1986:139-140; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:101), and they are closely connected to the *Heyoka* or contraries, who once decorated their shields with swallow images to display their allegiance to the thunders (Vestal 1934:7; Hassrick 1964:214; Walker 1980:279). Swallows are symbolically connected with dragonflies and butterflies and believed to be companions of the blacktail deer (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:99; Powers, W. 1986:152). Swallows are observed to appear before the arrival of thunderstorms (Standing Bear 1978:158; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:157). Several Lakotas, including Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:84-85, 114, 130, 222, 228, 229), White Bull (in Vestal 1934:12-15), and Lone Man (in Densmore 1918:188), recounted visions where swallows appeared in advance of thunderstorms. Lone Man received a *wotawe* charm from the swallows or “riders in the cloud,” and he fastened the skin of the swallow on his head when storms approached, singing songs to ward off their danger (Densmore 1918:188). Historically, swallow designs were painted on the horses and bison robes of members of the Sacred Bow Society (Blish 1934:186). Certain kinds of medical treatments were under the guardianship of swallows (Bordeaux 1929:109).

There appears to have been little special symbolic attachment to them among the Cheyennes, although Grinnell (1972:1:201) reported that swallow images were painted on war shields. This suggests they may have been connected to the Thunders in this culture too.

**THRASHERS AND ASSOCIATES**

* [MIMIDAE]  

The *Mimidae* family is represented by six different species at Wind Cave National Park, and most of these are rare and uncommon residents or migrants. None of the species are associated with any special cultural functions or meanings, and only two are reported in tribal nomenclatures. The mockingbird [*Mimus polyglottos*] is called *haestoho?semehe* (one with many sounds) in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:714; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:69). The Lakota name for the brown thrasher [*Toxostoma rufum*] is *cehu”pagla-gla*, which refers to the chattering sound of its teeth in cold weather (Buechel 1970:129, 799).

**ROBINS AND ASSOCIATES**

* [MUSCIPAIĐAE]  

Six species from the *Muscipapidae* family are found at Wind Cave National Park. The eastern bluebird [*Sialia sialis*] and mountain bluebird [*Sialia currucoides*] are summer residents, but only the latter is common in the park. Townsend’s solitaire [*Myadestes townsendi*] and the American robin [*Turdus migratorius*] are common and permanent residents of the park, while the Veery [*Hylocichla fuscescens*] and Swainson’s thrush [*Hylocichla ustulata*] are rare to uncommon.

With the possible exception of the robin, none of the birds in this family appear to have had any special importance to either the Lakotas or the Cheyennes. The Cheyennes knew the bluebird as *ota?taveve?-keso* (bluebird) (Petter 1913-15:134; North-
ern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:9). The Lakotas named the bluebird zintka’o (Buechel 1970:658). The Lakota artist Black Hawk painted a picture of the mountain bluebird, which is common in the Black Hills (Berlo 2000:136), and it is mentioned in an Iron Hawk story (Beckwith, M. 1930:388).

The Cheyennes named the robin ma’e-see-onah (red breasted one) (Petter 1913-15:134; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:92), and the Lakotas called it sisoka (Buchel 1970:463). The robin is also a figure in an Iron Hawk story (Beckwith, M. 1930:388), and it appears in the same Iron Hawk story as the robin (Beckwith, M. 1930:388).

CHICKADEES [PARIDAE]

The black-capped chickadee [Parus atricapillus] of the Paridae family is an abundant and permanent species of deciduous and coniferous forest habitats in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park (Froiland 1978:123). The bird is called ski’ pipi, ski’-bibila, and wi’ya wala by the Lakotas, who believe it has a cleft tongue that splits in seven stages from October until it heals in April. When the turkey vultures return, the bird is said to remain silent because the cold weather is gone (Buechel 1970:464). This bird appears in the travels of the culture heroes Iron Hawk and Stone Boy (Beckwith, M. 1930:389; Deloria 1978:33-34). Its Cheyenne name is not given in the literature, but George Bird Grinnell (1972:2.81) wrote that it was known to like the seeds of the hairy golden aster, Chrysopsis folios, which is called mis’ka tsi [chickadee plant]. The Cheyennes considered it a wise bird because it knew when summer came and told the people of its arrival (Ibid:110).

NUTHATCHES [SITTDAE]

WRENS [TROGLODYTIDAE]

Nuthatches, members of the Sittidae family, have not been reported in Lakota and Cheyenne bird taxonomies, although the Troglodytidae family of wrens is well-identified in Lakota nomenclatures. The rock wren [Salpinctes obsoletus], an uncommon summer resident at Wind Cave National Park, is known as igu’goitilia in Lakota (Buchel 1970:805), while the more common house wren [Troglodytes aedon] is called canhe’-yala because of its loud voice (Ibid:116). Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:152) told about his first boyhood hunting experience, which involved shooting a bird that he identified as a wren. He also mentioned the wren in a Falling Star story and gave it the name “Holds the Buffalo Back” (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:407-408).

FLYCATCHERS [TYRANNIDAE]

Several different members of the flycatcher family, Tyrannidae, appear in Wind Cave National Park. Most of the species are rare or uncommon summer residents, but the eastern kingbird [Tyrannus tyrannus] is common in its appearance. The kingbird is referred to in the prayers of the Lakota Sun Dance leader before the center tree is felled because this bird “though small is feared by all of its enemies” (Densmore 1919:111-112; Black Elk in Brown 1971:78). It is also mentioned as a spiritual guardian (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:109) and as a figure in a Falling Star story (Ibid:307). Lakota call the eastern variety [Tyrannus tyrannus] wasna’-ikpi ska [needs red grease] and the western species [Tyrannus verticalis] wasna’ikpi zi [needs yellow grease] (Buechel 1970:550). The Cheyennes know it as evecesseve (Petter 1913-15:134).
The black-billed cuckoo \((\text{Coccyzus erythrophthalmus})\), a member of the \(\text{Cuculidae}\) family, is a rare summer resident in the park. It is called \(\text{cepela tanka, soho 'tonla, or ico 'sapa}\) by the Lakotas, who described many of its habits to Buechel (1970:298, 804, 835). Its symbolic importance has not been recorded in the ethnographic literature, however.

**VIREOS**  
\([\text{VIERONIDAE}]\)

**SHRIKES**  
\([\text{LANIIDAE}]\)

**WAXWINGS**  
\([\text{BOMBYCILLIDAE}]\)

Various species of vireos, shrikes, and waxwings are also present at Wind Cave National Park. The warbling vireo \((\text{Vireo gilyns})\) is known as \(\text{zintka 'zila}\) [little yellow bird] in Lakota (Buechel 1970:658). The loggerhead shrike \((\text{Lanius ludovicianus})\) is linked with hawks in Lakota taxonomies and known as \(\text{cetan watapala}\) (Buechel 1970:130).

**EMBERZIDS**  
\([\text{EMBERIZIDAE}]\)

The Emberzids are represented by a large group of highly varied species, which include sparrows, towhees, juncos, blackbirds, and tanagers. Many of the birds in this group are not named, nor do they appear to have any special symbolic significance. Some species, such as the meadowlark and tanger, hold a very significant cultural position in Lakota and Cheyenne traditions.

**BUNTINGS AND GROSBECKS**  
\([\text{CAROLINAE}]\)

The Lark bunting \((\text{Calamospiza melano-cory})\) is a rare summer resident at Wind Cave National Park; it is known \(\text{wa 'bloska}\) [white wing blackbird], implying a link in Lakota taxonomy with blackbirds. As Buechel (1970:511), it sings \(\text{"Ska, ska, ska; to, to; sa, sa, zi, zi, hol, hol, hol, and while alighting wil, wil, wil.\"}\)

The evening grosbeak \((\text{Hesperiphona vesperina})\), a rare but permanent resident of the park, is called \(\text{cetan watapela zi}\) in Lakota. Even though it feeds on seeds and berries, the Lakota observe that it goes after other birds like a hawk does, and therefore, they associate it with other birds classed as \(\text{cetan}\) (Buechel 1970:130).

**BLACKBIRDS AND ASSOCIATES**  
\([\text{ICTERINAE}]\)

Blackbirds, bobolinks, meadowlarks, grackles, and orioles are often linked together because of their pointed bills and the strong and direct character of their flight patterns. All of the species reported in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park are listed in either Lakota or Cheyenne nomenclatures.

**Blackbirds**  
\([\text{Agelaius, Molothrus, and Xanthocephalus}]\)

Except for the yellow-headed blackbird \((\text{Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus})\), which is a rare summer resident of the park, the other two species of blackbirds, the red wing \((\text{Agelaius phoeniceus})\) and Brewer’s \((\text{Euphagus cyanocephalus})\) are common.

The red-wing blackbird is called \(\text{wa 'blosa}\) [red wing] in Lakota, and it is associated with a wide range of meaningful song patterns, which can be translated into Lakota words (Buechel 1970:511). The Cheyennes called it \(\text{heheenm}\) (Petter 1913-15:134). The yellow-headed variety is called \(\text{wa 'pagica}\) in Lakota (Buechel 1970:544) and \(\text{he 'heeno}\) (yellowhead) in the Cheyenne language (Moore 1986:184). The Brewer’s or common blackbird \((\text{Euphagus cyanocephalus})\) is called \(\text{wa 'hpa tanka}\) in Lakota, a
name which refers to its larger size (Buechel 1970:520); it was one of the birds for whom prayers were offered at the Sun Dance (Black Elk in Brown 1971:78). Standing Bear (1975:10) wrote about the close relationship between blackbirds and Lakota horses. When horses moved about, they disturbed the grasshoppers, a prime food for the blackbirds, and as he put it: “It was a common sight to see several of the birds perched on a pony’s back at the same time.”

Grackles

[Quiscalus quiscula]

Cowbirds

[Molothrus ater]

The common grackle is a frequent summer resident of Wind Cave National Park. The cowbird [Molothrus ater] is typically sighted in the lower elevation pastures and fields of the Black Hills during its spring and fall migrations, but it is not reported at Wind Cave National Park (Froiland 1978:133).

The common grackle, who is called can’-wahpa tanka [large blackbird of the tree] is related in Lakota taxonomy to the blackbird; it is also one of the birds known to utter words in Lakota (Buechel 1970:126). The brownheaded cowbird is another species the Lakota link to blackbirds; they call it wahpa hota [grey blackbird] or pteya’hpa because of its association with bison (Buechel 1970:449; Brown 1992: 25). These birds scavenge for parasites on the bodies of bison. The cowbird appears as a helper in a Lakota story entitled “The Gift of the Horse” (Deloria 1978:128-129).

Bobolink

[Dolichonyx oryzivorus]

The bobolink, another rare summer resident of the park, is called maka zintkala (earth bird) and manka’owanke in Lakota because of the stripes covering its back (Buechel 1970:329). In Cheyenne, it is called kokoa, which is also the name for quail (Petter 1913-15:155). It does not appear to have had any special cultural connections for either the Lakotas or the Cheyennes.

Orioles

[Icterus]

The three species of orioles reported in the park are rare to uncommon summer residents. The Bullock’s or the northern oriole [Icterus bullockii] is called skelu’ta in Lakota, while the Baltimore oriole, now considered an eastern variety of the northern species, is named skelu’ta tanka (big oriole). The Orchard oriole [Icterus spurius] is known as skelu’ta cik’ala (small oriole). The skins of these birds were often used as knife shields, wape’gnaka (Buechel 1970:464).

Meadowlarks

[Stunella neglecta]

The western meadowlark is a common summer resident of the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park.

Tribal Taxonomy

The Cheyenne name for the meadowlark is enoxeas (Moore, J. 1986:184), but no special cultural meanings or uses have been reported for it. It is an important bird for the Lakotas, however, who call her jialepa, tasi’yagnunpa, or winap’inla (Buechel 1970: 267, 483, 835). She is closely connected with the red buffalo calf and the elk, and she is an important messenger of the South Wind, Iokagata (Red Rabbit in Walker 1980:127; Powers, W. 1986:139-140, 1992: 152). This bird is mentioned in several sacred stories (Beckwith, M. 1930:381-382; Deloria 1978:30-32; Buechel 1970:267; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:397; Walker 1983:127-128, 130, 347, 354, 364), and it is reported to have appeared to Sitting Bull in a vision (Vestal 1932:21-22).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Among the Lakotas, the meadowlark is associated with clarity, fidelity, courage, and the good things of the day (Brown 1992:44; Rice 1993:156-157). It occupied a major position in their adoption ceremony, the **Hunka** (Walker 1980:226). Walker (1917:129) wrote:

To the Dakota, the meadowlark is the symbol of *fidelity*, just as among English-speaking people, the dove is the symbol of peace. By claiming relationship to the lark, the Shaman claimed power to influence for fidelity. By saying, ‘A voice in the air,’ he implied that the influence for fidelity pervaded the camp.

The meadowlark was also mentioned in the **Pte San Lowampi**, the Lakotas’ puberty ceremony for girls. In his description of this ceremony, Walker (1980:249) recorded the words that the shaman told the girl:

The lark is cheerful. It brings the warm weather. It does not scold its people. It is always happy. If a brave man takes you for his woman you may sing his scalp song and you may dance his scalp dance. He will kill plenty of game so that you will have skins and robes. You will bear him many children and he will make you happy. There will always be a fire in your tipi and you will have food for your people.

In general, appeals are made to the meadowlark as the harbinger of cheer and good weather, as a symbol of fidelity between kin, and as a model of the pleasant dispositions admired in Lakota women. The meadowlark was capable of foretelling the future; leaders of war parties often asked the bird how their expeditions would turn out (Powers, W. 1986:28).

Finally, the meadowlark was connected to the Sun Dance because of the sunflower painted on its breast (Dorsey, J. 1889a:157; Rice 1993:158).

**Sparrows and Associates**

**[Emberizinae]**

Except for the House Sparrow of the **Passeridae** family, the other birds in this group are from the family **Emberizidae**. Many of them are named in Lakota or Cheyenne ornithological nomenclatures, but only a few have any cultural use or significance. Surprisingly, the tribal names for the three species of longspurs, which are rare migrants in the park, have not been recorded in the ethnographic literature, even though two of them, the *Lapland longspur* (*Calcarius lapponicus*) and the *Chestnut-collared longspur* (*Calcarius ornatus*), are fairly common on the surrounding prairies. This may be one of several birds with Lakota names, the *igugaotila* as one example, that Buechel (1970:215) was unable to match with a scientific name.

**Sparrows**

Sparrows are represented by fourteen different species at Wind Cave National Park. They are classified among the Cheyennes’ as ordinary birds. Indeed, the house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), which is common and permanent everywhere in the Black Hills (Froiland 1978:124), carries the generic name for the Cheyenne class *xamaave'keso* [ordinary bird] (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:105). In Lakota, this bird is called *pa'cansihuta* or *ihu'haotila* (Buechel 1970:218, 422). The tree sparrow (*Spizella arborea*), which is referred to as *zintki'scila* in Lakota, is a common winter resident at Wind Cave National Park (Buechel 1970:658). The grasshopper
sparrow \([\textit{Ammodramus savanarum}]\), a common summer resident of the park, is known as \(\text{pte}'\text{gaglonica}\) or \(\text{zintka sli}ta\) in Lakota (Buechel 1970:658). Finally, the lark sparrow \([\textit{Chondestes grammicus}]\), an uncommon summer resident of the park, is another bird whose feathers are glued to the tips of eagle feathers on Lakota warbonnets, and it is called \(\text{situpi an}'\text{ayetonpi}\) (Buechel 1970:455).

**Towhee**

\([\textit{Pipilo eythrophthalmus}]\)

The spotted or rufus-sided towhee \([\textit{Pipilo eythrophthalmus}]\) is a common summer resident of the park. The Lakota call it \(\text{can}'\text{gugu}'\text{ya gleska}\), referring to its arboreal domain and its spotted, burnt-like appearance. The Lakota say it makes a smack with its lips and calls out “kiyo, kiyo, kiyo” (Buechel 1970:116).

**Junco**

\([\textit{Junco hyemalis}]\)

There are two birds commonly called the “snowbird” in ornithological writings, the snowbunting \([\textit{Plectrophenax nivalis}]\) and the dark-eyed junco \([\textit{Junco hyemalis}]\). The first is rare in the Black Hills and not listed at Wind Cave, although it is found on the surrounding prairies during the winter months (Grinnell 1875:85; Melius 1995:84). The junco, by contrast, is a common and permanent resident of Wind Cave National Park, and one variety, the white-winged, is known to breed in the Black Hills. Indeed, George Bird Grinnell (1875:84) described them in 1875 as “the most common bird in the more elevated portions of the Black Hills.” The Lakotas call this bird \(\text{cantku' sa}'\text{pela}\) [little black breast] (Buechel 1970:799), and the Cheyennes’ name for it is \(\text{sehe}\) (Petter 1913-15:987; Moore, J. 1986:184). The Lakota call the snow-bunting \(\text{hupu}'\text{wanbilia}\), which is also the name they use for the swallow-tailed kite (Buechel 1970:670); this bird often flies in large flocks, sometimes in the company of other birds such as horned larks. It is very difficult to know which of these two birds is being referenced in Lakota narratives as the “snowbird.” This was the bird that led the first man, \(\text{Tokiahe}\), and his followers to meat and safety when they emerged out of a cave, which many Lakota identify today as Wind Cave (Hassrick 1964:214; Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:101; Walker 1983:371). It has a high degree of symbolic significance, and at one time, it was an important source of food. According to Iron Shell:

To catch snow birds, we took several horse hairs with nooses at one end and tied them to a stick, about six inches apart. This we laid on a bare spot of earth from which the snow had blown away. Then from a distance we waited to watch a flock settle. When one little bird would fly up, he would get caught and as we approached the others would fly, but several would catch their feet in the tiny nooses. Snow birds were good boiled or roasted on coals (Hassrick 1964:169).

**FINCHES**

\([\textit{Fringillidae}]\)

Nine different members of the \textit{Fringillidae} family are associated with Wind Cave National Park. Only four of these have been identified with names in tribal ornithological listings, however, and none are linked with culturally significant functions or meanings.

**Finches**

\([\textit{Spinus pinus}]\)

The pine siskin or pine finch \([\textit{Spinus pinus}]\), an uncommon but permanent resident of the park, is called \(\text{wazi}'\text{zintkala}\) [pine bird] in Lakota (Buechel 1970:575); it appears in the Lakota Iron Hawk story cycle (Beckwith, M. 1930:388). The American goldfinch \([\textit{Spinus tristis}]\) is a common summer resident at the park. The Lakota know it as \(\text{wanbli}'\text{tahe}'\text{ya}\) [eagle follower] (Buechel 1970:541).
**Crossbill**
*Loxia curvirostra*

The red crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*, another common and permanent resident of the park, is called *pa’kaic’icuya* in Lakota. The Lakotas say it breeds in mid-winter (Buechel 1970:428).

**WARBLERS**
*PAULINAE*

Sixteen different species of warblers are identified as summer residents or migrants at Wind Cave National Park. Of these, three species, the Yellow-breasted chat *Icteria virens*, the common yellow-throat *Geothlypis trichas*, and the yellow-rumped warbler *Dendroica coronata* are considered common in the area. The chat, *w’ikpi zi* in Lakota, was known to sing its songs during the night (Buechel 1970:586). The yellow warbler (*Dendroica petchia*), which is an uncommon summer resident of the park, is called *situpi’-wanblila* [little eagle tailfeathers] in Lakota because its small white feathers are also glued on the tips of the eagle feathers that decorate Lakota warbonnets (Buechel 1970:455).

Another closely related species, the American redstart *Steophaga ruticilla*, is a common summer resident in the Black Hills, but it is not listed in reference to Wind Cave National Park (Froiland 1978:130). The Lakota knew it by three different names, *can’pisko* [tree night-hawk], *kansu zintkala* [plum bird], and *guguya sku* [burnt red]. The first name refers to its wooded habitat, the second to its special association with the plum tree, and the third to the burnt-like appearance of the male’s wing and tail feathers (Buechel 1970:123, 284).

**TANAGERS**
*THRAUPINAE*

The scarlet tanager *Piranga olivacea* was known to the Lakotas because an image of this bird was drawn by Black Hawk in the late nineteenth century (Berlo 2000:136). Its name, however, has not been recorded in available source materials. Similarly, the Cheyennes’ name for this bird is not reported, although Grinnell (1972:1:81) noted that the feathers of the tanager were attached to the sacred bows, *Hohnuhkawo*, of the Contraries. Powell (2002a:69) also writes that the heads of the tanager were tied on thunder bows. The red colors the Cheyennes painted on their person and clothing also represented this bird (Ibid.).

### III. Insects and Spiders

As already reported, most species of insects were linked to birds and other winged species (i.e., bats) in the cosmologies and naming practices of the Cheyennes and Lakotas. Many insects have gone unnamed and unnoticed in published ethnographic sources. Only a few are identified and differentiated according to species, and of these, even fewer are singled out as culturally significant. Of the numerous species of insects located in the region, only ones that have importance in local tribal cosmologies are described here.

**Butterflies, Moths, and Dragonflies**

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The Cheyennes had many names for butterflies, indicating their importance in tribal cosmology. John Moore (1986:182) gives the following identifications:
The Lakotas call the butterfly *kimimila*. Although their scientific species names are not given, the Lakota also distinguish them by color as follows: **-sapa** [black], **-ska** [white], **-sa** [red], **-to** [blue], **-zi** [yellow], and **-gleglega** [speckled] (Buechel 1970:307). *Kimimila ska* is also the name given to the small moths that fly at night and are attracted to light (Ibid.). The miller moth is named *Wa
-nagita-kimimila* [ghost butterfly], and it is admired because it is brave and fearlessly drawn to firelight (Ibid:536; Powers, W. 1986:160).

In the Cheyenne language, the dragonfly was named after the whirlwind, *hevovetaso* (Petter 1913-15:407; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:34; Grinnell 1972:2:112). In Lakota, the dragonfly is known as *tusweca*, and, like the butterfly, it is distinguished by its color: **-tanka zi** [large yellow], **-sa** [red], **-to** [blue], and **-tanka gleglega** [large speckled] (Buechel 1970:503).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

The Lakotas and the Cheyennes associate butterflies, moths, and dragonflies with whirlwinds because of their quick, erratic, and darting movements (Moore, J. 1986:178, 186; Powers, W. 1986:159-160). In fact, the Cheyennes considered the butterfly and the dragonfly to be types of birds in the class of their most “holy” animals known as “messenger” (Moore, J. 1986:178,182).

Since butterflies are often observed by the Cheyennes to swarm around sites where animals are butchered and to drink their blood, they are strongly associated with killing and warfare (Moore, J. 1986:182). According to George Grinnell (1972:1:96), they are often seen in association with a thunderstorm, and so the Cheyennes believe that when the thunders are angry, they shake themselves causing the butterflies, which are their parasites, to fall off them. Green mature dragonflies are associated with summer thunderstorms and green hailstones coming from the South; they are believed to warn people of enemies (Moore, J. 1974a: 157, 158). Immature blue dragonflies are associated with the West and the deep water of the earth, while the white coloration of dragonflies in the fall anticipates the dominance of the North in winter (Ibid:158) The Cheyennes frequently tied butterflies and dragonflies to the hair of their warriors as protective charms, and they also painted their images on shields and on their own bodies to emulate their light and active movements. This was done to help dodge bullets and arrows. Little Chief (also known as Roman Nose), a famous Cheyenne leader, had butterflies painted on the rawhide band that supported the feathers of his warbonnet (Grinnell 1972:2:111-112). Both of these insects were associated with many of the Cheyennes' major ceremonies and were kept in medicine bundles (Moore, J. 1986:182). They were also used as medicines in doctoring (Moore, J.1986:178). Dragonflies, for example, are painted on the bodies of Sun Dancers to represent the whirlwind (Grinnell 1972:2:266; Dorsey, G. 1905:172; Powell 1969:2:844; Moore, J. 1974a:178), and their images are painted on the tipis where the Cheyennes' Sacred Arrows and Sacred Hat were kept (Grinnell 1972:1:89).


The Oglala associated the fluttering, wind-making qualities of the moth’s wings with the underlying powers of the Whirlwind.
They noted that moths and butterflies proceed mysteriously from the confinement of the cocoon; so, this form itself took on special significance and, thus, appeared stylistically represented on a number of objects. The actual cocoon was often found, then wrapped in an eagle plume or down, and worn on the head. This was regarded as a perpetual prayer to the power of the Whirlwind. The sacred cocoon bundle apparently was conceived as being charged with potentiality.

In fact, the Lakota word for a cocoon or pupa, wamni'omni, is derived from the word for whirlwind (Buechel 1970:536). According to Clark Wissler (1905:258), the Lakotas believe that the whirlwind originates in a cocoon formation.

Like the Cheyennes, the Lakotas believe that butterflies and dragonflies are able to escape injury by humans, animals, and even the thunders because of their rapid, whirlwind like movements (Wissler 1905:259). As Wissler (1905:258) described this power: “In the whirlwind somehow and somewhere resides the power to produce confusion of the mind, it became the prayer of the Indian that the minds of his enemies should be confused.” Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:195) also talks about the association of butterflies and dragonflies with whirlwinds and war. He tells of a song appealing to the butterfly and dragonfly that was used by a reknowned Heyoka to cure snowblindness. Black Elk himself received a vision of butterflies in which cocoons were placed on his arms to signify the power of fire and lightning (Ibid:139). In another dream a spotted eagle, a chicken hawk, and a black swallow appeared to him followed by swarms of butterflies and dragonflies as the Thunders and their horsemen approached him (Ibid:228-229). Members of the Lakotas’ Sacred Bow Society painted their robes with dragonfly designs (Blish 1934:185).

Cricket, Grasshoppers, and Locusts

In the 1870s, the Black Hills were reported to be a breeding grounds for grasshoppers, and a location from which they issued forth in great numbers (Progulske 1974:123). This conforms with the movements of other animals that the Lakotas and Cheyennes believed originated in the Hills in the winter months and migrated to surrounding prairies in the spring to feed.

Tribal Taxonomy

The grasshopper goes by two names in the Lakota language: one ascription, psipsicala, refers its jumping actions (Buechel 1970:446) and the other denotes a large variety called anpe’tacagu [day lungs] (Ibid:83). The Cheyennes call the grasshopper hakota (Petter 1913-15:522; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:29). The Cheyennes also identify another variety as emaenasoszeo because its wings turn red at a particular point in its life cycle (Petter 1913-15:895).

Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Use

The Lakotas commonly used grasshoppers as fish bait (Hassrick 1964:172; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:156), and this insect was also reported as a source of food during times of starvation (Kelly1933:123-124).

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

In a Lakota Falling Star story, the grasshopper protects the hero during his travels and gives him power to transform himself into a grasshopper that dies and is reborn (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:402, 405). Grasshoppers are another of the insects represented in the body paintings of Cheyenne Sun Dancers (Powell 1969:795, 833, 843; Grinnell 1972:2:264); more specifically, the imagery of its tracks are painted on the Swifthawk dancer because like the hawk it
is a “swift moving creature” (Powell 1969: 2:833). Figures of this insect mark the tipis where the Cheyennes’ Sacred Arrows and Sacred Hat are kept (Grinnell 1972:1:89). This suggests that grasshoppers may be linked in some way to dragonflies and the likely connection would be their common wind-power attributes.

In Lakota, another grasshopper without wings, whose scientific species identification is unreported, is named ptewo’yake, which translates as “they tell a story of buffalo” (Buechel 1970:449). Robert Holy Elk (1937:44) reported how this insect once told the people where to find bison. A similar idea existed among the Cheyennes, who, according to Grinnell (1972:2:111), captured it to determine the bison’s direction. The captor held the insect in his hand and when it became quiet, the direction in which its antennae pointed was considered the direction where bison were located. However, if one antenna pointed backward, then the bison were not found in that direction.

The common cricket is called heskosema or masiskot in Cheyenne (Petter 1913-15:314-315) or heskósema (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:29). Among the Lakotas, the house cricket is known as a bug that makes a rolling sound in the house, wablu’ ska tiyosl o or –tiyoslola (Buechel 1970:512).

The locust or cicada was called mah’a’-wanglake [watches over the earth or field] in Lakota because it does nothing but sing and watch the fields according to Buechel (1970: 328). This insect is associated with the cloud that descended on the young man who had lascivious thoughts about Pte San Winyan, the White Buffalo Calf Woman (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:40). In Cheyenne, it is known as exa?ohovahe, a term that refers to the role locusts play in helping berries ripen (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:21).

## Ants

### Tribal Taxonomy

In Lakota, the ant is called tajuska or tasuska, and differentiated as follows: tasu’ ska kinyan [flying ant], tasu’ ska sapa [black ant], and tasu’ ska sasa [red ant] (Buechel 1970:475, 483). In Cheyenne, it is given the name azesc (Petter 1913-15:45). Ants are known to afflict people with diseases (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995: 95), but they are also strongly associated with healing. Red ants, for example, were crushed and combined with other medicines to heal wounds when people were shot (Buchel 1970:483). The Cheyenne held a similar notion that eating ants could cure battle wounds (Grinnell 1972:2:138). An ant also appears in one of the Lakotas’ Falling Star stories and provides the hero protection in his travels (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984: 400, 405, 409).

### Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Like other animals that burrow in the ground, ants are held sacred by the Lakotas because they constantly move between subterranean habitats and the earth’s surface, recreating the Lakotas’ own story of emergence from the underworld (Powers, W. 1986:113). The small stones, tunkan, that ants push out of their hills are commonly used in Yuwipi ceremonies and kept in small pouches (Ibid:160). At one time, they were also strung on necklaces (Densmore 1948: 200). These stones and the creatures who bring them to the surface are considered sacred because, as William Powers (1982: 13) writes:

A Yuwipi man will usually try to find such a stone near an anthill, where these industrious creatures have pushed it up to the surface. The Oglalas believe that the surface of the earth is contaminated, but that the earth beneath is clean. Thus the natural objects one finds around any burrow are particularly efficacious for religious purposes. Animals and insects that go back and forth between the surface of the earth and
the underground have knowledge of both worlds and themselves form a fraternity whose members may be called upon to aid the people. Thus spiders, ants, moles, prairie dogs, wolves, coyotes, and snakes, though different in anatomy and behavior, are linked in religious precepts because of their two-worldliness, and the earth and stones found around their holes are particularly efficacious for promoting personal security and welfare.

Cheyennes also used the quartz sand located near anthills; they melted the sand and fashioned it into the image of a small lizard (Grinnell 1972:1:223).

Water Insects

Another insect whose species is not identified is called maga’tasunpe; it is a long-legged black bug that travels on water (Buechel 1970:327). It is associated with healing among the Lakotas, and it is mentioned as one of the spiritual helpers of a Minneconjou female healer (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:171).

Spiders

Tribal Taxonomy

The spider is one of the most significant spiritual presences in Lakota cosmology and important to the Cheyennes as well. In Lakota, the generic name for spider is unktomi or inktomi (Buechel 1970:507), and in Cheyenne, it is ve’hoe (Petter 1913-15: 999-1000; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:105). George Bird Grinnell (1972:2:88-89) argues that the name of the spider is related to their supreme deity, Heammawihio, the Wise one Above. Vehoe or Wihio embodies, as he puts it,

….the idea of mental ability of an order higher than common—superior intelligence. All its uses seem to refer to this mental power. The spider spins a web, and goes up and down, seemingly walking on nothing. It is more able than other insects: hence its name (Ibid:2:88).

Powell (1969:1:300n2), however, claims, based on his reading of Rudolphe Petter’s notes, that Grinnell confused the meaning of vehoe, which refers not to wisdom or a web but to trickery and the intricacy of a finely woven trap.

The origin and meaning of the Lakota word for spider is also elusive, but it is probably connected to Unk, a prefix for a class of water beings known as the Unktehi. Inktomi is the progeny of Inyan, the Stone, and Wakinyan, the Thunders, and he has a half brother Iya, the spiritual personification of gluttony and evil, who is descended from Inyan and Unktehi (Walker 1917:82; Powers, W. 1982:12). In this regard, it is worthwhile to mention too that Inktomi is simultaneously represented as an associate of the Wakinyan and their archrivals, the Unktehi (Dorsey, J. 1894:482; Walker 1980: 118;). This is not surprising given the spider’s protean qualities and its ability to move through all spaces of the cosmos.

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

No matter what the etymological origins of its name, the spider represents the spiritual figure of the trickster in both tribal traditions (Grinnell 1972:2:111; Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:35). The trickster was seen, as Thomas Tyon (in Walker 1980:122) puts it, as the “presiding genius of pranks and practical jokes with power to work magic over persons and things.” Spider is the first animal of creation, the first to develop language, and thus the one to name all other animals. He is cunning yet hapless, deceitful yet naive, arrogant yet cowardly; he is a creator and a destroyer, a quintessential symbol of cosmic foible and contradiction (Brown 1992:47-48). The spider appears in a wide range of traditional stories, many of which were used to instruct children (Grinnell 1926; Deloria 1978). But he also appears among the Lakota as a central figure in
their creation narratives (Walker 1983). It is the spider that uses its guile and trickery to bring Tokahe and other humans to the earth’s surface from their home under the earth, which some Lakotas believe happened at Wind Cave.

In many ways, the spider defies easy categorization in tribal cosmologies and naming practices. As Joseph Eppes Brown (1992:47) notes in reference to the Lakotas, “the spider is special because it transcends classification because it carries features that tie it to all categories of animals.” Spiders are described as mysterious and spiritually wise (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:101; Powers, W. 1986:155-156); they are among a select group of spiritual figures that are appealed to in most major Lakota ceremonies (Walker 1980:208). They are also widely associated with healing power. Their power comes from the fact that they are everywhere, able to travel across all the tiers of the Lakota cosmos from the underground to the sky (Powers, W. 1986:155-156). Luther Standing Bear (1978:26-27) told a story that reflects the spider’s ubiquitous presence as follows:

A Lakota brave was once holding his vigil and fasting. In his vision there came to him a human figure all in black. The person in black handed to the brave a plant and said, ‘Wrap this plant in a piece of buckskin and hang it in your tipi. It will keep you in good health.’ When the brave asked who was speaking to him, the figure answered, ‘I can walk on the water and I can go beneath the water. I can walk on the earth, and I can go into the earth. Also I can fly in the air. I can do more work than any other creature, and my handiwork is everywhere yet no one knows how I work. I am Spider. Go home and tell your people that the Spider has spoken to you.’ This happened long ago, but the Lakotas still use the Spider’s medicine.

Among the Lakotas, spiders are closely connected to healing. According to Mark St. Pierre and Tilda Long Soldier (1995:110-111): “Since the trap-door spider on the prairie was seen to burrow and seek the shelter of the rocks and earth, it is also closely associated with the powers of Mother Earth and is a particularly useful ally in doctoring the sick, and in various incarnations is a common helper of healers.” The spider is frequently addressed in modern Yuwipi songs (Powers, W. 1986:156-157; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:156), and it is also reported in association with the dreams of healers (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:171). Grinnell (1972:2:111) wrote that the spider was an animal the Cheyennes associated with medicine, but he did not specify the nature of the connection.

Another source of the spider’s power is its connection to the Thunders. Thomas Tyon told James Walker (180:170):

If a man is going to kill a spider, it is proper to say this first and then kill it, “Grandfather, wakinyan are killing you!” he says then he kills the spider. Then that man is never bitten by spiders, it is said. When someone does not say that before killing a spider then the spider is offended and spiders bite the man, it is said. Spiders are very wakan, the people believe. This is the end. This belongs to the spider (Iktomi tawayelo).

James Owens Dorsey (1894:479) also wrote about the dangerous consequences of killing spiders without offering them prayers. According to William Powers (1992:156), the Thunders are the only living beings that can attack spiders without fear of retaliation. Dora (Little Wound) Rocks expressed another novel connection to the Thunders (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:49):

The white people are descended from the spider people. They have learned to use electricity. That electricity once belonged only to the Wakinyan [Thunder Beings].

To do this they put up wires on poles. They send these wires all over. As electricity covers the earth, it creates a huge spider web. One day this spider web will cause a great fire. This will cause the buffalo to lose its last leg and fall to the earth. This will be the end of the world.
Historically at least, the Lakotas saw the spider’s web as indestructible, and they often imitated its design to ward off the dangers of the Thunders (Wissler 1904: 44). The design was also used to deflect other sorts of danger too (Powers, W. 1986:159). As Clark Wissler (1904:44) wrote:

The observed fact that a spider manufactures a web, and that this web is not destroyed by bullets or arrows (since they pass through it, leaving only a hole), is cited by some individuals as the basis for the conception that the spider has power to protect people from harm.

Generally speaking, the spider was appealed to and imitated in a wide variety of contexts where people required protection. For example, the warrior members of the Sacred Bow Society hung rawhide images of a spider from their eagle bone whistles (Wissler 1904:44; Blish 1934:185).

Besides the protective symbolism attached to the spider, which this animal also shared with lizards, turtles, and dragonflies (Powers, W. 1986:159,160), there were other symbolic associations, notably, its relationship with technology and industry. Oscar Howe (in Long Soldier and St. Pierre 1995: 49-50) told a story of how the spider design, tohokmu, came to the people. In this story, a young hunter, while searching for game, took shelter in a cave and fell asleep. When he awoke the next morning, he saw a beautiful web above his head. Because he admired it and did not bring harm to its maker, the spider gifted him with knowledge of a hill where stones for making arrowheads could be found. She also instructed him how to make arrowheads, a technology that the Lakotas believe was invented by spiders. In Lakota traditions, there is a fundamental connection between the spiritual powers of spiders and stones (Powers, W.1982:12-13). Arrowheads and stone clubs abandoned on the prairie are often attributed to the work of spiders (Smith, D. 1949:307; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:311n6; Brown 1992:47). In Yuwipi ceremonies, spiders and stones are often addressed simulaneously and even interchangeably in prayer and song (Powers, W. 1986:156-157).

The industry of the spider was not only linked to the making of arrowheads but it was also associated with women’s work. In the buffalo sing for a young woman, the intercessor says, “A spider, a turtle, the voice of the lark, a brave man, children, a smoking tipi” (Walker 1980:249). According to Walker (1980:249), the spider served as a model for an industrious woman who provides adequate food and shelter for her children. Indeed, women who excel at quillwork often link their abilities to the spiritual influence of the spider (Sundstrom, L. 2002).

There is yet another symbolic association and that is the connection of the spider’s web to the Four Winds and the Whirlwind. Designs painted on the blankets of children often involved representations of a spider’s web (Densmore 1918:77), and according to Clark Wissler (1904:248-249), the design symbolized the homes of the winds at the four corners of the universe. This design and a web-like hammock the Lakotas made for their children were thought to bring good fortune (Wissler 1904:248-249; Brown 1992:49). The spider was also symbolically linked to the whirlwind, not only by way of its web, but also through the manner it wraps its eggs in a chrysalis-like pouch (Wissler 1904:44, Brown 1992:49). Like the whirlwind and its associates, the dragonfly and butterfly, the spider is understood to emerge from a cocoon that holds the power that gives rise to its own movement and life force. Cocoons and caves, in many ways, are symbolic equivalents insofar as both represent enclosed spaces where the breath of life incubates awaiting rebirth and regeneration (Brown 1992:49).

The spider’s web, tawogmunke, [ta = meat, wogmunke = trap] (Buechel 1970:485) [gmunke = trap] or towokaske [wowokaske = to tie or imprison] (Powers, W. 1986:152), was associated with trickery and entrapment, especially in matters of romantic in-
terest. Like the hoop of the elk dreamer, the spider’s web had the power to attract and catch a member of the opposite sex (Brown 1992:49), and so the spider’s image was often painted on the lower corner of a courting blanket (Wissler 1905:267).

IV. Reptiles and Amphibians

Nearly twenty different species of reptiles and amphibians are reported at Wind Cave National Park, and again, the park’s website (Pisarowicz 2001) is the principle source of information. A much larger number, however, are identified for the Black Hills region as a whole.

In Lakota and Cheyenne traditions, some orders of reptiles and amphibians are able to cross different planes of the universe, and as a result, they occupied spiritually important positions. Frogs, lizards, and turtles, according to William Powers (1986:162), were considered sacred to the Lakota “because it was believed...that these species fell to the earth during rainstorms.” In fact, certain species of reptiles and amphibians were grouped together and identified by similar names based on their shared spiritual traits.

Frogs and Toads

One species of frog is abundant at Wind Cave National Park, the upland chorus [Pseudacris triserata], while another, the northern leopard [Rana pipiens], is not found in the park even though the habitat is well-suited to its presence. Two species of toads are also present: the woodhouse [Bufo woodhousei] and the great plains toad [Bufo Cognatus]. Another variety, the plains spadefoot [Scaphiopus bombifrons] is largely restricted to the open grassland areas of the park.

Tribal Taxonomy

In Lakota, the generic name for frog is gnaska (Buechel 1970:162), while the bullfrog is known as was’in (Buechel 1970:664). Gnaska’ canli [tobacco frog] designates a small tree frog with a loud voice, and gnaska wakan [holy frog] identifies a frog with a loud voice that sounds like the bray of a donkey (Ibid:162). Tadpoles were called honagila [little spirit voice] and honawitkala (Ibid:184). The toad is known variously as mata’piha (Ibid:334), or witapiha (Ibid:590). In Cheyenne, the frog is known as oonaha’e (Petter 1913-15: 504; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:39), and the toad is named popeeona (Petter 1913-15:504).

There are no specific references in the literature to frogs being taken as food either by the Lakotas or the Cheyennes. Indeed, Lone Man told Francis Densmore (1992:160):

They told me that the frog must not be harmed, as he watches everything in the water and has been given this peculiar power. They told me a great deal about the creatures that live in the water, saying they are taken care of, and water is sent them from the sky when they need it; therefore they should never be treated cruelly.

Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:152), however, claimed that his first use of a bow and arrow involved the killing of a frog.

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

According to Thomas Tyon (Walker 1980:122), frogs were closely associated with “occult powers.” They were viewed as the soldiers of the Thunders, Wakinyan (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear and Sword in Walker 1980:101). The Cheyennes also link frogs to the thunders, and like lizards, they are believed to fall with the rain from storm clouds (Moore, J. 1974a:157). Tadpoles are painted on the ankles of the blacktail deer dancers in their Sun Dance (Powell 1969:2:834). According to Powers (1986: 162), the
Lakotas view frogs as mediators between earth and water, “hard to catch, therefore good to emulate.” Both tribes link them to certain forms of healing (Densmore 1948: 179; Grinnell 1972:2: 135; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995: 197). Toads were also directly associated with healing. Thomas Tyon told James Walker (1980:161) that people who dream of toads become sucking doctors. As he put it:

If a man dreams of a toad, he is a doctor (wapiya), it is said. Whatever these toads suck, they suck hard. So it is that man who dreams of a toad is very wakan, they believe. From the time of his dream, he doctors people using his mouth. He takes all the bad blood out of the body, it is said. Those men who become doctors, Indian doctors, do not do it intentionally. The dreams they have of animals are what cause them to believe they are doctors. Those who dream of the toad believe that it is their leader.

The Cheyennes connect toads, especially the horned variety, with the treatment of snake-bites because they are able to run over snakes without ever being harmed (Grinnell 1972:1:111,150-151).

Symbolic and Spiritual Significance

Among the Lakotas, lizards were the aki-cita of the Thunders, and according to James Walker (1982:104), they were associated with “increase, nourishment, and growth.” In some references, however, the lizard is considered the messenger of the Thunders’ enemy, the Unktehi, a class of water monsters (Walker 1980:118; Dorsey, J. 1894: 482). William Bordeaux (1929:113) indicated that the Lakotas admired the sand lizard because it could kill snakes and other reptiles. As he writes:

The Indians believed and have in fact witnessed sand lizards, Te-La-Ne-We-La, charming and killing snakes and reptiles. On discovering a snake, the lizard would run in a circle around the snake which was coiled up ready for attack or to strike. The lizard would stop, retrace its steps and go in the opposite direction. The object was to worry the snake as much as possible until finally the snake was compelled to uncoil and crawl away. Like a flash the lizard will start from the tail and run the full length of the snake, jumping off at the head and disappearing in the weeds. The snake is killed in this manner either by fright or poison, hence the Sioux Indians regard the sand lizard as a dangerous animal.
William Powers (1986:162) elaborates further on the symbolism associated with lizards as follows:

The lizard can disappear easily into small crevices and therefore represents not only areas above the earth and the earth’s surface but also places beneath the earth. The word *t’elanunse’e* means ‘almost dead’ and refers to the fact that the lizard can deceive enemies by holding itself very still. It is also regarded as capable of living to an old age which is also true of the other creatures in this category.

Some Lakota who encountered lizards in dreams became *Heyoka* or Contraries (Hassrick 1964:214), and others became specialized healers able to treat arthritis (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:183).

The Cheyenne viewed the small, quick moving lizards as spiritual helpers as well, and they were admired for their swift motion and ability to kill snakes (Grinnell 1972:2:110, 111). The Cheyennes did not kill lizards, and if they did do so accidentally, they made offerings to them (Grinnell 1972:2:111). Lizards were considered powerful war charms, giving courage to their wearers and the power to move quickly and escape bullets and arrows (Grinnell 1972:2:110). Certain Cheyenne Sun Dancers paint a white lizard, head upward, on their arms and thighs (Grinnell 1972:2:266,279; Powell 1969:2:795,833), and they carry the figure of a lizard in their hands (Powell 1969:2:845). Figures of the lizard are carved into pipestems used at the Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:270), and they were also cut from rawhide as good luck charms. People who desired to make a vow or obtain power wore these figures (Grinnell 1972:2:110). In the distant past, the Cheyennes made small beads in the image of a lizard fashioned from the quartz sand located near anthills (Grinnell 1972:1:223). The Cheyennes believed that the power associated with lizards was a protection but a danger too, and certain doctors specialized in treating afflictions caused by this animal (Grinnell 1972:2:131). Newts and salamanders were also associated with healing; they were feared and not generally killed except when needed to treat leg pains (Grinnell 1972:2:111; Rockroads in Leman 1987:214; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:55).

The Cheyennes made pouches, shaped like a lizard or a salamander, to hold an infant’s umbilical cord (Grinnell 1972:2:110; Rockroads in Leman 1987:214). The Arapahos followed this practice too, and they made small paint bags in the likeness of lizards (Trenholm 1970:60,73). Pouches in the shape of a lizard were also made by the Lakotas to hold the umbilical cord of male infants to protect them from danger, especially the malevolent, *Anog-Ite*, the Two-Faced Woman who was seen as an enemy of the *Wakinyan* or Thunders (Walker 1982:104; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1985:112). Luther Standing Bear (1978:184) described these pouches as follows:

There was one charm, however, known as the cekpa almale, which every boy possessed and which he wore into his first battle with the hopes that it would bring him home safely. When a Lakota boy was born, a small piece of the umbilical cord was placed in a decorated buckskin bag made in the shape of a lizard. The bag was stuffed with buffalo wool in which was wrapped the piece of cord. The bag was sewed up and placed on the boy’s back and he wore it until he was six or seven years of age. The mother then kept it and gave it to him as a good-luck talisman when he started with his first war-party. The talisman was made in the shape of a lizard, because it can flatten itself on the ground and appear to be dead, whereas it is very much alive and able to run away speedily from its enemies. So the meaning of the talisman was Telanunwela, or ‘dead yet alive.’ If the boy returned in safety, the mother buried the cekpa aknake and it was never seen again.

There were ten different species of snake are found at Wind Cave National Park. The prairie rattlesnake [*Crotalus viridis*] is the most common and often located at the park’s
prairie dog towns, but the bullsnake [*Pituophis melanoleucus*] and the wandering garter [*Thamnophis elegans*] are also abundant. The red-sided garter [*Thamnophis sirtalis*] and the eastern yellow-bellied racer [*Coluber constrictor*] are common, while the western plains garter [*Thamnophis radix*], the Black Hills red-bellied snake [*Storeria occipitomaculata*], the plains western hognose [*Heterodon nasicus*], the pale milk snake [*Lampropeltis triangulum*], and the smooth green snake [*Opheodrys vernalis*] are rare.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

The generic ascription in Lakota for snake is *zuzeca* (Buechel 1970:659), but there are also several species-specific names. The rattlesnake is called, *sintehla* [rattle tail] (Ibid: 54), the garter snake is known as *wagleza* (Ibid:515), and the bull is known as *wangle-glega* or *zuzeca luzahan* [fast snake] (Ibid:541, 659). Buechel only gives the name for the blue racer, *wanto* (Ibid:542), so the yellow variety might have been called *wanzi*. The *zuzeca blaska* [fast snake] was a flat looking snake, possibly the western hognose, while *zuzeca kinyanpi* referred to a flying snake (Ibid:659). And finally, the water snake was known as *mini‘mahel* [inside the water] (Ibid:336). Several different names are given for snakes in Cheyenne: *se?senovotse*, the generic name (Petter 1913-15:986; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:102), *xamaase?senovotse*, the rattlesnake (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:89), *maatameo*, the blue racer, *niee*, bull snake, and *sasooveta*, *saseskoveta* or *saskoveta*, the water snake (Petter 1913-15: 986, 1095; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976: 120).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

Unlike other reptiles, which were highly valued by the Lakotas, snakes were generally feared and avoided (Brown 1992:40; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:113). Snakes were seen as sly and deceitful (Walker 1980:122), and dreams of them portended death and disaster (Dorsey, J. 1894:479-480). They were considered the messengers of the much reviled water creatures, the *Unktehi* (Walker 1980:118). Indeed, Good Seat (Ibid:71) even claimed that the spirits of this bad animal did not move on to the spirit world. In some versions of the White Buffalo Calf woman story, they were the animals that devoured the young man who lusted after *Pte San Winyan* (Walker 1980:149; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:40). In a Falling Star story, a snake is asked to raise the boy, but he declines, saying: “No, I am the most unlike and most pitiful animal of all. I have no legs and have to crawl on my stomach and I eat dirt and can’t get around much. I am not liked and I am not fit to raise him” (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:397). Not surprisingly, snakes were believed to cause serious illnesses that required treatment from powerful healers (Walker 1980:91; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:57-58). In spite of the overall negative attitude towards snakes, they were known as the originating power behind the Lakotas’ sacred Bow Society (Blish 1934:183), and their skins were tied around the bows and sometimes used as protection against danger (Blish 1934:183; Powers, W. 1986:160). Snake venom was used by the Lakotas to make poison arrows (Bordeaux 1929:157-158).

The Cheyennes, like the Arapahos, held the snake in much higher regard than the Lakotas. In the Arapaho creation story, the garter snake sacrificed itself by becoming the circumference of the universe. The outer rim of the Arapahos' sacred Wheel has one end tapered like the tail of a snake and the other fashioned into its head (Trenholm 1970:56; Harrod 1987:51). The Cheyenne believed the blue racer, which came from the sun, was a snake with great power (Grinnell 1972:1:150). The Cheyennes carved some of their flutes in the image of a snake (Grinnell 1972:1:205), their Elk Soldiers carried elk horn instruments carved in the image of a snake (Grinnell 1972:2:58), and their Sun Dance priests used...
pistems with snake carvings (Ibid:270). These snake images probably represented the much-revered blue racers. Rattlesnakes, on the other hand, were greatly feared by the Cheyennes. Only a few of their healers were able to treat this snake’s venomous bites (Ibid:148-150).

**Turtles**

Two turtles are reported at Wind Cave. The snapping turtle [*Chelydra serpentina*] is commonly found along streambeds, while the western painted turtle [*Chrysemys picta*] is located near shallow water and at soft muddy locations.

**Tribal Taxonomy**

In the Lakota language, the generic name for turtles is *ke* or *keya* (Buechel 1970:297). Many varieties are differentiated by species-specific names in Lakota as well, although Buechel never identified any of them with scientific taxonomies. There was a species of turtle associated with trees, *ke can’h’a*, another variety that was spotted and lived on land, *ke geleza*, and one that was soft-shelled, *ke nununja* (Ibid: 297). There was a small water turtle known as *patkasa*, *patkasala*, or *ta’tka’sa* (Ibid:436, 827) and two additional ones, the *ke skokpa*, a large turtle, and the *ke s’samna*, a stink turtle (Ibid:665). The Cheyennes named the turtle *ma?eno*, which is the same word for fog. The Cheyennes connect this animal to the creation of the world when it still existed in a primal mist (Petter 1913-15:489,1072; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:116). They also see it as a symbol of the womb (Petter 1913-15:1072).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Practical Use**

Turtles and their eggs were eaten and considered delicacies by both the Cheyennes and Lakotas (Bordeaux 1929:200; Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:90; Hassrick 1964:173; Grinnell 1972:1:256). Adults and child-

The turtles which we caught out of the beaver pond made a good food, so we boys often went fishing for turtles. First we looked for them along the banks. If we did not find them there, we went into the water for them, either wading or swimming. Turtles like sunbaths, so we slipped along quietly, hoping to catch sight of them lying in the sand. Maybe a log extended from the water to the shore and a whole row of turtles would be on it enjoying the sun.

William Bordeaux (1929:200-201) also describes the ways in which Lakotas once captured turtles.

When turtles were killed by the Cheyennes, their entrails were removed. Standing on the edges of their shells, they were placed around a fire and roasted. Sometimes they were also boiled in their shells (Grinnell 1972:1:308). The Lakotas often boiled their turtle meat in soups (Standing Bear 1988:64; Hassrick 1964:173; Walking Bull 1980:11-12). Turtle shells were also used by the Cheyennes to make bowls (Grinnell 1972:1:171) and sometimes spoons (Hoebel 1960:62). The Lakotas made them into serving dishes and used them as paint pots (Standing Bear 1975:15, 21); they also attached them to their children’s clothes to ward off sickness (Bordeaux 1929:112-113). The Plains Apaches attached the bones of snapping turtles to their children’s dress to repel snakes (Schweinfurth 2002:104).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

The movement of turtles, according to Standing Bear (1988:65), served as a practical sign that a body of water would dry up
after they departed. The turtle’s simultaneous link with earth and water imbued it with feminine and procreative symbolism in Lakota cosmology (Meeker 1901a:163; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:112). The Lakota believed that the turtle spirit was a wise protector of life. Women often wore small beaded turtles as fertility charms on their belts (Densmore 1948: 193). Its shield protected it from being wounded, and thus, it was also associated with powers over surgery, accidents, conception, birth, infants, and illnesses specific to women (Walker 1917:147, 1980:122, 249). In the *Pte San Lowanpi*, a coming of age ceremony for young women, the turtle was held up as an animal to emulate because “it hears many things and does not tell anything” (Walker 1980:249).

Turtles appeared in visions (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:121-122; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:109), and women who received power from them often cured infertility and other female reproductive complications (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:112,113). They played an important role in Lakota healing, not only in giving doctors spiritual guidance (Powers, W. 1986:162), but also as a remedy for specific illnesses. Eating the heart of a turtle, for example, treated infertility and menstrual disorders, (Walker 1917: 147; Wissler 1904:241-242).

Pouches to hold an infant’s umbilical cord were also made in the shape of a turtle (Wissler 1904:241; Red Shirt 2002:114). Turtle designs appeared on cradleboards and women’s leggings. The U-shaped designs beaded on the bodice and wing-like arm extensions of a Lakota woman’s buckskin dress represented the breast and shells of turtles respectively. These were often placed against solid blue backgrounds that represented the water in “both the seen and unseen world” (Wissler 1904:240).

The Cheyennes also considered the turtle to be a sacred animal because it was difficult to kill (Marriott and Rachlin 1975:78; Grinnell 1972:1:193). Like the Lakotas, the Cheyennes placed an infant’s umbilical cord in pouches made in the form of a turtle (Grinnell 1972:2:110). Cheyenne doctors appealed to turtles in some of their healing treatments (Ibid:1:146), and warriors often carried their shells so that they would recover when wounded (Ibid:1:193). Turtles are also carved onto the stem of the pipes used in the Cheyenne Sun Dance (Ibid:2:232, 270).

V. Fish, Crustaceans, and Mollusks

Fish

The northern plains region is not typically associated with fish, and at least historically, some observers claimed that many local tribes were loathe to eat them. Although fishing was not a major subsistence pursuit for most of the tribes in the region, it was a routine activity that supplemented and added variety to the diets of the Lakotas and Cheyennes (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:89; Hoebel 1960:64; Hassrick 1964:173; Grinnell 1972:1:114; Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9). John Moore (1974a: 208) argues, however, that fish was not a preferred food and considered a sign of poverty. Fishing was a common occupation for young boys among the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:1:114) and among the Lakotas. Standing Bear (1988:65-66) and Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:156-157,161) fondly recalled fishing in the streams of the Black Hills during their childhood years.

History & Habitat

Only a few varieties of fish are native to the waterways of the Black Hills and the larger rivers surrounding them. In 1875, Lt. Richard Dodge (1965:126) reported seeing suckers and dace in some of the Hills’ streams and catfish in surrounding waterways. Today, some of these species or closely related ones are being restocked in streams managed by federal agencies. In the waterways that cross Wind Cave National Park, including Beaver, Highland,
and Cold Spring Creeks, six species are reported: brook trout [*Salvelinus fontinalis*], white sucker [*catostomus commersoni*], mountain sucker [*Catostomus platrhythms*], longnose dace [*rhinichthys cataractae*], creek chub [*Semotilus astromaculatus*], and fathead minnow [*Pimephales promelas*] (Pisarowicz 2001d).

**Tribal Taxonomy**

In the Lakota language, fish are generically known as *hogan*, and minnows are called *hogansa* or *hoganscila* (Buechel 1970: 180-181). Lakota names for fish species include: *hoiwootka*, or *hosan* [carp] (Ibid:182), *howasapa* [catfish] (Ibid:186), *hoka* or *zeze* [eel or *fish snake*) (Ibid: 182, 659), *hologielega* [trout] and *holaska* or *hoblaska* [chad] (Ibid:181). In Cheyenne, the generic name for fish is *noma?he* or *noma?ne* (Petter 1913-15:482; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:39), while the catfish is called *axeho* [*water monster-animal*] (Petter1913-15:482; Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:18).

**Modes of Procurement, Preparation, and Practical Use**

The Lakotas and Cheyennes fished for suckers, catfish, and redfins, and they used a variety of different techniques in their fishing pursuits. In one, fish were speared (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:156-157, 161; Hassrick 1964:173). According to one of Royal B. Hassrick’s consultants:

Suckers never bit when we fished for them, so we used spears. These were made from forked poles about six feet long, with four barbed-like notches on the inside of each sharpened prong. If you missed the fish with the prong, it was certain to be caught by the center barbs. We also caught suckers in another way by attaching a noose of rawhide to the end of a pole. Then putting the loop in the water, we carefully slipped it over the fish’s head past his gills. By jerking very rapidly, we often caught a sucker (Hassrick 1964:173).

Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:156-157) elaborated upon this in relation to “calling fish” as follows:

We have a boy who [*calls the fish and catches them and*] puts the fish on a stick with a fork on the end so that it will not fall off and then he kisses it. If you don’t kiss the fish, you don’t get any. They should all be very quiet except the fisherman...There was another boy [*the caller*] who, when he say this line to the fish, he would pull them out one after the other. We got about thirty fish on two sticks, and went home with them. Whenever we caught a small fish that is no good, we would kiss it and throw it back in the water, meaning that he should tell the bigger fish to come along. The reason we talk to fish was that we should be like relatives to all animals as I had seen in my vision. We were ready to go home and the bait we had left we offered to the fish in payment for the fish we had gotten. The next time we went fishing we would be lucky.

Other popular techniques entailed seining fish upriver toward a waterfall (Hassrick 1969:173) or catching them with a bone hook attached to a long line of sinew and a willow pole (Standing Buffalo 1988:66-67). The Cheyennes caught fish with lines made from buffalo sinew to which meat was attached (Iron Teeth in Marquis and Limbaugh 1973:9), and they also made lines from horsehair (Wooden Leg in Marquis 1931:89). Among the Lakotas, lines were made from horsehair and hooks from the rib of a mouse (Bordeaux 1929:130). Grasshoppers were a popular bait, and bits of venison pancreas were commonly used too (Hassrick 1964:172; DeMallie 1984:156). Standing Bear (1988: 66) described other kinds of bait as follows:

For bait we used buffalo meat. Fish will not notice cooked meat, so, of course our bait was raw. Also fish are attracted to red, so we gathered along our way some red berries, perhaps the buds of the wild rose. By throwing these into the water, we would
soon find out if there were any fish there. We tested for fish in this way until we found a spot where the fish were before using our buffalo meat.

The Lakotas baked their fish in a small pit lined with leaves, or they parboiled them (Hassrick 1964:173).

The Cheyennes used seining techniques as well (Grinnell 1972:2:48, 308), but more typically, they caught fish in a pen made of willow saplings, which was built under the supervision of a medicine man. Once the fish were trapped, a small opening was made in the pen and an appointed man pulled the fish out with his hands. Such traps were commonly used to capture suckers and whitefish (Curtis 1907-30:6: 156; Grinnell 1972:1:311). Before metal was introduced to the Cheyennes in trade, spines were taken from the side of the head of a large catfish to make awls (Grinnell 1972:1:218). And before beads were acquired from European American traders, necklaces were fashioned from the vertebrae of fish (Grinnell 1972:1:223).

**Symbolic and Spiritual Significance**

The Lakotas considered fish wakan, a “patron of abolition,” and a source of healing power connected to water (Tyon, Garnett, Thunder Bear, and Sword in Walker 1980:101, Walker 1980:122; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:139). Those who dreamed of fish became healers (Walker 1980:161; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:171), and Black Elk was one of the people who received healing powers from fish (in DeMallie 1984:139). Today, fish are sometimes served in ceremonies because they are a favorite food of bear and eagle spirits (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:171). The Cheyennes also linked fish to healing, and George Bird Grinnell (1972:2:151) presents an example of this when Spotted Wolf is wounded and dives into the water to retrieve a fish upon instructions he receives from a kingfisher.

**Crustaceans and Mollusks**

Historically, many of the rivers and streams in the central Plains were well stocked with mussels and snails (Hayden 1862b:179-182). Ferdinand Hayden (Ibid: 179) found few living shells in the Black Hills in 1857, but he did observe that many of the little streams were filled with land and freshwater shells. Shells were used for spoons, paint pots, incense containers, and scrapers (Densmore 1918:399, 1948:172, 195; Wedel and Frison 2001: 52). Snails went by several different names in Lakota: mniwamnuh’a (Buechel 1970:339), tunsila, a name also used for leeches (Ibid:502), and wahacan kakic’ in [one who carries a shield on their back] (Ibid:517). Their shells served as ornamentation (Buechel 1970:339; Densmore 1948:200). Clams were called tuki and the shell without the animal, tuki’ ha (Buechel 1970:501). Another word for shell was kanpe’ ska or panke’ ska, after which the Platte River, Panke’sha Wakpa, is named (Riggs 1968:259; Buechel 1970:430).

The Cheyennes knew the clam or mussel as hexovo (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:21) and the snail as nimac (Petter 1913-15:986). They sometimes decorated the fringe of their leggings with these shells (Grinnell 1972:1:221). Mussel shells are related to the West direction and the moon, which is also tied to the claws of carnivores and horns of ruminants (Moore, J. 1974a:152).

Local tribes also procured a variety of crustaceans for food and manufacture. In Lakota, crayfish are called matu’ gna, and crawfish are known as matuska (Buechel 1970:334). The Lakotas boiled and fried crustaceans. The claws of the crayfish were boiled, and when they turned red, they were treated with grease and used as ornaments on clothing (Bordeaux 1929:131). The Cheyenne knew them as hetoxtne (Petter 1913-15:313).
APPENDIX B

PLANTS OF THE BLACK HILLS AND WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK:
Their Cultural Uses & Meanings

The plants described in this appendix are organized into four major groups: 1) Non-Vascular Plants: Fungi, Lichens, and Moss; 2) Vascular Plants: Flowering Forbs; 3) Vascular Plants: Grasses, Sedges, Rushes, and Horsetails; and 4) Woody Plants. Again, all references to plant species at Wind Cave National Park come from the park’s websites (Pisarowicz 2001f, 2001g, 2001h, 2001i, 2001j, and 2001k, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c).

This listing is not inclusive of the plants located in the Black Hills, nor does it cover all the names and uses of plants among the tribes known to have occupied the area in historic times. Some of the scientific and common plant names listed by ethno-graphers do not correspond with new scientific nomenclatures. An asterisk is placed next to all plant names that have not been matched with listings on the USDA’s plant database (http://plants.usda.gov/tools_html).

I. NON-VASCULAR PLANTS: FUNGI, LICHENS, & MOSS

A wide variety of non-vascular plants were used by the tribal nations of the northern Plains for food and other purposes, although many of them have not been identified and correlated with indigenous nomenclatures. These are found throughout the Black Hills growing on trees, rocks, and soils common to the region.

Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:169; Hart 1981:2, 3, 4)
of these match some of the varieties found at the park.

**Uses:** A wide variety of non-vascular plants were used for food and medicine but also in art and manufacturing.

**[food]** The tribal nations who lived in the Black Hills region ate certain fungi. Melvin Gilmore (1919:61-62) observed Lakota women gathering elm cap [*Pleurotus ulmarius*] for food from decayed areas of box elder and elm trees. Luther Standing Bear (1978:58) and Christina Little Horse (in Lewis 1980:253) describe this as well. The Lakotas also gathered bracket fungi for food from young ash trees (Standing Bear 1978:62). The Poncas boiled and ate puff-balls, and the Cheyennes consumed another large fungus of unknown origin that grows on cottonwood trees (Grinnell 1972:2:168). Many northern plains tribes found puffballs [*Lycoperdon*] to be a palatable food (Gilmore 1919:63; Vestal and Schultes 1939: 12).

**[medicinal]** The Cheyennes, Lakotas, Poncas, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches moist-ened the dry spores of puffballs [*Lycoperdon*] to use as a styptic for sores, scratches, and an infant’s umbilicus (Gilmore 1919:63; Vestal and Schultes 1939:12; Jordan 1965:1135-136; Hart 1981:3; Lewis, T. 1990:135; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:84; Red Shirt 2002: 114). Lakotas used *Parmeliaceae* in their treatments for rheumatism (Denmores 1918:271). The Kiowas applied a variety of lichens, which were dried and powdered, to treat sore and abscessed gums (Vestal and Schultes 1939:12). According to the Cheyennes who Grinnell (1972:2:169) interviewed, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, which grows on diseased pine trees, was burned with sweet grass to purify and make other medicines stronger (Hart 1981:3).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Kiowas also mixed lichens in their tobacco mixtures for ceremonial smoking (Vestal and Schultes 1939:12). Lame Deer (in Fire and Erdoes 1972:177), a Lakota medicine man, reported that stones with lichens are preferred for burning in sweatlodges because they don’t crack or burst. In Lakota origin stories, *Wohpe* is the one who creates puffballs (Walker 1983:365-366).

**[art & manufacture]** Some lichens were also used to make yellow dyes for porcupine quills (Gilmore 1919:63; Buechel 1970:5, 93).

**II. VASCULAR PLANTS: FLOWERING FORBS**

There are more than 300 different species of flowering forbs described in Larson and Johnson’s book (1999) on the plants of the Black Hills. Of these, nearly half are documented in ethnographies and ethnobotanies for the tribal nations who lived in the region during historic times. And more than three-quarters of the plants reported at Wind Cave National Park have names and/or traditional uses among the tribes who lived historically in the region. A few other species, which are not reported in Larson and Johnson’s work (1999), are included here as well, not only because they were used by local tribal nations but also because they are commonly found in the grassland or sagebrush steppe habitats surrounding the Hills.

**Agavaceae**

**Agave Family**

**Yucca glauca**

Also known as soapweed, *Yucca glauca* [*yucca*] is the only member of the agave family reported in the Black Hills. Widespread in the high plains area of the United States, it is a plant for which resi-dent American Indian populations had many uses. The plant’s capacity to produce high levels of saponins, steroid derivatives, may very well account for its popularity in native and Euroamerican hygienic and medicinal practices (Kindscher 1987:224-227, 1992: 219-223).
Names:

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:12; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53)
*hestahpano? (no translation provided)
alternate: *hestapano [soap weed]

Comanche [Carlson and Jones 1939:524]
*mu:mutsi [no translation given]

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultz 193917)
kaw-izee-a-tzo-tee-a [no translations given]
alternates: ol-po-on-a
kee-aw-gee-tzot-ha’-a’

Lakota (Buechel 1970:190; Rogers 1980:30; Walker 1980:93)
hupe’stola [sharp pointed stem]
alternates: icahpaha pejuta [medicine that grows in a bunch or cluster]
pesto’stola [sharp pointed stem]
tazi-yazan pejuta [stomachache medicine]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:54)
da o ig o a [appears whitish]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:71)
duwada-’wa-hi [no translation provided]

Habitat: Soapweed is widely found throughout the high plains in sandy blowouts and hillsides from Montana to Texas, and it is a species common to the grassland foothills of the Black Hills including those located at Wind Cave National Park (Kindscher 1987:225; Larson and Johnson 1999:44; Pisarowicz 2001h:1).

Uses: This is one of the most versatile plants in the northern Plains because its flowers, stalks, fruits, leaves, and roots were reused for food, medicinal, hygienic, and/or manufacturing purposes (Kindscher 1987: 225-226).

[food] In the northern areas of the Plains, this plant is rarely listed as an important source of food, although the Kiowas and Plains Apaches who once resided in the region of the Black Hills ate the flower stalks and called them “Indian cabbage” in English (Vestal and Schultz 1939:17; Jordan 1965:54; Kindscher 1987:226). The Chey-ennes considered the seedpods edible (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53). The native peoples of the Southwest commonly ate the fruits and flower pistils (Larson and Johnson 1999:44), but there is no published evidence for this practice among the tribes of the Black Hills.

[medicinal] According to Reverend Eugene Buechel (1970:190), the Lakotas had two major medicinal uses for this plant. In one, the plant was mixed in tepid water and used as a tea to treat stomachaches, and in the other, it was combined with prickly pear cactus roots in a medicinal solution to aid birthing. He also points out, however, that it was known to have dangerous side effects when used obstetrically because it could cause a fetus to be aborted. As the Lakota medicine man, Archie Fire a.k.a. Lame Deer (in Fire and Erdoes 1972:172) said, “This medicine is *lila wakan* -- very sacred, working two ways.” Another Lakota, George Sword (in Walker 1980:93), reported that powders were made from the plant and mixed with water to treat swellings and stomachaches. The Chey-ennes pulverized the root to make a powder to apply to sores, rashes, and other skin ailments (Hart 1981:12). Melvin Gilmore (1919:71) noted that the Poncas and Omahas burned the root as a medicinal remedy for unidentified medical conditions. The Plains Apaches used strips of yucca leaves to wrap and tie poultices around an injury (Jordan 1965:54). 1981:12). European Americans of the Plains and Intermountain West were known to use this plant in making remedies for the treatment of arthritis, and it is still popular for this purpose among herbalists today (Kindscher 1992:221-22; Tilford 1997:172).

[cosmetic & hygienic] Among the Lakotas, the sudsy lather produced from the roots was used to make soap for cleaning hair, and it served as a tonic to treat lice infestation. Along with the Cheyennes, the Lakotas believed the plant was able to promote hair growth (Gilmore 1913b:358; Buechel 1970:190; Rogers 1980:30; Fire and Erdoes 1972:172; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53; Suka Sni Win n.d.:15). Luther Standing Bear (1978:65) wrote:

The pride of both Lakota men and women was a splendid head of hair, and especial attention
was given to its care as a mark of good breeding. The women were especially proud of long hair and brushed and smoothed their long braids to keep them from breaking. Frequent washings in hupestola kept the hair glossy. Every morning a married woman had her hair brushed and her face painted for the day by her husband. This was a mark of respect that every Lakota brave paid his spouse.

Among the Cheyennes, Comanches, Kio-was, and Plains Apaches, the root was used to clean hair as well and to treat dandruff and baldness (Carlson and Jones 1939:524; Vestal and Schultes 1939:19; Jordan 1965: 150; Hart 1981:12; Kindscher 1987:226). The Plains Apaches and Arapahos also used it to wash clothes and blankets (Nickerson 1966:47; Jordan 1965:151).

[veterinary] The Lakotas believed that yucca had “wakan” or sacred qualities when smoke from its burning roots were used to control horses (Buechel 1970). As Lame Deer (in Fire and Erdoes 1972:172) put it, “Let these animals smell its smoke and they slow up, quiet down enough for you to catch them.”

[art & manufacture] The Lakotas bundled the sharp pointed leaves to use as fire drills. They employed the roots in solutions to tan hides (Gilmore 1913b:358; Kindscher 1992: 226). The Lakotas and the Plains Apaches used the sharp point as a needle and made thread from the leaves (Gilmore 1919:71; Rogers 1980:28; Jordan 1965:90). The Cheyennes used yucca leaves in their bas-ketry for a game called ko keo has in e ya (Grinnell 1972:1:246, 332), and the Plains Apaches made them into a puzzle game (Jordan 1965:89-90).

[fuel] The Cheyennes made punks out of dry, rotten yucca roots to transport fire (Grinnell 1972:2:543), and the Lakotas used yucca as a fire-starter and as a means of transporting it (Mallery 1886:291; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:311).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Lakota spiritual leader Nicholas Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:311) describes how the Lakotas attributed to the origins of fire to the yucca plant.

**Alismataceae**

**Water Plantain Family**

Two plants in the Water Plantain Family, *Sagittaria cuneata* [arumleaf arrowhead], described below, and *Alisma plantago* [water plantain], which is found largely in regions east of the Black Hills, are named in the botanical nomenclatures of the tribal nations who resided in this area. In Lakota, water plantain is called wakinyanla pahli’ hu [small thunder stick in the ground stem] (Buechel 1970:531; Rogers 1980:25). It is one of the plants mentioned in the Lakota creation story (Walker 1983:234).

**Sagittaria cuneata or latifolia** [arumleaf arrowhead]

Also known as Duck potato, this is the most common *sagittaria* species found in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:46).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:170; Hart 1981:7)
ho hast soh’ [shining stalk]
alternate:heshexova?tovotsr [no translation given]

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:176, 447; Rogers 1980:26)
hinhan tahanpe [refers to the shape of its leaves]
alternate: pstio’la hu [bead plant]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:65)
sin [no translation given]

**Habitat:** In the Black Hills, this plant is generally located at the margins of low elevation ponds and streams (Larson and Johnson 1999:46).

**Uses:** The tubers were a valued source of food especially for tribal nations located in the prairies east of the Black Hills.

**food** The Cheyennes ate the stalk below the blossom raw (Grinnell 1972:2:170), and the Arapahos consumed them fresh as well
Lakota women and men gathered arrowhead tubers from local waters (Hassrick 1964:179; Standing Bear 1978:58). They were prepared for consumption through boiling or roasting (Buechel 1970:176; Gilmore 1919:65). Christina Little Horse (in Lewis, L. 1980:251) recollected her grandmother gathering these and said:

When she would go out to pick the berries and wild food she had been used to eating, she would take me along. Usually the first place we’d go would be the creek. There was a plant growing there she called “spetola.” That word meant beads. She’d take the plant out of the muddy, slushy water where the leaves would be floating on top of the water. She’d reach into the water with her hands and dig around and she would come up with a white, cordlike root with little bumps on it from about the size of a walnut down to the size of small beans. The root and the bumps together looked just like a string of beads. She would take all those beadlike things off the cordlike root and wash them in water. Then she’d boil them and they tasted just like mashed potatoes. She said they were Indian beans.

[medicinal] The Lakotas were known to have used the tubers for unspecified medicinal purposes (Gilmore 1919:65; Buechel 1970:176), and the Cheyennes combined the leaves in an herbal mixture whose applications are not reported (Hart 1981:7).


Amarantheae
Amaranth Family

Two species from this family are reported in Wind Cave National Park, *Amaranthaea retroflexus* [rough pigweed or redroot amaranth] and *A. albus* [prostrate pigweed] (Pisarowicz 2001k:4); both grow in ravine environments.

Names:

- *AmaranthAEA*
- *Amarantheae*
- *Carrot Family*

The carrot family contains species that have diametrically opposing affects on humans. Both the poisonous and the beneficial are found in the Black Hills. Some such as water hemlock and poison hemlock are deadly but remarkably similar in appearance to plants with potential medicinal and nutritional value. Although most tribes relied on various species within this family, they appear to have played a much more central role as food staples for populations, such as the Comanches, Shoshones, and Utes, who were known historically to reside in regions on the southwestern edge of the Black Hills. Other species with important food and medicinal uses, but not reported in the Hills, include *Ligusticum porteri* [Por-ter’s Lovage a.k.a.
bear medicine], a high elevation plant found over much of the Rocky Mountain West (Albers and Lowry 1995:55).

**Cicuta**  
[water hemlock]

The Lakotas named this plant *yajopi hu cik' ala* [small flute stem]. In spite of the fact that this is a highly poisonous plant, it was used to treat stomach ailments (Buechel 1970:622; Rogers 1980:33). The Lakota name for it has nothing to do with making a musical sound, but rather, according to Dilwyn Rogers (1980:33), it was similar in appearance to a parsnip that was relied upon for this purpose. Water hemlock is widely found in the Black Hills in moist habitats from low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:46).

**Conium maculatum**  
[poison hemlock]

Abundant in many locations throughout the Hills and found at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:48; Pisarowicz 2001k:3), poison hemlock was called *yajopi hu* [flute stem] in Lakota (Buechel 1970:622; Rogers 1980:33). Its stem was not used to make a musical instrument, however (see above).

**Daucus carota**  
[Queen Anne’s lace]

This plant of the northern and central Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:48) has no documented ethnobotanical uses for either the Plains Indians or European Americans who lived in the region. It grows at Wind Cave National Park.

**Heracleum maximum**  
[cowparsnep]

Cowparsnip is one of a number of plants that are not readily found in the prairie regions east of the Black Hills, and as a result, the Hills would have been a good place for local tribal nations to find it.

**Names:**

- **Arapaho** (Nickerson 1966:49)  
  *nee-a-tat* [no translation given]

- **Cheyenne** (Hart 1981:40)  
  *hetahpenn*estse *[his flute plant]*

- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970:622; Rogers 1980:33)  
  *yajopi hu* [flute stem]

- **Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:107)  
  *zhaha-makan* [beaver medicine]

**Habitat:** Cowparsnip is occasionally found in moist habitats along streams or in woods and thickets at low to mid elevations in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:50). It is located at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:2).

**Uses:** Most of the tribal nations in the Black Hills region used cowparsnip for medicinal purposes (Kindscher 1992:254-255).

- **[food]** This plant’s leaves and stems are edible (Tilford 1997:42; Larson and Johnson 1999:50), but only the Shoshones and Arapahos are reported to have taken them as a source of food (Nickerson 1966:49).

- **[medicinal]** The Poncas boiled the root for intestinal pain (Gilmore 1919:107), and the Lakotas also used the root in decoctions to treat stomach ailments (Buechel 1970:622). The Shoshones and Arapahos considered this one of their main plants for making medicines, and they used it in the treatment of colds and flu. They also administered it as a medicinal wash and applied the pounded root in massage therapies (Nickerson 1966:49). European American settlers relied on it for healing remedies as well (Kindscher 1992:255; Tilford 1997:42).

- **[art & manufacture]** The Cheyennes made courting whistles from the hollow stems of the cowparsnip (Hart 1981:40), while the Lakotas...
made whistles for children (Buechel 1970:622).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Poncas placed it in the hole where their ceremonial pole was planted (Gilmore 1919:107), and the Arapahos combined the dried root with Bull Durham for use in social smoking (Nickerson 1966:49).

**Ligusticum Porteri**

**[Osha or Porter's Lovage or licorice-root]**

Also known as Porter’s Lovage, the root of this plant is a popular medicine, known among many American Indian tribal nations as “bear’s root.” Although neither this plant nor the closely related species known as Angelica are reported in the Black Hills, it is mentioned here because it represents an important medicinal and ceremonial plant for many of the tribal nations who live in the Black Hills region. It has a spicy celery like odor and bears a strong resemblance to the poisonous water hemlock, but osha usually grows at elevations (above 5000 feet), higher than the poisonous hemlock (Tilford 1997:178, 204).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:182)

nahko hes tam oka  [bear’s food]

Lakota (Lewis, T. 1990:47)

canli icaibiye  [tobacco leaf]

**Uses:** This has been a very important ceremonial and medicinal plant for Euro- pean Americans and American Indian populations in the region. Today, it is widely traded among tribal nations in the northern Plains, although interestingly the exact botanical identity of the plant as used among the Lakotas, the Cheyennes, and the Utes has only been confirmed in published sources in recent years (Lewis, T. 1990:47; Black Elk and Lyon 1990:191).

[medicinal] The Cheyennes brew a tea from the root to treat diarrhea (Grinnell 1972: 2:102). The Lakotas use it to treat bronchitis and other respiratory ailments, and they apply it as a salve to heal facial sores (Lewis, T. 1990:134). The Blackfeet and tribal nations in the Northwest employ it for respiratory distress, fevers, and stomach-aches. European American herbalists rely on osha for a variety of respiratory complaints (Tilford 1997:204), and they prescribe angelica, as do Chinese herbalists, to relieve female reproductive ailments (Tilford 1997: 198).

[cosmetic & hygienic] The Lakotas believe that the smell of the root prevents snakes from entering a house (Lewis, T. 1990:134).

oblinsalt it in the hole where their ceremonial pole was planted (Gilmore 1919:107), and the Arapahos combined the dried root with Bull Durham for use in social smoking (Nickerson 1966:49).

**Lomatium foeniculaceum**

**[desert biscuitroot]**

Also known as Prairie parsley or Wild parsley, this and the closely related L. orientale [Northern Idaho biscuitroot], and L. dissectum [fernleaf biscuitroot] were im-portant food and medicinal plants for tribal nations in the northern Plains (Kindscher 1987:147-48; 1992:260-261). Larson and Johnson (1999) list only the desert biscuit root in their ethnobotanical survey of the Black Hills. Some of the other Lomatium species may exist in the region but are infer-quent in their occurrence.

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:182; Hart 1981:40)

motsins’tahn  [no translation given]

L. dissectum alternates: motsensstoste

nahko ‘hes tam oka  [bear food]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:460; Rogers 1980:33)

sahi’yela  tatin’psinla (Cheyenne turnip)

L. orientale

sahi’yela  tatin’psinla huzizi [Cheyenne turnip with yellow stem]

L. nuttali* alternate: wahcazi iyawiskapa [yellow flower that sticks to a person]
**Habitat:** Often found in heavy clay soils on the dry plains and foothills, the desert biscuitroot is fairly common throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:50).

**Uses:** The various species of *Lomatium* had important culinary and medicinal uses for the tribal nations of the region.


[medicinal] Shoshone and Bannock populations considered desert biscuitroot “the Big Medicine,” and used it for many different medicinal treatments (Kindscher 1992:260). The Cheyennes pulverized the root of *L.dissectum* and brewed it in a tea for chest pains and other internal ailments, and they also made an infusion from the root that was applied externally to reduce swellings. The powdered leaves and roots of *L. orientale* were made into a tea used in the treatment of bowel pain and diarrhea (Grinnell 1972:2:181).

**Osmorhiza spp.**

[sweetcicely or sweetroot]

Several varieties of *Osmorhiza*, including *O. depauperata* [bluntseed sweet root] and *O. berteroii* [sweetcicely], were used by many of the tribal nations who lived in the Black Hills region.

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:181; Hart 1981:40).
*ma ta mhao e* (spiny infusion by heat)
alternate: *mah.tmahaa?e(ho?)* [old lady]

**Lakota** (Gilmore 1919:107)
*cha-pezhuta* [wood root]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:107)
*shanga-makan* [horse medicine]

**Habitat:** *Osmorhiza* species are restricted to the moist environments of the low to mid elevation regions of the central and northern Black Hills, where their appearance is occasional (Rogers & Johnson 1999:52).

**Uses:** Sweetcicely appears to have been used primarily for medicinal purposes among the tribal nations of the region.

[medicinal] The Cheyennes pulverized the leaves, stems, and roots and combined them in an infusion to treat stomach bloating and other abdominal complaints. An infusion was also made from the roots to treat kidney disorders. In addition, the Cheyennes chewed the roots and brewed a tea from the leaves to treat colds (Grinnell 1972:2:181-82; Hart 1981:40). The Poncas made a poultice out of the roots to doctor boils, and their Omaha cousins used the roots in healing wounds (Gilmore 1919:107; (Fletcher & La Flesche 1972:2:487). Although this plant is becoming popular among modern herbalists, there is no evidence it was widely used by European American settlers for medicinal purposes (Tilford 1997:142).

[veterinary] The Poncas report that horses were especially fond of the roots, and as a result, they were used to catch them (Gilmore 1919:107).

**Periderida gairdneri**

[yampa]

Also known as wild carrot, this edible species is widely distributed in the grass meadows of mountain ranges throughout the Intermountain West.

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:81; Hart 1981:41)
*an’o nivi tís* [four grow together]
alternate: *ano-neve-ë?ose*

**Habitat:** Yampa is occasionally found in the northern Black Hills at high elevations in meadows and open deciduous forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:54).

**Uses:** Yampa was not commonly gathered by tribal nations on the eastern peripheries of the Black Hills, but it was a very important food for many of the Numic speaking populations who once occupied lands on the western side
of the Hills (Garner & Hawley 1950:324; Larson and Johnson 1999:54). It was probably significant to the Comanches when they lived near the southwestern edge of the Black Hills. *Yampiri*ka [eaters of wild carrots] is an old band name for the Comanches and also the Utes. Of the other tribal nations living in the vicinity of the Black Hills, only the Cheyennes have recorded uses for this plant.

**[food]** Cheyenne women gathered the roots in May and June at the peak of their greatest nutritional value. These were eaten fresh and dried for winter use. When rehydrated, they were prepared as a mush (Grinnell 1972:2181). This was and remains an im-portant food source for the Utes, Shoshones, and Arapahos (Nickerson 1966:49; Smith 1974:271).

**[medicinal]** This root was also a valued ingredient in various Cheyenne medicinal compounds (Grinnell 1972:2; Hart 1981:41), and it has a wide variety of medicinal uses for European Americans as well (Tilford 1997:166).

### *Sanicula marilandica*

**[Maryland sanicule]**

Also known as Black snakeroot, it is found frequently in the Black Hills in moist and forested habitats at low to mid elevations. Larson and Johnson (1999:54) report that it has a variety of medicinal uses among American Indians, although none of these were found for any of the tribes who lived in the region historically.

### *Zizia aptera*

**[heartleaf Alexanders]**

*Zizia* species are largely located in the moist environments of the eastern woodlands and Pacific Coast, and therefore exist as outliers in the more humid central and northern reaches of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:54). Again, even though they are used by tribal nations outside the area, there are no reports of their use for tribes living near the Hills (Kindscher 1992:288-289).

### Apocynaceae

#### The Dogbane Family

Two species in this family are reported in the region, but only one is documented in ethnobotanical sources.

### Apocynum spp.

#### [Indian hemp]

Two species of dogbane are reported in the Black Hills, *Apocynum androsaemifolium* [spreading dogbane] and *A. cannabinum* [Indian hemp] (Larson and Johnson 1999:54-56). Indian hemp is also found at Wind Cave National Park.

**Names:**

- **Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:47)
  - *gho-la* [no translation given]
- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970:353; Rogers 1980:34)
  - *nap’e’olekiyapi* [to burn in the hand]
  - *A. cannabinum* [so called because the wooly seeds burned rapidly in people’s hands]

**Habitat:** Spreading dogbane is located throughout the Black Hills at low to mid elevations in dry, rocky meadows, wood-lands, and forest openings and edges, while Indian hemp is most commonly found at low elevations in moist habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:54-56).

**Uses:** An indigenous name and documented use for this plant has been found only for the Kiowas and Lakotas.

**[food]** The Kiowas allowed the plant’s sap to harden and used it as a chewing gum (Vestal and Schultes 1939:47).
[medicinal] Spreading dogbane is reported as an American Indian medicinal plant for the treatment of venereal diseases and wart removal (Larson and Johnson 1999:54), but there is no confirmation of this use in the ethnobotanical sources for the tribal nations who occupied the Black Hills in historic times. Indian hemp also has medicinal uses in European American folk medicine and for tribal nations outside the region, but again, nothing has been uncovered for native populations historically associated with the Hills (Kindscher 1992:41-45; Tilford 1997:196).

[art & manufacture] The Lakotas and other tribal nations of the region used the stems for cordage (Nickerson 1966:49; Rogers 1980:4).

Araceae
The Arum Family

No plants in this family are reported for the Black Hills in Larson and Johnson’s work (1999). One plant, which is an eastern Woodlands plant and located outside the region, however, deserves mention, and this is Acorus calamus [sweet flag]. Known as sinkpe tawote [muskrat food] or hohwa [refers to the consumption of the plants stalks] in Lakota (Buechel 1970:182, 454; Rogers 1980:26) and wi ukh is e’eko [bitter medicine] in Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:171), it was an important medicine for tribes throughout the region. According to Melvin Gilmore (1919:70), it was considered a “panacea” and used to reduce fevers, tooth-aches, sore throats, muscle cramping, and anxiety. In more recent times, it is taken by Dakotas and Lakotas to treat diabetes, tooth-aches, and sore throats (Albers 1966-1976; Lewis, T. 1990:135; Kindscher 1992:25). Even though it does not typically grow on the High Plains, the tribal nations who live in this region still secure the plant’s roots through long-distance trade connections with Sisseton Dakota who occupy areas in Minnesota and South Dakota where this plant remains plentiful (Albers 1966-1976; Grinnell 1972:2:171).

Araliaceae
The Ginseng Family

Aralia nudicaulis [wild sarsaparilla] is the only member of the Ginseng family reported in Larson and Johnson’s botanical inventory of plants in the Black Hills. Common at low to mid elevations in the central and northern Black Hills, it is found in the understory of coniferous and deciduous forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:58). This is another plant that has important medicinal uses among tribal nations in the eastern regions of the United States, but one that has not been documented for the tribes who occupied the Hills in historic times. Panax quinquefolius [American Ginseng], however, is known to the Cheyenne as vanov [rainbow medicine]; it is considered one of their strongest medicines and commonly used as a stimulant (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53). This may be the plant the Lakotas called ta’to or pejuta to; it was used in treatments for anemia, stomach bloating, and muscle pain (Buechel 1970:484, 824; Sword in Walker 1980:93).

Asclepiadaceae
The Milkweed Family

Most species in this family, known for their production of a milky sap, have many different documented medicinal uses (Kindscher 1992:54-59). The Lakotas, for example, are reported to have eleven names for seven different species in the milkweed family (Gilmore 1919:109; Rogers 1980:34). A. speciosa [showy milkweed], which is found on the eastern margins of the Plains and at Wind Cave National Park, is the most commonly used milkweed in the region. A. in-carnata [swamp milkweed], A. pumila [plains milkweed], A. verticillata [whorled milkweed], and A. virdiflora [green milkweed] are only documented in sources on the Lakotas.
Names:

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:183; Hart 1981:14)
*ma tan ai mahkst* [milky wood pieces] *A. speciosa*
alternates: *matanaa-vo’estse* [milk plant] *matanaa-maxestse* [milk wood]

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:47)
*zaip-ya-daw* [no translation provided]
*generic name for *Asclepias* species*

**Lakota** (Gilmore 1913b:363, 1919:57; Buechel 1970:130, 192, 431, 440, 489, 517, 519, 520; Rogers 1980:34)
*cesloslo pejuta* [diarrhea root] denotes
*A. pumila*
alternate: *hante’iye’ecca* [like juniper]
*pezi swula cikala* [small fine herb]

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:104)
*’ize.licowe* [yellow medicine]
*A. tuberosa*

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:109)
*makan saka* [raw medicine]
*A. tuberosa*

**Habitat:** *A. incarnata* [swamp milkweed] is common in the Black Hills and found along low elevation streams especially in the southern areas. Also located at low elevations is *A. pumila*, which is associated primarily with the Hogback and Red Valley. *A. speciosa* [showy milkweed] is the species of milkweed most frequently found in the Plains, and in the Black Hills, where it is generally located in meadows and prairies at low elevations. *A. Viridiflora* appears occasionally at low elevations, especially in the Red Valley and at various limestone, grass-land, and open forest sites. While *A. verticillata* [whorled milkweed] appears frequently in adjacent grasslands, it is uncommon in the Hills and restricted to the grass-land margins (Larson and Johnson 1999:60-64). *A. incarnata, A. speciosa,* and *A. verticillata* are reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2, 2001j:2).

**Use:** Except for *A. speciosa*, which was a food source for many tribal nations in the region, most of the other milkweeds were taken primarily for medicinal purposes.

**[food]** The flowers of *A. speciosa* were collected by the Lakotas to thicken soups and also as a preserve (Bordeaux 1929:131; Buechel 1970:519). The Crows boiled the flowers and ate the seeds raw (Kindscher 1987:56), and the Cheyennes boiled them with meat and in soups (Hart 1981:14, 1992:66). The Cheyennes also ate the inner layer of the stalks when the fruit was still green, and they used the dry milk as a chewing gum (Grinnell 1972:2:183). The Kiowas and Plains Apaches ate the young pods of many different milkweed species, and often refer to them in English as “Indian pickles” (Vestal and Schultes 1939:48; Jordan 1965:27). Lakotas, Poncas and Pawnees ate the young sprouts of *A. syriaca* (most commonly found in areas east of the Black Hills) in spring and boiled the bud clusters in the summer like cabbage (Gilmore 1913b:363; Gilmore 1919:109-110).

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas used most milkweeds for medicinal purposes. They prepared a salve from the roots of *A. incarnata* to treat swollen glands, which in Lakota beliefs are caused by encounters with gophers. Lakota children were admonished to keep away from gopher mounds, or they would come down with scrofulous swellings in their neck (Buechel 1970:517; Rogers 1980:27, 34). Like cedar, *A. pumila* was brewed in a tea primarily for the treatment of childhood diarrhea (Buechel 1970:130, 192, 440), while its close relative, *A. verticillata* was prepared to promote milk pro-duction in nursing women.
The roots of *A. viridiflora* and *A. stenophylla* (not reported in the Black Hills) treated a loss of appetite in children (Buechel 1970:489, 520) and childhood diarrhea (Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:171-172). *A. speciosa* was taken for unspecified medicinal purposes (Buechel 1970:431).

Other tribal nations also used various milkweed species medicinally. The Cheyennes prepared a medicine from *A. speciosa* for the treatment of various forms of blind-ness (Hart 1981:15, 1992:66), and the Plains Apaches employed it for relieving stomach complaints, fevers, and snakebites (Jordan 1965:104). The Poncas relied on many different species of milkweed for a wide range of medicinal purposes including pulmonary and intestinal complaints (Gilmore 1919:109-110). European Americans depended on *A. speciosa* and other western milkweed species to eliminate warts and skin parasites, and the roots of milkweeds were relied on to cure a range of ailments from asthma to kidney stones (Moore 1979:106-107; Tilford 1997:97).

**[art & manufacture]** The Kiowas may have used the dried pods of *A. speciosa* as spoons (Vestal and Schultes 1939:47), while the Cheyennes once made a fiber from the plant to make threads and bowstrings (Grinnell 1972:2:183; Hart 1981:14).

**Asteraceae**

**The Aster Family**

Also known as the Composite family, this is the largest family of flowering plants found in the Black Hills with more than 80 different species described in the Larson and Johnson volume (1999:64).

*Achillea millefolium*  
**[common yarrow]**

Known by many other names, including wild tansy, sneezewort, bloodwort, and mil-foil, this plant is very common throughout the northern plains. It is a plant for which resident American Indian populations and early European American settlers had multiple medicinal uses. The plant contains more than 120 different compounds, many with recognized therapeutic value (Kindscher 1992:17, 20-22).

**Names:**

i ha i se e yo [cough medicine]  
alternate: hehaa-heseeo?otse  
hesta-beseoz [heart medicine]

Lakota (Densmore 1918:254; Buechel 1970:192; Rogers 1980:35)  
hante canhlogan [cedar weed]  
alternate: taopi pejuta [wound medicine]

**Habitat:** Common yarrow is ubiquitous in the Black Hills and located at all elevations in dry meadows, grasslands, and open forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:68). It is also present at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3). Lame Deer (in Fire and Erdoes 1972:170-171) said that this plant was most frequently found among the prehistoric dinosaur bones located in the Badlands.

**Uses:** All parts of the plant were employed, but the leaves and tops had the greatest importance (Kindscher 1992:17). Its use is reported for tribal nations throughout the high plains and intermountain deserts, and interestingly, many of its most common applications are similar to those followed by European Americans.

**[medicinal]** The Cheyennes brewed a tea from the plant to stimulate sweating and alleviate cold symptoms and other respiratory problems, and they also used it to treat heart trouble, chest pains, and nose bleeds (Grinnell 1972:1:89; Hart 1981:17-18; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53). The Lakotas are also reported to have made a tea to treat colds and coughs (Buechel 1970:192), and they applied it as a poultice to treat wounds (Densmore 1918:254; Erdoes 1988:171-172). The Crows used it to make poultes to heal burns, boils, and open sores (Hart 1992:7). The Shoshones and Arapa-hos mixed it in poultes for sores,
and they made a laxative tea from it (Nickerson 1966:50). It was widely recognized among European Americans and used as a tea or infusion to treat coughs, sore throats, and earaches. It is reputed to have mild laxative properties as well (Kindscher 1992:20-21; Tilford 1997:166; Larson and Johnson 1999: 68).

[art & manufacture] The Shoshones and Arapahos used the leaves in a green dye (Nickerson 1966).

\textit{Agoseris glauca}
\textbf{[pale agoseris or false dandelion]}

Commonly found in the low to mid elevation meadows and grasslands of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:68), the False dandelion (goat chicory) was called \textit{yapi’zapi iyececa} [like a mouth organ] in Lakota (Buechel 1970:626; Rogers 1980: 35). It grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3). Although Larson and Johnson (1999:68) report that American Indians chewed the sap of the plant to clean their teeth, this has not been confirmed in ethnobotanical sources specific to the tribal nations who historically lived around the Black Hills.

\textit{Ambrosia spp.}
\textbf{[ragweed]}

Various varieties of ragweed are widespread in the northern plains. Commonly found near disturbed pasture, roadside, and stream bank habitats, it is an important medicinal plant for many tribal nations in the region (Kindscher 1992:33).

\textbf{Names:}

\textbf{Cheyenne} (Grinnell 1972:2:188; Hart 1981:18)
\textit{mohk tah’ wanotst} [black sage]
alternate: \textit{mo?ohtaa-vano?estse}

\textbf{Comanche} (Carlson and Jones 1939:520)
\textit{w>anatsu} [no translation given]

\textbf{Kiowa} (Vestal and Schultes (1939:55)

\textit{ko’khad-la tzan-go-pan-ya} [horse worm plant]
alternate: \textit{a’sahe} [green plant]

\textbf{Lakota} (Gilmore 1913b:369; Buechel 1970:117, 445, 624; Rogers 1980:35)
\textit{canhlogan panspanjela} [bulky weed] 
\textit{A. trifida}
alternate: \textit{yamnu’mnuga iyececa} [grating with teeth]
\textit{canhlogan wastemna} [sweet smelling weed]
\textit{A. artemisiifolia}
alternates: \textit{canhlogan onzipakinte} [rear wipe stem]
\textit{poipiye} [to doctor swellings]
\textit{pejuta pa} [bitter medicine]

\textbf{Plains Apache} (Jordan 1965:97)
\textit{‘o’di.ci.hi} [bitter grass]

\textbf{Habitat:} Ragweed is found throughout the Black Hills at low to mid elevations in grassland, open forest, and disturbed sites (Larson and Johnson 1999:70). Western ragweed is reported at Wind Cave National Park.

\textbf{Uses:} The leaves, top, root, and even the entire plant were employed by tribal nations throughout the area for a variety of different medicinal purposes (Kindscher 1992:33).

\textbf{[medicinal]} Many tribes relied on this plant to treat intestinal disorders. The Cheyennes used the stem and leaves to concoct a tea as a remedy for constipation, bowel cramps, and bloody stools (Grinnell 1972:2:188; Hart 1981:18), while the Dakota took the plant’s top and leaves to relieve vomiting (Gilmore 1913b:369). The Lakotas made a tea from the leaves of \textit{A. artemisiifolia} for swellings (Buechel 1970:117), and the Cheyennes did so to treat colds (Grinnell 1972:2:188). The Kiowas relied on ragweed leaves to heal sores (Vestal and Schultes 1939:55), and the Plains Apaches also applied them to sores but considered the treatment too strong for persistent use (Jordan 1965:97).

\textbf{[veterinary]} The Kiowas also gave the tea they made for themselves to their horses to doctor skin disease and sores (Vestal and Schultes 1939:55), and the Plains Apaches made a juice specifically to treat screw-worms in horse wounds and also to heal sores on dogs (Jordan 1965:97).
The Kiowas sometimes combined ragweed with various sages for smudges in their sweatlodge (Ves-tal and Schultes 1939:55).

**Anaphalis margaritacea**

[pearly everlasting]

This plant is found occasionally at mid to high elevations in the central and northern regions of the Black Hills, and it also appears at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:70; Pisarowicz 2001h:3). The Cheyennes knew this plant as sihy’a-ino eisse’eo [strong medicine] or tsexe-haae-no?heseeo?otse (Grinnell 1972:2:187; Hart 1981:18). Although the plant has known antihistamine properties and was taken by tribal nations in the eastern woodlands and the Pacific Northwest for respiratory disorders, only the Cheyennes are reported to have used it (Tilford 1997:108). The Chey-ennes put the plant on the hooves of their horses to make them endure, and its powder was blown between the animals’ ears to make them long-winded (Grinnell 1972:2:187; Hart 1981:18). They also gave this plant as a gift to their spirits. According to George Bird Grinnell (1972:2188), “in one of his little medicine bundles, each man carries some of the dried and powdered flowers of this plant; and formerly, when going into battle, he chewed a little of it and rubbed it over his arms, legs, and body, for the purpose of imparting strength, energy, and dash, and thus protecting him from danger.” Women were not allowed to touch men who had this medicine on their body because this would nullify its effects.

**Antennaria spp.**

[pussytoes]

Antennaria grow over much of the United States, and several varieties are reported in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3). Only the Lakotas have documented uses and names for them, even though they are widely reported to have medicinal applications for tribal nations in other regions (Kindscher 1992: 227-228).

**Names:**

Lakota (Buechel 1970:117,178, 445, 474; Rogers 1980:35)

*canhlogan hu wanjila* [weed with one stem]

*A. parviflora*

alternates: *hitunkalanakpala* [mouse ear]

*poipiye* [to treat swellings]

*tahca nakpala* [deer ear]

**Habitat:** *A.microphylla* is commonly found in a wide variety of Black Hills habitats at mid to high elevations, while *A.neglecta* and *A.parvifolia*, also frequent in occurrence, are associated with low to mid elevation environments (Larson and Johnson 1999:72-74).

**Uses:** Of the three varieties of Antennaria found in the Hills, only *A.parviflora* has been identified in the ethnobotanical nomenclatures of the tribal nations who used the area. The Lakotas have four names for *Anten-naria*, but only one has been definitively identified with the *A.parviflora* species.

**[medicinal]** Lakotas relied on Antennaria for unspecified medicinal purposes (Buechel 1970:178), although one of its names suggests it was used to treat swellings (Buechel 1970:445).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Shoshones and Arapahos dried the tiny leaves to put in their tobacco mixtures (Nickerson 1966:50).

**Arcticum minus**

[burdock]

This aster species is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:1), but nothing has been found on it in the ethnobotanical literature covering the tribal nations who lived in the Black Hills.

**Arnica spp.**

[arnicas]

Three varieties of arnica are found occasionally at mid to high elevations in the northern and central regions of the Black Hills.
None of the varieties have been associated with names or uses in the ethnographic and ethnobotanical literatures for the tribal nations who lived in the area in historic times. They are used, however, by European American herbalists in muscle liniments to treat sprains and bruises (Tilford 1997:180).

**Artemisia spp.**

Numerous species, subspecies, and varieties of sage are found in the western United States, and according to Kelly Kindscher (1992:48), all of them probably had some form of medicinal use. The Lakotas alone have names for seven different species of wild sage. Nearly all of the *Artemisia* species, including the woody varieties covered in another section, were used by the tribal nations of the northern and central Plains, although it is sometimes difficult to determine which species are associated with particular applications since generic names are often given in the sources on native nomenclatures.

**Names:**

**Arapaho** (Nickerson 1966:50)

*na-ko-ha-sait* [no translation given]

*A. frigida*

**Cheyenne** (Hart 1981:18)

*he?e-vano?/setse* [woman’s sage]

*A. frigida*

*hetane-vano?/setse* [man sage]

*A. ludoviciana*

**Comanche** (Carlson & Johnson 1939:520)

*pehebiv* [no translation given]

*A. ludoviciana*

*pasiwonepehebiv* [no translation given]

*A. filifolia*

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:56)

*ta-a* [no translation provided]

*A. ludoviciana*


*canhlogan wastemna* [sweet smelling weed]

*A. campestris & A. frigida*

*mako sice peji hota* [gray grass of the badlands]

*A. longifolia*

*nasula jazanpi ipije* [no appetite cure]

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:99)

*‘eldilgö.de* [burning stick]

*A. ludoviciana*

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:134)

*pezhe-hota* [grey medicine]

*A. ludoviciana*

*pezhe hota zhinga* [little grey herb]

*A. frigida*

*thasata-hi* [no translation given]

*A. dracunculus*

**Habitat:** *Artemisia campestris* [western sagewort] is a very common plant in the central Plains region with many different varieties; members of the subspecies candata and borealis being the most common in the Black Hills. It appears occasionally in dry, sandy, or rocky soils throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:78-79).

*Artemisia dracunculus* [green sagewort or tarragon] is found only occasionally at low to mid elevations in dry grassland, sagebrush steppe, and open forest areas over the entire Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:80).

*Artemisia frigida* [fringed sagewort] is located in many of the same habitats as green sagewort, but it is much more common in the area (Larson and Johnson 1999:80). It appears at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3).

*Artemisia ludoviciana* (gnaphalodes) [cudweed sagewort], also commonly known as white sage, wormwood, or mugwort, is widely distributed in the northern Plains, and in the Black Hills, where it typically appears at low to mid elevations in dry grassland, sagebrush steppe, meadows, and open forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:82). It is also common at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3).

**Uses:** The Lakotas are the only tribal nation with any recorded use for *A. campestris*, while
the Poncas are the only one with any documented applications for *A. dracunculus*. *A. frigida* is described in association with the Cheyennes, the Lakotas, and the Poncas. *A. ludoviciana* has reported applications for nearly all tribes in the northern Plains. Scientific research has demonstrated that Artemisia species contain several components with potent pharmacological effects (Kindscher 1992:47-52).

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas brewed a tea from the roots of *A. campestris* to treat the inability to urinate, constipation, and difficulty in childbirth (Buechel 1970:177; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:172). They also used it to promote sound sleep, with the suggestion that it could make men sleep soundly so their horses could be stolen (Buechel 1970:118; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:172).

The Poncas used *A. dracunculus* in a smoke treatment for unspecified illnesses (Gilmore 1919:134).

The Lakotas employed *A. frigida* for a variety of medicinal purposes. A smudge made from the dried and powdered root was sprinkled on hot coals and the fumes inhaled to treat headaches (Densmore 1918:259). The Cheyennes and the Lakotas made a decoction with this herb that was taken internally to treat menstrual irregularities (Gilmore 1919:134; 1930:80; Hart 1992:45). The Cheyennes also wove a braid from it and wore it around the head to treat nosebleeds (Hart 1981:18). The Arapahos and Shoshones depended on this species to stop hemorrhages (Nickerson 1966:50).

The Kiowas had multiple medicinal uses for *A. ludoviciana*, including the treatment of various respiratory and digestive complaints (Vestal and Schultz 1939:56). The Cheyennes crushed the leaves into a snuff as a remedy for sinus problems and headaches (Hart 1981:19; 1992:44-45), and the Oma-has had similar applications (Gilmore 1919:135). The Crows made an astringent tea for the treatment of eczema (Hart 1992:45). This was one of the most important plants in the Plains Apache pharmacopoeia, and it was believed to be especially potent in curing depression and restoring harmony, in treating arthritis, rheumatism, and in moxa applications for headaches and body pain (Jordan 1965:99-103). Finally, the Arikaras used it in childbirth (Gilmore 1930:73).

Early settlers also collected sage for a variety of medicinal purposes, adapting well-known remedies from Europe to American soil (Kindscher 1992:50-51; Tilford 1997:208).

**[cosmetic & hygienic]** The Lakotas pulverized the roots of *A. campestris* for a perfume (Buechel 1970:117), and they mixed *A. frigida* in solutions for bathing (Gilmore 1919:134). Larson and Johnson (1919:80) report that the foliage of *A. frigida* was used as toilet paper and for menstrual pads, but, again, they do not identify the tribal origins of these practices.

The Lakotas took bunches of *A. ludoviciana* to brush and purify the body, especially in preparation for ceremonial functions (Gilmore 1919:135). They also mixed it with water for bathing, something also done by the Omahas (Gilmore 1913b:369; 1919:134). The Crows made an astringent tea as a deodorant and antiperspirant for feet and underarms (Hart 1992:45), and the Kiowas used this sage as a towel in bathing (Vestal and Schultes 1939:56).

**[art & manufacture]** The Comanches made mattresses for childbirth from *A. frigida* and cushions for their tipis (Carlson and Jones 1939:520). The Shoshones and Arapahos used the leaves in a green dye (Nickerson 1966:50). The stems of *A. frigida* were woven into mats and fans, but again the tribal origins of these practices remain unidentified and probably do not refer to tribes in the area of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:80).

**[fuel]** The Cheyennes relied on the dried leaves of *A. ludoviciana* as tinder for starting their fires (Hart 1981:19).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Cheyennes are reported to have used the root of *A. frigida* in
the Sun Dance in association with the role of their sacred woman (Hart 1981:18), and the Lakotas employed it extensively in the Pte San Lowampi, the White Buffalo Calf ceremony for pubescent women (Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:172; Walker 1980:244, 247-248, 250-251). The Arapahos and Shoshones also used A.frigida in many of their ceremonies (Nicker-son 1966:50).

According to Melvin Gilmore (1913b:369), the ton (immaterial essence) of artemisia is repugnant to malevolent forces. Lakota men used A. ludoviciana as a smudge to drive away evil influences and also in purify-cations to counteract the effects of spiritual transgressions (Gilmore 1919:135; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:170). They employed it extensively in their Sun Dances, not only in the arm and ankle bracelets of the dancers but also to smudge the dance ground and altar (Dorsey, J. 1894: 454; Densmore 1918:93,122; Buechel 1970: 439; Rogers 1980:36; Walker 1980:176-177, 184, 187-188, 190-192). They burned it as incense in the sweatlodge and in the Hunka ceremony (Buechel 1970; Walker 1980:94, 197, 214, 224), and they placed it on the altar in Elk Dances (Fletcher 1887a: 284).

Jeffery Hart (1981:18-19; 1992:44-55) writes that A.ludoviciana was probably the most important ceremonial plant for the Chey-ennes, who used it extensively in the Sun Dance and most other major ceremonies as a ritual border. They also drew on it as an in-cense to ward off malevolent influences, and their Contrary warriors purified themselves and their horses and lances with it. This was known as their “man sage” (Moore 1974a: 174). The Kiowas and Plains Apaches de-pended on this variety of sage in their sweat-lodges and on other ceremonial occasions (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 56; Jordan 1965: 99). The Arikaras placed a wisp of A. ludoviciana in placenta bundles that were hung on fruit trees as an offering to ward off diseases in their children (Gilmore 1930:75).

**Balsamorhiza sagittata**

[arrowleaf balsamroot]

This and a related species of balsamroot, *B. hookeri* [Hairy balsamroot], which is not reported for the Black Hills, are important primarily to tribal nations living west of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:90). Only the Cheyenne are reported to have had a name for it, *hetone?e-heseeo?otse* [black medicine]. They employed many parts of this plant for medicinal purposes. The roots were used to ease childbirth. A tea made from the leaves, roots, and stems treated stomachaches and colds, and a steaming in-fusion cured headaches (Grinnell 1972:2: 183; Hart 1981:20). The Cheyenne also tied this plant to the lances of the Bowstring Society members during their ceremonial dances (Grinnell 1972:2:78). The Utes and other tribal nations of the Intermountain west ate the seeds of balsamroot (Albers and Lowry 1995:52), and the Lakotas are reported to have done so as well (Brown 1992:12). A variety of other uses are connected to this plant, but many of them are not confirmed in the ethnobotanical literatures for the tribal nations who lived around the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:90). Some European American herbalists use the root as a mild expectorant (Tilford 1997:16).

**Bidens cernua**

[nodding beggartick]

Beggar’s tick is located occasionally, and in certain locations abundantly, at low eleva-tions along stream banks and lakeshores throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:90). The Lakotas call the *B. glaucescens* variety *minio’huta aglagla wahcazi* [yellow flower growing by water], but no uses for it have been reported (Bue-chel 1970:336; Rogers 1980:36).
**Brickellia (Kuhnia) eupatoriodes**  
*false boneset*

The False boneset is located over the entire Black Hills in low to mid elevation meadows, open forests, and grasslands especially along the Hogback and Red Valley (Larson and Johnson 1999:122). It is also present at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3). Only the Lakotas are reported to have a name and possible use for this plant. They called it *poowaste* [good for swelling] or *wakpe 'pa* [bitter leaf] (Buechel 1970:445, 520; Rogers 1980:38). One of these Lakota names implies that it may have been used to treat inflammations.

**Carduus nutans**  
*musk thistle or nodding plumeless thistle*

The Lakotas call this plant *tokahu* [enemy stem] (Buechel 1970:494; Rogers 1980:36). Luther Standing Bear (1988:101) reported that it was used to make a yellow dye. It is typically found in the northern Black Hills but may appear elsewhere at low to mid elevations along roadsides and in pastures and meadows (Larson and Johnson 1999:92). It has also been identified at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:5).

**Centaurea biebersteinii or maculosa**  
*spotted knapweed*

Found mostly in the central and northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:92) but also reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2002k:3), the spotted knapweed has no reported uses in the ethnobotanical literature for local tribes.

**Heterotheca camporum/Chrysopsis villosa**  
*lemonfalse or hairy goldenaster*

The Hairy Golden aster plant covers the entire Black Hills, from low to high elevations, where it is found in dry grasslands, meadows, and open forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:94). Only the Cheyennes are known to have named and used it; they called it *mis ka tsi* [chickadee plant]. A drink was made from the plant top and leaves to help a person sleep. It was also employed to exorcise evil influences (Grin-nell 1972:2:81; Hart 1981:20).

**Cirsium spp.**  
*thistles*

Five different *Cirsium* species are reported in the Black Hills, but only one of these has any name or use reported in ethnobotanical sources for the tribes who once lived in the area. Two of them, *C.arvensis* and *C.undulatum*, are found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3). Several of the tribal nations who lived in the area have names and/or uses for thistles commonly found in the general area of the Black Hills (Kindscher 1987:85-87, 1992:234-235), but not listed in Larson and Johnson’s volume (1999).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:20)

*hesheko-v’estse* [thorny plant]

*C. edule*

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:521)

*tsen* [no translation given]

*C. undulatum*

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:85)

*sengts-on* [thistle]

*C. ochrocentrum*

**Habitat:** All of the *Cirsium* are frequent at low to mid elevations in dry habitats over the entire Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 96-100).

**Uses:** Again, many uses are associated with thistles but not for species listed in the Black Hills by Larson and Johnson (1999), although one, *C. undulatum*, which is reported as common in western South Dakota, does have a documented use (Johnson and Larson 1999:108).
Some of the thistle species found in the Black Hills are edible and have a taste that resembles artichokes but others are very bitter (Tilford 1997:144). The Cheyennes ate the inner stem of *C. edule* raw and considered this a prized food (Hart 1981:20), while the Comanches consumed *C. undulatum* and the Kiowas *C. ochrocentrum* (Carlson and Jones 1939:521; Vestal and Schultes 1939:85).

The Comanches used *C. undulatum* to treat gonorrhea (Carlson and Jones 1931:521), while the Kiowas made a tea from the blossoms of *C. ochrocentrum* to treat burns and wounds (Vestal & Schultes 1939:85).

*C. edule* was served as food in the Cheyenne Sun Dance (Hart 1981:20).

**Conyza Canadensis**

[Canadian horseweed]

This tall annual herb with abundant leaves is ubiquitous in North America (Kindscher 1992:236) and very common in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:100), but only the Lakota name and use for it have been reported in the ethnobotanical literatures for the tribal nations of this region. Another related species, *C. ramoses-sma* [spreading fleabane], is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3). *Canhlogan wastemna iyececa* [like a sweet-smelling weed] is the name for it in the Lakota language (Buechel 1970:118; Rogers 1980:37). The roots, stalks, leaves, and flowers were prepared for a variety of medicinal remedies by tribal nations in various regions of North America (Kindscher 1992:236-237). Lakota people brewed the roots and lower stalks in a tea to treat diarrhea and bowel cramping in children (Densmore 1918:266-267). Euro-pan settlers used it as a remedy for these and other conditions, including a treatment for bronchitis and a stimulant to accelerate contractions in childbirth (Kindscher 1992: 237; Larson and Johnson 1999:100).

Also called golden tickseed, this is another common roadside plant in the plains region that contains many medicinally therapeutic properties (Kindscher 1999:238). It is not listed in Larson and Johnson (1999), even though it is very common in regions surrounding the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:112).

**Coreopsis tinctoria**

[plains coreopsis or golden tickseed]

Names:

- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970:117; Rogers 1980:37; Lewis, T. 1990:134)
  - *canhlogan wakaljapi* [boiling weed]
  - alternate: *lak olwak alyapi* [Lakota boiled drink]
- **Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:59)
  - *tza-agudl* [no translation given]

Habitat: If this plant was present in the Black Hills, it would likely be located in low elevation roadside ditches with sandy soils.

Uses: The plant tops and flowers are used for culinary and medicinal purposes.

- **food** The Lakotas prepared a culinary tea from the plant (Buechel 1970:117) as did the Kiowas (Vestal and Schultes 1939:59).
- **medicinal** The Lakotas made another tea from the plant that is reported to have blood-strengthening properties. It was also used in treatments for diarrhea, gallbladder, and kidney ailments (Lewis, T. 1990:134). It is known as a remedy in European American folk medicine as well (Kindscher 1992:238).

**Dyssodia papposa**

[fetid marigold]

Fetid Marigold is eaten by prairie dogs and commonly found near their towns (Gilmore 1919:133), and thus, its Lakota and Dakota name *Pispiza tawote* or prairie dog food.

Names:

- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970:444; Rogers 1980:37)
**Habitat:** This plant is frequent at low elevations over the entire Black Hills, but it is particularly common in the dry grassland and open forest habitats in the southern regions (Larson and Johnson 1999:102). It is found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3).

**Uses:** This plant had important medicinal applications for humans and animals.

[medicinal] The Lakotas and the Poncas powdered and administered the plant for respiratory ailments and inhaled it for head-aches (Gilmore 1919:132; Buechel 1970: 444; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972: 171). The Plains Apaches probably used the crumbled flowers of this flower as an inha-lant too (Jordan 1965:135). Euro-pean Americans were also known to use the plant for different medicinal purposes, from treating diarrhea to the relief of stomach-aches and vomiting (Kindscher 1992:241).

[veterinary] This was one of the plants that the Lakotas used to treat coughs in their horses (Gilmore 1913b:369, 1919:132).

**Echinacea angustifolia**  
[purple coneflower]

This is probably the region’s most well known herbal plant. Today, it is sold com-merically as a popular antidote and remedy for colds. Recent scientific research has documented many of its medicinally active components. It also stands as one of the most significant herbal plants in the pharma-copeias of tribal nations who lived in the Plains (Kindscher 1992:84-93).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:188; Hart 1981:20; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53)  
*mohk ta’wi se’e yo* [black root]  
alternates: *mo?ohta-heseeo?ote*  
*moxta-vesseo?* [black peppermint]

**Comanche** (Carlson and Jones 1939:521)  
*dukunenatsu* [no translation given]

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes1939:57)  
*dain-pai-a* [no translation given]  
alternative: *awall-son-a*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:200, 397; Rogers 1980:37; Lewis, T. 1990:135)  
*icahpe ha* [a thing used to knock something down  
a.k.a. whip stem]-  
*Applied to plants growing in the hills.  
on’glakcapi* [hair comb]  
*Applied plants found at lower elevations.

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:110)  
*čo. hicise’ize* [tooth gum medicine]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919: 131)  
*mika-hi* [comb plant]  
alternate: *inshtogahte-hi* [plant to wash eyes]

**Habitat:** This is a very common plant in dry upland prairies of the high Plains. It is also found throughout the Black Hills in the mixed grass prairie, sagebrush steppe, and open pine forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:102). It grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3).

**Uses:** The root is the most commonly used, but other parts of the plant may be employed for medicinal purposes as well (Kindscher 1992:86).

perspiration (Densmore 1918:270, 389; Buechel 1970:397). The Lakotas also ingested the plant to help endure extreme heat in their sweatlodges, and they applied the juices to treat burns (Gilmore 1913b: 368). Standing Bear (1978:60) said of this plant: “The long, slender black root of this plant, which grew abundantly on the plain, was chewed and applied to the injured place. Though not pleasant to taste, it eased pain and almost magically cured cuts and bruises.” The plant was also used as an antidote for venomous bites, to treat hydrophobia, and to heal wounds that had putrefied (Smith, H. 1928:212; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972: 171). The Cheyennes made a salve out of it to treat a wide variety of external injuries and swellings (Hart 1981: 20; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53). The Omahas and Poncas mixed it in a solution to treat sore eyes (Gilmore 1919:31; Buechel 1970:397). The Crows, Kiowas, and Cheyennes treated colds with teas made from the roots and/or leaves (Hart 1981:20; Vestal and Schultes 1939:71). Additionally, Cheyennes brewed a tea to treat rheumatism, arthritis, mumps, and measles, and they combined the roots with other herbs to treat boils and smallpox (Hart 1981:20). Early travelers and settlers to the Plains quickly learned the medicinal value of the purple coneflower and applied it widely as a folk remedy (Kindscher 1992: 88-89; Tilford 1997:52-53).

[cosmetic & hygienic] The Kiowas used the dried inflorescence to comb and brush their hair (Vestal and Schultes 1939:71), and the Lakotas and Poncas probably did so as well given one of the names they use for the plant (Gilmore 1919:31; Buechel 1970:397).

[veterinary] The Lakotas treated distemper in their horses with it (Buechel 1970:200).

[art & manufacture] The Lakotas also mixed the petals of this flower in solutions to make yellow dyes (Lyford 1940:42).


**Erigeron spp.** [fleabanes]

In the Plains region, American Indians used a number of different varieties of fleabane. Three of the varieties reported in the Black Hills, *E. Annuus* [daisy fleabane], *E. pumilus* [low or shaggy fleabane], and *E. Philadelphia* (Philadelphia fleabane) have documented uses in Native and European American folk remedies.

**Names:**


**Habitat:** In the Black Hills, the *E. annus* variety is sporadic at low elevations on the eastern side of the Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:104-108). *E. pumilus* is the most widespread and common species of *Erigeron*, and it is located in environments similar to *E. canus*. Spreading, Philadelphia, three-nerve, and smooth fleabanes are reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisa-rowicz 2001j:3).

**Uses:** *Erigeron* are widely distributed in North America and used by tribal nations throughout the area (Kindscher 1992:95-98).

[medicinal] The Lakotas brewed a tea from *E. Annuus* as a remedy for sore mouths in children and also as a treatment for urinary problems, and from *E. pumilus* came a treat-ment for rheumatism and stomach disorders (Densmore 1918:389). Cheyennes relied on the species *E. salsuginosus* in steam treat-ments, in teas to treat drowsiness and dizzi-ness, and in a liquid...
solution applied to sore backs (Grinnell 1972:2:187).

[cosmetic & hygiene] European Americans burned fleabane to smudge their homes to rid them of gnats, fleas, and other small insects (Kindscher 1999:97).

[art & manufacture] The blossoms of *E. pumilus* were combined with brains, gall and spleen to produce a substance that bleached hides in tanning (Buechel 1970:399).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Kiowas brought fleabane into their homes as an omen of good fortune (Vestal and Schultes 1939:60).

**Eupatorium maculatum**
**[spotted joe pyeweed]**

Spotted joe pye weed, which is found at Wind Cave National Park, is a common plant in the Black Hills where it is typically located in wet habitats at low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:110; Pisarowicz 2001j:3). In Lakota, it is called *wahca pepe’la* [prickly flower]. No use has been reported for it (Buechel 1970:519; Rogers 1980:37).

**Euthamia graminifolia**
**[flattop goldenrod]**

This goldenrod is most common at low elevations in the southern regions of the Black Hills where it is found in moist locations such as wet meadows and stream banks (Larson and Johnson 1999:112). The Lakota name for it is *cannunga hu pte-ptecelea* [bison calf’s lumpy stem] (Buechel 1970:121).

**Gaillardia aestivalis or aaristata**
**[blanketflower]**

Blanketflower is found occasionally in the Black Hills at low to high elevations in a variety of habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:112), but its native uses are reported only for tribal nations who lived historically outside the region (Kindscher 1992:246-247).

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**Grindelia squaros**
**[curlycup gumweed]**

This plant is native to the western regions of North America where it is commonly found in pastures and along roadsides and railroads (Kindscher 1992:119).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:21)
*ho?eetohkonah* [no translation given]

Lakota (Gilmore 1919:133; Buechel 1970:448; Rogers 1980:37)
*pte ichi yuha* [buffalo cows follow one another] alternate: *pteiciyuhu unma* [buffalo cows curl around each other]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:133)
*pezhe-wasek* [strong herb]

**Habitat:** Curlycup gumweed is found in dry grasslands, pastures, and roadsides at low to mid elevations over the entire Black Hills including Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:114; Pisarowicz 2001h:3).

**Uses:** This plant was widely used by tribal nations in the northern Plains for its many medicinal properties (Kindscher 1992:120-121). Its resin can be used as a chewing gum, but this has not been reported for any of the tribes in the Plains (Kindscher 1987:243).

[medicinal] The flowering tops were used by Cheyennes in treatments for skin dis-orders and eye inflammations (Hart 1981: 21), while the Crows employed it in treat-ments for respiratory disorders (Hart 1992: 32) The Lakotas made a remedy out of the plant to treat colic in infants and to stop the spitting of blood, while the Poncas and La-kotas took it as a medicine for consumption (Gilmore 1913b:368, 1919:133; Buechel 1970: 444). The Lakotas also relied on it to treat breathing complications and skin in-flammations from contact with poison ivy (Red Cloud High School 2001). Early Euro-peon American settlers drew on this plant to treat asthma, bronchitis, colds, and pneu-monia and applied its resin to poison ivy rashes to relieve itching...
Machaeranthera pinnatifida/
Haplopappus spinulosus
[lacy tansyasteer/iron plant]

This plant, which the Lakotas called wahcazi wastemna [sweet smelling yellow flower] (Buechel 1970:519), is one of many composite species found at Wind Cave National Park, but no use is reported for it.

Helenium autumnale
[common sneezeweed]

Although not reported for the Black Hills, sneezeweed is widespread in North America where it grows in moist, low elevation prairie habitats (Kindscher 1992:252-253). According to Johnson and Larson 1999b: 120), this plant is most prevalent east of the Missouri River, but it does occur sporadic-cally in regions west of the river. The Comanches are the only tribal nation who once lived in the general region to have had a documented use for this plant. They inhaled the flowers to induce sneezing to clear the nasal passages and also during childbirth to induce the expulsion of the afterbirth. In addition, the stems of the plant were soaked in water and the solution was applied to a patient to reduce fever (Carlson and Jones 1939:532-534). Shoshones and Arapahos at Wind River used another variety of sneeze-weed [H. hoopesii] in an inhalant for headaches (Nickerson 1966:48). Other tribal nations with known uses for the plant are located in the eastern Woodlands (Kindscher 1992:252-253).

Helianthella quinquenervis
[fivenerve helianthella]
[false sunflower]

Mostly found in the western and northern parts of the Black Hills, the false sunflower is not associated with any names or uses among the tribal nations who historically lived in the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:115).

Helianthus spp. [sunflower]

Sunflowers are among the most abundant and conspicuous wild plants in the northern and central Plains where they are common in pastures and grasslands and along roadsides and railway tracks (Johnson and Larson 1999:116). Nine different species are reported in the Black Hills. Of these, H. annus [annual sunflower] is the most wide-ly used by the tribes who lived in the area, but H.maximiliani [Maxmillian's sunflower] is also identified in native botanical nomen-clatures. Although H. tuberosus [Jerusalem artichoke] is not listed as local to the Black Hills proper, it was very common on the prairies, immediately to the north and east of the Hills, where it grows along stream banks, in prairies, and open wood wetlands (Kindscher 1987:130).

Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:189; Hart 1981:21)
ho?e-noono [earth bulb, tuber]
H. annus

hohinon [brought back by scouts]

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:60)
ho-son-a [looking at you]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:430, 519; Rogers 1980:38)
pangi [no translation given]

H. tuberosus

wahca zi [yellow flower]
generic term for Helianthus species

wahca zi tanka (big yellow flower)
H. maximiliani

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:66)
datizil [no translation given]
H. annus

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:130-131)
pangi [artichoke]

H. tuberosus

zha-zi [yellow weed]
H. annus

Habitat: H.annus and H.pauciflora are very common from low to mid elevations over the entire region of the Black Hills especially in grassland environments and along roadsides. H.maxmilliani is especially prevalent in moist
Red Valley locations, while *H. nuttalli* occurs only occasionally near moist habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:116-118). *H. annus* is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3).

**Uses:** *H. annus* was once cultivated by several tribal nations in the region, and many tribes gathered the wild variety (Kindscher 1992:253-254). The Plains Apaches are the only tribe who apparently did not consume them (Jordan 1965).

[food] The seeds of *H. annus* were eaten raw, prepared by roasting and cooking, or dried and ground into a meal (Kindscher 1987:124). Lewis and Clark reported that the ground seeds were used to thicken soups and also made into breads (in Kindscher 1987:124-125). The Lakotas ate the stalks too (Buechel 1970:38). Although some tribes, such as the Hidataska, cultivated sun-flowers, they preferred the wild varieties for making oils (Wilson 1917:18-19). The La-kotas, Poncas, and Cheyennes ate the tubers of *H. tuberosus*, but they did not cultivate it. (Gilmore 1919:369; Gilmore 1919:131; Standing Bear 1975:120; Walker 1982:128).

[medicinal] *H. annus* heads were used medicinally by the Lakotas to treat pulmonary ailments and fevers (Buechel 1970: 519; Gilmore 1919:369; 1919:130; Red Cloud High School 2001). The Kiowas chewed the coagulated sap to diminish thirst (Vestal and Schultes 1939:60).

[cosmetic & hygienic] Among its many uses, the Hidataska applied the oil of *H. annus* as a hairdressing and skin lotion (Wilson 1917:18-19).

[art & manufacture] The Plains Apaches occasionally made windbreaks from tall sunflower stalks, and they also used them as tinder for starting fires (Jordan 1965: 66,157). The flower petals went into the making of a yellow dye among the Lakotas (Red Cloud High School 2001).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Cheyennes used the flower heads of *H. annus* in their *Massaum* ceremony (Hart 1981:21), and Luther Standing Bear (1975:120) reports that the Lakota used sunflowers in the Sun Dance because “it is the only flower that follows the sun as it moves on its orbit, always facing it.” The Lakotas also believed that when the sunflowers were ripe the buffalo were fat and their meat was good (Gilmore 1919:130).

**Hieracium canadense**  
[Canadian hawkweed]

In the Black Hills, this plant’s distribution is restricted to the central and northern regions (Larson and Johnson 1999:120). There are no reported uses for it in any of the ethnographic and ethnobotanical sources on the tribal nations who once occupied the Hills and its immediate environs.

**Hymenopappus filifolius**  
[fineleaf hymenopappus]

The closely related *H. tenifolius* [wooly white hymenopappus] was used by the La-kotas, who named it *sunkhu‘stipije* [horse hoof cure] (Buechel 1970:469; Rogers 1980: 38). This variety is found only on the open grasslands outside the Black Hills, but it is very similar to the *H. filifolius* species found in the Black Hills and located occasionally on the dry ridges and hillsides of the Hog-back and Red Valley (Larson and Johnson 1999:120). Since the two species are very similar, both of them may have been used by the Lakotas to make a tea and salve to treat lame horses (Buechel 1970:469).

**Lactuca spp.**  
[wild lettuce]

*L. oblongifolia* and *L. pulchella* are frequently found in the Black Hills at low to mid elevations in moist and open habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:124). *L. serriola* [prickly lettuce], an import from Europe, is widely found in disturbed sites throughout the West (Tilford 1997:116); it is reported in Wind Cave
National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:3). All species found in the Black Hills are edible, and their roots yield latex that can be used as a chewing gum (Larson and Johnson 1999:124; Tilford 1997:116). Notwithstanding this, there are no reports of any food use for tribal nations in the vicinity of the Black Hills. The Lakotas are the only tribal nation reported to have had any name and use for wild lettuce. They had at least three names for the plant: *azun‘tka yazan‘pi on‘piyapi* [kidney pain treatment] refers to *L. pulchella*, *wabluska hinsma iyececa* [like a hairy insect] designates to *L. oblongifolia*, and *wahpe inkpa jiji* [fuzzy white end leaf] denotes *L. serriola* (Densmore 1918:262; Buechel 1970:512; Rogers 1980:38). The Lakotas made the leaves of native varieties into a decoction that was used for kidney ailments (Densmore 1918:262-263).

**Leucanthemum vulgare / Chrysanthemum lecantiemum**

**[oxeye daisy]**

Oxeye daisy is very common in the central and northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:94), but it is not named nor is it associated with any uses in the ethno-botanical literature for the tribal nations who lived in the region. Modern European American herbalists, however, use it for its diuretic and homeostatic properties (Tilford 1997:106).

**Liatris spp.**

**[gayfeathers]**

Two *Liatris* species are reported for the Black Hills, *L. ligulistylis* [Rocky Mountain gayfeather] and *L. punctata* [Dotted Blazing Star or gayfeather]. Both of them are named in the ethnobotanical nomenclatures of the tribal nations who historically lived in the region, although *L. punctata* was the one most frequently used as food and medicine. It is also the one reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3).

**Names:**

**Comanche** (Carlson and Jones 1939:522)

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:61)

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:484, 574; Rogers 1980:38)

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:34)

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:133)

**Habitat:** *L. ligulistylis* is found only occasionally in the Black Hills at mid to high elevations in open forest and moist meadow environments, while *L. punctata* frequently appears at low to mid elevations in mixed grass prairie, sagebrush steppe, and open pine forest habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:124-126).

**Uses:** The various species of *Liatrus*, which are distributed throughout the central prairie and plains regions of North America, were commonly used as a food and for medicinal purposes by the tribal nations who occupied the area (Kindscher 1987:142-45, 1992:136-140).

**[food]** The Kiowas and Plains Apaches ate the bulb-like root of *L. punctata*, which they reported had a carrot-like flavor (Vestal and Schultes 1939:61; Jordan 1965:34). This was true for the Lakotas as well but only as an emergency source of food (Red Cloud High School 2001).

**[medicinal]** *L. punctata* was dried and powdered by the Lakotas to treat heart pain (Densmore 1918:389; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:170). The pulverized roots, which
the Lakotas claimed were hardened like the intestinal contents of a deer, were taken to strengthen the appetite (Buechel 1970:484). The Plains Apaches treated cuts with a decoction made from the roots of _L. punctata_ (Jordan 1965:118), and the Comanches (Carlson and Jones 1939:522) treated swollen testes with a juice extracted from its roots. _L. aspera_, which was more commonly used by the Poncas, was applied in a medicinal remedy for childhood diarrhea (Gilmore 1919:133-134). European Americans used _L. punctata_ as a diuretic among other medicinal uses (Moore, M. 1979:49).

[veterinary] The Lakotas also dried and powdered a mixture from _L. punctata_ for a horse medicine (Densmore 1918:389), and the Poncas relied on _L. aspera_ to strengthen their horses (Gilmore 1919:134).

[symbolic & ceremonial] Melvin Gilmore (1926:14) noted that when gayfeather came into bloom, the buffalo hunting tribal nations took this as a sign to travel to the Arikara villages because the corn would be ready to trade.

_Lygodesmia juncea_  
[rush skeletonplant]

This is a plant of the plains, open forests, and sagebrush steppes of the West, and historically, it was used by many tribal nations in the region (Kindscher 1992:261-262).

Names:

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:22)  
*ma?sepeseo?ote* [big medicine]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:116,329; Rogers 1980:38)  
*maka’cansinhu* [earth resin wood stem]  
alternate: *canhlogan hu can swula un he tahtaktele yake* [small woodstem exists here and there].

Habitat: Dry grasslands, open sagebrush steppes, and open pine forests at low to mid elevations are the habitats for this plant, which is common in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and John-son 1999:126).

Uses: Most of the uses reported for this plant are medicinal in nature (Kindscher 1992:261-262).

[food] Melvin Gilmore (1919:136) reports that tribal nations in the region used the latex from the plant’s root as a chewing gum.

[medicinal] The Cheyennes considered this one of their most important medicinal plants, and it was procured to treat a whole range of illnesses. The roots were used in treating colds, tuberculosis, and mumps (Hart 1981:22). John Stands in Timber (and Liberty 1967:110) indicated that it was an essential ingredient in nearly all medicinal mixtures and decoctions. A tea made from the entire plant was brewed by the Lakotas to treat childhood diarrhea (Buechel 1970: 329). The Plains Apaches and Poncas made a tea to doctor sore eyes (Gilmore 1919:136, Jordan 1965:262). The Cheyennes, Lakotas, and Poncas also used it to stimulate milk production in nursing mothers (Gilmore 1919:136; Hart 1992:27).

_Matricaria spp._  
[chamomile]

Two species of _Matricaria_ are located in the Black Hills, and both _M. maritime/Tripleurospermum_ [false mayweed] and _M. matricarioides/discoidea_ [pineapple weed/ disc mayweed] have documented ethnobotanical uses.

Name:

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:22)  
*onone-voneshe-moxeshene* [prairie dog mint]  
_M. matricarioides_

*cansinsinla* [little tree sap]  
_M. maritime_ and _Silphium laciniatum_

Habitat: Also known as wild chamomile or disc mayweed, pineapple weed _M. matricarioides_ is found over the entire Hills at low to mid elevations in a variety of disturbed
habitats, including parking lots, trails, and roadsides (Larson and Johnson 1999: 128). Surprisingly, it is not listed for Wind Cave National Park.

**Uses:** Although European Americans are known to use *Matricaria* species for culinary and medicinal teas, Native American usage appears to be restricted to medicinal and hygienic uses.

[food] European Americans took this and related varieties of *Matricaria* to make a beverage whose properties are similar to chamomile (*M. chamomilla*) tea (Tilford 1997:110).

[medicinal] The tops of the pineapple weed are an ingredient in many Cheyenne medicines (Hart 1981:22). The plant is known to have mildly sedative properties and anti-spasmodic affects on the stomach, and it is used much like chamomile tea in European American folk remedies. Scentless chamomile or false mayweed is taken by the Lakotas to treat headaches (Lewis, T. 1990: 134).

[cosmetic & hygienic] The Cheyennes included the dried and pulverized flowers and leaves of the pineapple weed in a per-fume mixture, and the Crows lined their baby cradles with the dried plants (Hart 1992:23).

[symbolic & ceremonial] Pineapple weed was part of a mixture blown on the bodies of Cheyenne Sun Dancers to keep them cool (Hart 1981:22).

**Microseris cupidata**  
*[false dandelion]*

This member of the aster family is reported in Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3); it is not mentioned in the ethno-botanical literatures on the tribal nations who lived in the area.

**Onopordum**  
*[Scotch thistle]*

Introduced from Europe, Scotch thistle represents a serious weed problem in the Black Hills. No uses of this plant are reported for European Americans or the tribal nations who lived in the area (Larson and Johnson 1999:128).

*Petasites Sagittatus*  
*[arrowleaf sweet coltsfoot]*

This coltsfoot species is confined to the central and northern Black Hills where it is uncommon in its appearance. Although there are no reported uses for the plant among the tribal nations who occupied the Black Hills in historic times, it has a long history as a popular cough suppressant and expectorant in European American herbal medicine (Tilford 1997:3 Larson and Johnson 1999:128).

**Ratibida columnifera**  
*[prairie coneflower]*

Prairie coneflower is abundant in the grasslands of the northern and central Plains, and it is a valuable medicinal plant for many of the groups who live in the region (Kind-scher 1992:179-181; Larson and Johnson 1999b:132).

**Names:**

*shi’ shin o wuts’ tse i yo* [rattlesnake medicine]  
*she’ shenovotse-heseesootse* alternate: *Maetomone* [blood weed]

*asanpi ijaite* [drink milk with]  
alternates: *napostan* [thimble]  
*wahecha-zii chiklala* [little yellow flower]  
*winawazi hutkan* [root of the bur]

**Habitat:** This is an extremely common plant over the entire Black Hills, where it occurs at low to mid elevations in mixed grass prairies, sagebrush steppes, meadows, and open forests (Larson and Johnson 1999: 132).
**Uses:** The prairie coneflower was used mostly for medicinal purposes.

**[food]** Melvin Gilmore (1913b:368, 1919:131) reports that the Oglalas made a culinary tea from this coneflower, and that they found its smell pleasant, "lila wash-temna."

**[medicinal]** Certain unspecified parts of the plant were employed to stop hemorrhages, and a tea made from the tops was administered for stomachaches and headaches (Buechel 1970:355). Frances Densmore (1918:265) reports that the stalk and leaves were boiled in a tea for pain in the side, while a decoction made from the root was used to treat earaches. Melvin Gilmore (1913b:368) indicates that the flowers were compounded with other plants for a remedy to treat chest pains and wounds. The Chey-ennes boiled the leaves and stems with a yellow solution to relieve external pain, to draw out rattlesnake venom and to soothe skin rashes from poison ivy and other plant toxins (Grinnell 1972:2:188; Hart 1981:23). They also used the leaves to stop bleeding (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53).

**[veterinary]** The Lakotas administered an unspecified portion of the plant in remedies to make horses urinate (Buechel 1970:355).

**[art & manufacture]** The Lakotas used the plant's top as a nipple for feeding infants (Gilmore 1913b:368), and they also made a yellow dye solution from the petals (Lyford 1940:42).

**Rudbeckia hirta**

**[blackeyed Susan]**

This *Rudbeckia* is also common in the Black Hills, where it is found in low to high elevation meadows, open forests, roadsides, and along drainages, and it grows at Wind Cave National Park. Although early settlers are reported to have used it for a kidney stimulant, there are no reports of its use for the tribal nations who occupied the area (Larson and Johnson 1999:132; Pisarowicz 2001j:2).

**Rudbeckia laciniata**

**[cutleaf coneflower]**

The Cutleaf coneflower is found only occasionally in the central and northern Black Hills, and even though ethnobotanical uses have been documented for tribal nations from the eastern Woodlands of North America, there are no reports for groups who lived near the Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:134).

**Senecio spp.**

**[groundsel and ragworts]**

Ten different species of *Senecio* are found in the Black Hills but only four of these are described in Larson and Johnson's botanical work (1999:134). Of these, three have known names and/or uses among the tribal nations who inhabited the area. These are *Senecio canus* [Gray ragwort], *Senecio integerrimus* [Lambstongue ragwort], and *Senecio riddelli* [Riddell’s ragwort].

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:190-191; Hart 1981:23)  
*heove-heseeo?oote* [yellow medicine]  
*S. integerrimus*

Lakota (Buechel 1970:117,469, 520; Rogers 1980:39)  
*canhlogan suta* [tough weed]  
*S. riddelli*

*S. canus*  
*sunkawakan tapejuta* [horse’s medicine]  
*S. integerrimus*  
*thewe slusjuta* [slippery leaf]

**Habitat:** *Senecio canus* [Gray ragwort] appears frequently in the Hills at all elevations in dry and open sites in mixed grass prairies, sagebrush steppe, and open pine forest (Larson and Johnson 1999:134). *Senecio integerrimus* is commonly found at all elevations and in a wide variety of habitats, including Wind Cave National Park, while *Senecio riddelli* is occasional in appearance and restricted to low elevations in the southern foothills and Red Valley (Larson and Johnson 1999:136-138).

**[medicinal]** The Cheyennes brewed a tea from *Senecio integerrimus* for sedation and also

[veterinary] As its Lakota name implies, *Senecio canus* was applied as a horse medicine (Buechel 1970:469).

**Silphium laciniatum**  
**[pilotweed or compassplant]**

This plant is located in regions far to the east of the Black Hills, but it had a variety of different medicinal purposes among the Lakotas and Poncas (Gilmore 1919:132; Buechel 1970:123; Rogers 1980:39). Its Lakota name, *cansinsinla* [little tree sap], is also a name for chamomile. The plant was used as an incense in the Lakota Sun Dance (Dorsey, J. 1894: 454).

**Solidago spp.**  
**[goldenrod]**

Of the seven different goldenrod species, only two, *S. canadensis* [Canada goldenrod] and *S. rigida* [stiff goldenrod], are associated with any name or use by the tribal nations who once occupied the Black Hills. *S. missouriensis*, however, has reported uses for tribal nations outside the area (Larson and Johnson 1999:140).

**Names:**

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:117, 336, 447, 519; Rogers 1980:39)  
*waheza* *ziblu* [pulverized yellow flower]  
*S. canadensis*  
*canhlogan maka* *aynblast* [weed spread out on ground]  
*S. rigida*  
*alternate: mine' *la waheza* [round yellow flower]  
*tal'aagnake* [place meat on]

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:130)  
*cizekase* *ize* [cold & fever medicine]  
*S. canadensis*

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:133)  
*zha-sage-zi* [hard yellow wood]

**Habitat:** Canadian goldenrod is found frequently throughout the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park in moist meadow-dows, flood plains, and open forests at low to mid elevations, while the stiff and Mis-souri goldenrods appear commonly at all elevations in grasslands, meadows, and open forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:138, 140, 144; Pisarowicz 2001j:3).

**Uses:** Goldenrods appear to have been used primarily for medicinal purposes.

**[medicinal]** The Plains Apaches used an unidentified species of *Solidago* to treat fever (Jordan 1965:131-133). Tribes outside the region used *S. missouriensis* for tooth-aches and sore throats (Larson and Johnson 1999:140). Historically, the plant was widely taken by European Americans to treat upper respiratory disorders and as a styptic agent (Tilford 1997:66).

**[art & manufacture]** As one of the Lakota names for this plant suggests, its leaves were probably used as a mat to keep meat clean while butchering (Buechel 1970:117).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The blooming of goldenrod was a calendrical sign for the Poncas to return home from their buffalo hunts, which once took place near the Black Hills, in order to tend to their ripening corn fields (Gilmore 1919:133).

**Sonchus arvensis**  
**[field sow thistle]**

This is another species reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:3), but one for which no information is found in ethnobotanical sources on the region.

**Symphyotrichum spp.**  
**[aster]**

Of the different species of aster located in the Black Hills, only two have been named in ethnobotanical sources for tribal nations who historically occupied the area. Tribal nations, who lived outside the region of the Black Hills, are known to have used aster species including
some of those found in the Hills (Kindscher 1992:60-63).

Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:187; Hart 1981:19)
sto’ wahts is se’ e’ yo [ear medicine]
Symphyotricum cilolatum
alternate: hestovootse-heseese?otse

Lakota (Buechel 1970:117, 519; Rogers 1980:36)
canholgan pepela [prickly stem]
Aster hebecladus*
wahe’a’zi waste [good yellow flower]
Symphyotricum falcatum
wahca’zi wastemna [good smelling yellow flower]
Symphyotricus oblongifolium

Habitats: White prairie aster [Symphyotria-cum falcacum or A. commutatus] is common throughout the Black Hills in sagebrush steppe, mixed grass prairies, meadows, and open forests from low to high elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:82). New England aster [Symphyoticum novae-angliae or A. novae-angliae] is occasional but restricted to the central and northern areas (Larson and Johnson 1999:86). Aromatic aster [Symphyotricum oblongifolium or A. oblongifolias] is ubiquitous and frequently located in dry grassland areas mainly at low elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:88). Smooth blue aster [Symphyotriacm laeves or A. laevis] and the Siskiyou aster [Symphyotricum hesperium or A. hesperius] are reported in Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:3).

Uses: Although the Lakotas had names for three different species of aster, only the Cheyennes are reported to have had any use for them.


Tanacetum vulgare
[tansy]

This plant is ubiquitous in North America, where it is typically found in moist environments in pastures and meadows and along roadsides and irrigation ditches (Tilford 1997:212). It is locally abundant in areas of the northern and central Black Hills, where it appears at low to mid elevations in flood plains and along stream margins (Larson and Johnson 1999:146). It appears at Wind Cave National Park too (Pisarowicz 2001k:4). The Cheyennes called it heove-heseese’otse [yellow medicine], and they made a tea from the leaves and flowers to treat fatigue (Grinnell 1972:2:190-191; Hart 1981:23). Although this plant has many pharmacological properties (Tilford 1997:192), its medicinal use has been reported only for the Cheyennes. The plant remains, however, popular in European American folk medicine, taken for a wide variety of purposes from treating jaundice to expelling intestinal worms (Tilford 1997:192).

Taraxacum officinale
[dandelion]

One of the most widely recognized weeds in the Black Hills and in other regions of North America as well, the dandelion is known to be rich in many essential vitamins. It is edible and has a long history of medicinal use in European American folk medicine (Tilford 1999:48). It was introduced to the Black Hills by settlers for their own culinary and medicinal purposes, and today, it is common and often locally abundant throughout the Black Hills at mid to low elevations in a wide range of habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:148). There is no evidence that it has been adopted and used by the tribal nations who resided in the region, however.

Tetraneris acaulis
Hymenoxys acaulis
[stemless four-nerve daisy]

There is no information on the name or use of this plant in ethnomedical sources for the tribal nations who lived in the region, although it is very common in the Black Hills in a wide
range of dry habitats at all elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:122).

**Thelesperma megapotamicum**  
[thelesperma]

This plant is located in Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3), but nothing has been recorded about it in the ethnobotanical literature.

**Townsendia exscapa**  
[Easter daisy/ stemless Townsend daisy]

This plant is uncommon in the Black Hills and restricted to the dry and open grasslands of the southern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:148). Lakotas call it *ih’eh’e canhlogan* [rock stem], but there are no reported uses for it (Buechel 1970:218; Rogers 1980:40).

**Tragopogon dubius**  
[yellow salsify]

Also known as groundsel or oyster root, this plant was introduced to North America by early settlers as a vegetable crop. It is frequent in the Black Hills at low to mid elevations in a wide range of habitats. It is also found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:4). No report on its usage among local American Indian populations has been uncovered, however (Tilford 1997: 132; Larson and Johnson 1999:150).

**Xanthium strumarianum**  
[cocklebur]

In the Black Hills, the cocklebur is common at low elevations in habitats with disturbed soils (Larson and Johnson 1999:150). The Lakotas named it *winawizi hu tanka hca* [jealous woman stem that is the biggest], and they used it as incense, *silyapi*, in some of their ceremonies (Buechel 1970: 587; Rogers 1980:40).

**Boraginaceae**  
**Borage Family**

Several members of the Borage family grow in the Black Hills, but only the gromwells and false gromwell had applications among tribes in the region. Wild comfrey and Hound’s tongue, which were not significant to the region’s tribal nations, do have value in European American folk remedies.

**Cryptantha celosioides**  
[buttecandle]

Butte candle is found throughout the Black Hills at low to mid elevations on dry slopes and ridges in grassland areas. It is called *canhlogan ape’pepe* [prickly leaf weed] (Buechel 1970:116; Rogers 1980:40), but no use is reported for it.

**Cynoglossum spp.**  
[wild comfrey]

Both *C. virginianum* [wild comfrey] and *C. officinale* [hound’s tongue] are used in European American folk medicine, often serving as substitutes for each other. Both are ingredients in salves and poultices to treat burns and skin inflammations, and in earlier historical times, they were taken internally to treat respiratory disorders (Tilford 1997:78). There is no mention of these plants in the ethnobotanical sources for the tribal nations who lived in the region. These plants are commonly located at low to mid elevations in open forest clearings and meadows over the entire Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:154), and hound’s tongue is found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:2).

**Hackelia floribunda**  
[manyflower stickseed]

This plant is common over a wide range of habitats in the Black Hills, but there are no reports of its use by American Indians or
European Americans in the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:154).

*Lappula occidentalis*
[desert/flatspine stickseed]

Called *hupe'pe* [prickly stem] in Lakota (Buechel 1970:190), the desert stickseed and its relative *L.floribunda* [many flowered stickseed] are not associated with any ethnobotanical uses either by European Americans or the tribal nations who occupied the Black Hills. Desert stickseed is found frequently in the Black Hills at low to mid elevations in areas that have been dis-turbed and eroded, especially roadsides and pastures but also barren spots in grasslands and open forest (Larson and Johnson 1999: 156).

*Lithospermum spp.*
[gromwell]

Only one species of gromwell is reported for the Hills, *Lincision* [Narrowleaf grom-well], but this and others were widely used by the tribal nations of the region for medi-cinal and other purposes (Kindscher 1992: 142-45). Most of the other species, inclu-ding *L.caroliniense* [Carolina puccoon] and *L.canescens* [hoary puccoon], are found in the prairie regions east of the Black Hills (Johnson and Larson 1999b:146).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:185; Hart 1981:15)
*hoh’ ahea no is’ tut* [to revive life]
*L. incisum*

alternate: *hoahea-notahs toretse*
*noahea-nohtsetotse*
*woh’ po it* [whitish plant growth]
*L. ruderale*

Lakota (Buechel 1970:440; Rogers 1980:40,41)
*pejuta wah’e sa* [red root]
*L. gmelini* or *L. caroliniense*

alternate: *pejuta ha sapa* [root with black skin]
*pejuta sapsapa* [black root]
*L. incision*

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:118)
‘izelicihi’ [red medicine]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:111)
*bazu-hi* [no translation given]
*L. canescens*

**Habitat:** The narrowleaf gromwell grows over the entire region of the Black Hills, including Wind Cave National Park, from low to mid elevations in grassland and open forest habitat (Larson and Johnson 1999: 156; Pisarowicz 2001h:2).

**Uses:** Gromwells were very important medicinal plants for the tribes of the north-ern Plains, but there are no reported uses for them among European Americans.

**[medicinal]** The Cheyennes ground the leaves, roots and stems of *L. incision* into a small quantity of powder that was rubbed on paralyzed parts of body. They also crushed the fresh leaves, either in cloth or by chew-ing, and applied them to the afflicted parts of the body. The Cheyennes also made a tea from the roots, leaves, and stems that were rubbed on a patient’s head and face to treat delirium and to prevent them from sleeping too much. Another application involved chewing these parts of the plant and then rubbing them over a patient’s heart or spitting and blowing it on their face (Grin-nell 1972:2:185; Hart 1981:15). The Lakotas made a powder from the roots of the narrow-leaf gromwell to treat chest wounds (Bue-chel 1970:440; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:171). *L. ruderale* was also used by the Cheyennes as a treatment for rheuma-tism; the stems and leaves were finely pulverized and moistened and then applied to the skin as a poultice (Grinnell 1972:2: 185; Hart 1981:16). *L.caroliniense* was a medicine used by the Lakotas to treat lung hemorrhages (Densmore 1918:269-70). The Plains Apaches prepared a tea from *L. incisum* to treat diarrhea and other stomach disorders. It was also combined with rac-coon liver, brown sugar, and another unidentified plant in a decoction to heal sore mouths in children (Jordan 1965:118-119).

**[art & manufacture]** Omaha (and Poncas) extracted a yellow dye from the flowers of *L. canescens* (Gilmore 1919:111).
Mertensia lanceolata
[lanceleaf or prairie bluebells]

Also known as lungwort and chiming bells, lanceleaf bluebells are edible (Tilford 1997:32) and widely distributed in the Black Hills in a wide range from habitats from low to high elevations, including locations in Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:158; Pisarowicz 2001j:1). Only the Cheyennes are reported to have used them; the leaves were made into infusions to treat smallpox and measles as well as to increase milk production in nursing mothers (Hart 1981:16).

Myosotis scorpiodes
[forget-me-not]

This plant, which is occasionally found near springs and spring fed streams in the Black Hills, is not reported to have had any uses among local American Indian and European American populations (Larson and Johnson 1999:158).

Onosmodium molle
[false gromwell or softhair marbleseed]

This is a common plant in the northern Plains typically found on the dry, rocky, and sandy hillsides of prairies, pastures, and open woods in the central regions of the Plains (Kindscher 1987:265).

Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:185)
mak esk o wa ni’u [big rough medicine]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:445, 469; Rogers 1980:40)
sunkcan kahupiye [something to fix horses’ spine] alternate: poi-piye [something to fix swelling]
*note: This term is applied generally for any medicine that treats swelling (cf. Buechel 1970:445).

Habitat: False Gromwell is frequently found at low to mid elevations in mixed grass prairies, meadows, and open forest throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:180), and it is located at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:1).

Uses: The Cheyennes and Lakotas are the only two tribal nations in the region who have names and uses associated with this plant.

[medicinal] The Lakotas made a tea and a salve from the roots and seeds of this plant to treat external swelling (Buechel 1970:445), while the Cheyennes pulverized the leaves and stems and mixed them with grease for a salve that treated numbness and lumbago (Grinnell 1972:2:185).

[veterinary] The Lakotas administered the plant both internally and externally in medicinal treatments for their horses (Buechel 1970:469).

[art & manufacture] Johnson and Larson (1999b:148) also report that the stone-like seeds were used in the making of ceremonial rattles but the origins of this information are not reported.

Brassicaceae
Mustard Family

Alyssum desertorum
[dwarf alyssum or desert madwort]

Located mainly at low elevations, usually in disturbed grassland and open forest environments, the dwarf alyssum is frequent in its occurrence at low elevations. It grows at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and John-son 1999:161; Pisarowicz 2001k:1). It is not associated with any uses among local American Indian and European American populations.
**Arabis globra**  
[tower rockcress]

This is the most common of the five rockcress species found in the Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:162).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:174; Hart 1981:24)  
etayey’i se yallernate: heove-heseeo?o\v\

Lakota (Buechel 1970:117; Rogers 1980:41)  
cahnlogan huanjila [stalk with one stem]  
*A. hirsuta* [Hairy rockcress]

**Habitat:** Rockcress is occasionally found in the Black Hills at all elevations and in a wide variety of different habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:162).

**Uses:** This plant is not associated with any uses for European Americans. Among American Indian populations in the area, only the Cheyennes appear to have made use of it.

[medicinal] The Cheyennes used rockcress as a preventive medicine to stave off a cold or other sickness. It was administered as an infusion and given to children when contagious illnesses were spreading in the camps (Grinnell 1972:2:174-75).

**Barbarea vulgaris**  
[yellow rocket]

Yellow rocket is reputed to be edible, but it has toxic qualities that can lead to kidney malfunctions. It is located in the north and central regions of the Black Hills in moist locations at low to high elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:162). The ethnobotanical literature on the tribal nations of this region yields no information on this plant.

**Berteroa incana**  
[hoary false alyssum or madwort]

This plant has been naturalized in the Black Hills only in recent years. It is found occasionally in the central regions at low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:164). No uses have been associated with it in European American or American Indian medical traditions.

**Camelina microcarpa**  
[littlepod falseflax]

Littlepod falseflax is common throughout the Hills at low to mid elevations in a wide range of habitats, including those at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:164; Pisarowicz 2001k:2). It is another plant for which there are no reports of any usage in ethnobotanical sources.

**Capsella bursa-pastoris**  
[Shepherd’s purse]

Shepherd’s purse is very common over the entire western United States, and it is found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:3). The Cheyennes called it *ota’?ave-heseeo?o\v\* [blue medicine] (Grinnell 1972:2:174; Hart 1981:24), and they made a cold water infusion or a pulverized powder from the plant to treat colds (Grinnell ibid.). European Americans used the seeds in traditional mustard plasters and for a wide variety of other medicinal treatments (Tilford 1997:158).

**Chorispora tenella**  
[blue mustard or crossflower]

Blue mustard is not reported to have any uses in ethnobotanical sources. Introduced to North America from Asia, it is common throughout the Hills in a wide range of low to mid elevation habitats, including those at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:166; Pisarowicz 2001k:3).

**Descurainia sophia**  
[fixed tansymustard]

Fixed tansymustard, which is not associated with any uses in ethnobotanical sources, was introduced to North America from Eurasia. It is common throughout the Hills in a wide
variety of habitats at all elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:166).

**Erysimum asperum**
*western or sanddune wallflower*

This plant’s range is restricted to the High Plains. Although it is widely found in the Black Hills and surrounding areas, only the Lakotas and Arikaras are reported to have had any specific use for it (Kindscher 1992: 244-245).

**Names:**

*Lakota* (Buechel 1970:117, 519)
- *canhlogan pa* [bitter weed]
- alternative *wahca zi sicamna* [bad smell yellow flower]

**Habitat:** This plant is found over the entire Black Hills region at low to mid elevations in mixed grass prairie and sagebrush steppe (Larson and Johnson 1999:168), and it grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3).

**Uses:** The uses for this plant appear to have been restricted to medicinal applications.

**[medicinal]** Among the Lakotas, the entire plant was dried and either chewed or prepared as a tea to treat stomach and intestinal cramping; the crushed seeds mixed in water were also used for the same purpose (Densmore 1918:269, 389). The Arikaras are reported to have employed it for unidentified medicinal reasons (Kindscher 1992:244).

**Lepidium densiflorum**
*pepperweed*

Like other members of the mustard family, pepperweed is known to stimulate the production of digestive juices. This mustard is widely distributed across North America (Tilford 1997:158). Two varieties are found at Wind Cave National Park, *L.cam-pestre* [field pepperweed] and *L.perfoliatum* [clasping pepperweed] (Pisarowicz 2001k: 4).

**Names:**

*Lakota* (Buechel 1970:659; Rogers 1980:41)
- *zitka`la tawote* [small bird’s food]
  *also used for Lotus corniculatus* [prairie bird’s foot trefoil]

**Habitat:** This plant is very common in the low to mid elevation grasslands, open for-ests, and roadsides of the Black Hills (Lar- son and Johnson 1999:170)

**Uses:** The Lakotas are the only tribal na- tion in the region reported to have named and used pepperweed.

**[food]** Larson and Johnson (1999:170) report that the plant’s leaves are edible, but its consumption has not been reported for the tribes of the region.

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas made a tea from pepperweed for kidney ailments (Buechel 1970:659), and European American settlers used it for similar purposes (Larson and Johnson 1999:170).

**Lesquerella ludoviciana**
*foothill bladderpod*

This is the most common of the four bladderpod species in the Black Hills. It is frequently found in dry habitats with sandy or gravelly soil (Larson and Johnson 1999:170). The Lakotas call it *pangi pepe* [prickly tuber] (Buechel 1970:489; Rogers 1980:41), but there are no reports on its use.
**Nasturtium Officiale**

[watercress]

This is used as a popular green in salads today. Although introduced from Europe, watercress has been naturalized in many different locations throughout the United States. In the Black Hills, it is typically found near springs and spring-fed streams at low to mid elevations over the entire region of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:172). Although many plants from Eurasia naturalized on North American soil are not identified in native nomenclatures nor used, watercress was adopted and became a popular food staple in the diets of some American Indian tribes. The Plains Apaches called it *koya’ ito* [water leaves] and ate it either raw or boiled (Jordan 1965:36). The Utes did so too (Albers and Lowry 1995:70). European Americans have long used it as a salad green (Tilford 1997:154).

**Sisymbrium spp.**

[mustard]

*Saltissimum* [tumbling mustard] is an edible plant commonly located in disturbed locations at low to mid elevations throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:174); it is also located at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:3). The ethnobotanical literature contains no reports of uses for this plant among the tribes who lived in the region, although the Lakotas have a name for it, which is *canglogan wabluska hu* [insect weed stem]. The name reportedly refers to its fringed, leg-like leaves (Buechel 1970:117; Rogers 1980:42). *S.loeselii* [tall hedgemustard], which was introduced from Eurasia, is less common but scattered across many of the same habitats as tumbling mustard (Larson and Johnson 1999:174).

**Thlaspi arvense**

[pennycress]

Also known as Frenchweed, this is another plant naturalized in North America from Europe. It is very common throughout the Black Hills in a wide range of environments at all elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:176). It is present at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:4). No names or uses have been documented for it in the ethnobotanical literatures on the tribes who occupied this region.

**Cactaceae**

**The Cactus Family**

There are several different species of cacti in the Black Hills, and of these two have been associated with names and uses in ethnobotanical sources on the region. Another cacti not listed in Larson and Johnson (1999), the Nylon hedgehog, grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2002b:1).

**Coryphantha Missouriensis**

[pincushion cactus]

This cactus is found in the foothill prairies of the Black Hills where it typically grows in dry and rocky locations (Larson and John-son 1999:176). It also appears at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2002b:1). The pincushion cactus was used largely as a source of food. The Hidatsas ate the fruit of this cactus fresh and roasted (Nickel 1974:67), while the Cheyennes consumed them while they were fresh or after they had been dried. In the Cheyenne language, this cactus is called *maatahesono* or alternatively *mata-ha* (Hart 1981:16).

**Opuntia spp.**

[pricklypear cactus]

Three varieties of this cactus are reported in Black Hills area, *O.fragilis* (fragile prickly-pear), *O.mascrorhiza* (bigroot pricklypear), and *O.polyacantha* (plains pricklypear) (Larson and Johnson 1999:178-179). Most of the native names for pricklypears appear to be generic and include the different varieties.

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell1972:2:180; Hart 1981:16)
mah-ta'-o-munst [prickly fruti]  
alternates: heshkove-mata [thorny]  
ma-tah.a'-ome (-notse)  
O. polyacantha

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:523)  
wekwesi [no translation given]

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:45)  
sen-adl-gaw [no translations given]  
alternates: sen’alo  
a-lo

Lakota (Buechel 1970:506-07)  
unkce’la blaska [flat cactus]  
unkce’la tanka [large cactus]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:38)  
gosci.s [red sticker]

Habitat: Of the varieties located in the Hills, the Plains pricklypear is the most common. It is located over the entire area at low to mid elevations in the sandy and rocky soils of the dry grasslands and sagebrush steppes. The bigroot variety is restricted to the southern parts of the area and is typically found in dry grassland habitats, while the fragile pricklypear is found only occasionally in these habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:178). Pricklypears also grow at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2002b:1).

Uses: The tribal nations of the northern and central Plains had many different uses for pricklypear cacti.

[food] The Lakotas ate the fruit, taspu, raw or stewed, and they also ate the stems when other foods were scarce (Gilmore 1913b: 366; Bordeaux 1929:130; Standing Bear 1978:59; Brown 1992:12). Hassrick (1964: 179) quoted a Lakota woman who said,

From the cactus we gathered the red tops or fruit and often brought them home, worked them around in a deerskin to remove all the thorns. Next we crushed them with a pestle and mortar in a rawhide bowl in much the same way we pounded cherries, and placed them in rows to dry. From this, we made mush, sometimes adding a little fat.

The Cheyennes dried the fruits as well, and they used them in meat stews and as a thickening agent for soups (Grinnell 1972:2:181; Hart 1981:16-17). The Comanches dried the unripe fruit, which they stored and eventually cooked with other foods (Carlson and Jones 1939:523), while the Plains Apache ate them fresh and raw when they were picked in the fall (Jordan 1965:38). The Kiowa also candied the tunas and made them into jams (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 45). Pricklypears were also consumed in emergency times as food and for water (Kindschier 1987:156-157). Early American settlers in the West quickly learned the food value of these cacti (Ibid:158).

[medicinal] The Lakotas made a tea from the roots to promote urination, and they also mixed them with yucca in an obstetrical decoction (Buechel 1970: 506). The Lakotas, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches applied the mucilaginous juice from the stems in a dressing for wounds (Gilmore 1919:136; Vestal and Schultes 1939: 545; Jordan 1965: 125). Modern herbalists use the mucilaginous juice as an emollient to soothe dry skin and also as an anti-inflammatory agent to treat digestive and urinary tract maladies (Tilford 1997: 118).

[cosmetic & hygiene] The Kiowas and Plains Apaches punctured the skin in their ear piercings with the thorn of this cactus (Vestal and Schultes 1939:45; Jordan 1965: 149).

[art & manufacture] Melvin Gilmore (1919:136) reports that the Lakotas used the mucilaginous juice as a sizing to fix colors painted on hides. The Kiowas took the sharp thorns to make small arrows, and they also applied the mucilaginous juice to moc-casins as a varnish (Vestal and Schultes 1939:45).

[symbolic & ceremonial] This cactus is featured in a Lakota story narrated by Left Heron (Walker 1983:128-129).
**Campanulaceae**  
The Bellflower Family

Only one species from this family is reported in the Black Hills, *Campanula rotundifolia* [harebell] (Larson and Johnson 1999:180). Although this is very common in the Hills and is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:1), no names have been found for it in native nomenclatures. Two other species from the bellflower family, however, were identified and named by the Lakotas, and both of these are found in regions east of the Black Hills. The Lakotas call the *Lobelia siphilitica* [great blue cardinal or great lobelia] *zuze’ca tawote unma ape toto he* [the other blue snake food] (Buechel 1970:660). The *Triodanis leptocarpa* [slimpod Venus’ looking glass] is named *canhlogan can-kcanla* [tall swaying weed], while the *Triodanis perfoliata* [clasping Venus’ looking glass], which is also located in Wind Cave National Park, is known as *canhlogan can-kcanla* [tall moving weed] (Buechel 1970:117; Pisarowicz 2001h:1). The Paw-nees held the Red lobelia, *Lobelia cardinalis* [cardinalflower], in high regard and considered it a highly sacred medicinal plant, which they may have even cultivated in their Nebraska homeland (Gilmore 1919:129).

**Cannabaceae**  
The Hemp Family

Only one species in this family, *Humulus lupulus* [hop], is reported for the Black Hills. Hops are occasionally found in the Black Hills in moist deciduous woodland habitats at low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:181). The Lakotas and the Poncas are the only tribal nations in the region associated with a name and use for hops. The Lakotas call them *wahpe akkas-kapi* [leaves look like they are tied together] or *winakapo* [to make things swell] (Buechel 1970:520, 586; Rogers 1980:42). Buechel (Ibid:586) writes that hops were an ingredient in Lakota bread making. The Lakotas also made a tea from this plant to treat fever and intestinal cramping, and the inner portion of the root was chewed with the root of ground cherry and meadow anemone to make a poultice for wounds (Gilmore 1913b:362, 1919:86; Lewis, T. 1990:135). The Poncas named them *maka skithe* [sweet medicine] (Gilmore 1919:86), implying they had some kind of medicinal use. The Poncas’ cousins, the Omahas, considered it one of the healing plants associated with the Buffalo Medicine Society (Fletcher & La Flesche 1972:2:487).

**Capparaceae**  
The Capper Family

*Cleome serrulata* [Rocky Mountain bee-plant] and *Polanisia dodecandra* [clammy weed] are the only plants in the Capper family reported in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park. The Rocky Mountain beebplant is occasionally found in low elevation, dry grassland environments, especially in the Hogback and Red Valley (Larson and Johnson 1999:182; Pisarowicz 2001h:1). The Lakotas are the only tribe reported to have named the plant, and they called it *wahpe h’eh’e* [ragged leaf] (Buechel 1970:520; Rogers 1980:42). Many tri-bal nations in the American Southwest boiled this plant and ate it, much like spinach (Kindscher 1987:92-93), but there are no reports of such use for the nations who historically lived in the region of the Black Hills. The early explorer, Joseph Nicollet (in DeMallie 1976: 281) reported it was one of two plants the Dakotas used to attract bison. Other species in this family, *Cristatella/Polanisia jamesii* [James’ clammyweed], which is known as *makomnica* [earth bean weed] (Buechel 1970:52; Rogers 1980:42), and *Polanisia dodecandra* [clammyweed], which is called *wahpe hla* [rattle leaf] (Buechel 1970:520), have no reported uses.

**Caprifloiacae**  
Honeysuckle Family

*Linnea borealis* (twinflower) is the only flowering forb species from the honeysuckle family associated with the Black Hills. It is...
restricted to the central and northern regions of 
the area, and it is not identified in any of the 
ethnobotanical source materials used for this 
report (Larson and Johnson 1999:183).

**Caryophyllacae**

**Pink Family**

There are seven flowering forb species from 
the Pink family reported the Black Hills: 
* Arenaria lateriflora [bluntleaf sandwort],  
* Cerastium arvense [field chickweed],  
* Cerastium fontanum [mouse-ear chickweed],  
* Silene pratensis [white campion],*  
* Silene vulgaris [bladder campion],* and 
* Stellaria longifolia [Long leaved stitchwort]* (Lar-
son and Johnson 1999:184-188). 
Field chickweed and 
mouse-ear chickweed are both reported at 
Wind Cave National Park and common over 
the entire region in a wide range of habitats. 
The others are restricted to the moister 
environments of the central and northern Hills 
(Pisarowicz 2001i:3, 2001k: 2). 
 Although field 
chickweed is associated with medicinal uses in 
European American 
folk medicine (Tilford 
1997:30), there are no reports on its identity or 
use in the literatures on American Indian 
popu-
tions from the area.

**Chenopiaceae**

**The Goosefoot Family**

*Chenopodium* are the only plants in the 
goosefoot family reported in the region of the 
Black Hills. These are not covered in Gary 
Larson and James Johnson’s botanical 
inventory (1999) of the Black Hills. A few 
species, however, are located at Wind Cave 
National Park. These include: 
*Chenopodium album* [lambquarters],  
*Chenopodium berlandieri* [pitseed goosefoot] and 
*Kochia scoparia* [Mexican-fireweed] (Pisarowicz 
2001h:3, 2001k:3). Goosefoot and other 
pigweeds are common in the plains region and 
North America more generally. 
*Chenopodium berlandieri* was an ancient food plant in the 
plains, while *C.album* was in-troduced and 
naturalized in North America (Kindscher 

**Names:**

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:25)  
*batl-sai-an* [stink weed] species unspecified  
alternate: *badl-sai-ya-don*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:117, 574; Rogers 1980:43)  
*canhlogan inkpa gmigmela* [small round point stalk]  
* C.album*  
* wazimninkpa iyeca* [its like wazimninkpa] designates  
* C.hybridum/simplex* [mapleleaf goosefoot]  
* canhlogan owi cak* o  
* Cyclolma atriplicifolium* [winged pigweed]

**Habitat:** According to Kelly Kindscher 
(1987:80), goosefoot and related pigweeds are 
found along roadsides, pastures, and waste 
grounds.

**Uses:** *Chenopodium* species were used mostly 
as foods by native populations in North 
America, but they had medicinal functions as 
well (Kindscher 1987:81-82).

[food] The Lakotas boiled the immature plant 
greens of *C.album and C.hybridum* for food or 
prepared them as a mush (Gil-more 1919; 
Buechel 1970:117, 574). The Kiowas (Vestal 
and Schultes 1939:25) also consumed them, 
even though they believed that the plant was 
put on the earth “to bother Indians or drive 
them away from dangerous places” (Vestal 
and Schultes 1939:25). They were a popular 
source of greens for European American 
travelers and emigrants in the nineteenth 
century (Kindscher 1987: 82).

[medicinal] The Lakotas used the entire plant 
of *C.album* as a remedy for bloody dysentery 
in children (Densmore 1918:267).

**Clusiaceae**

**The Mangosteen Family**

Only one species is reported in the Black Hills, 
*Hypericum perforatum* [St. Johns wort] 
(Larson and Johnson 1999:188). In recent 
times, this plant has become a popular herbal 
remedy for the treatment of depression 
(Tilford 1997:130). It is scattered over the 
northern and central Black Hills in disturbed 
meadows and open forests at low to mid
elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999: 188). There is no evidence, however, in the ethnobotanical literatures for any medicinal use among the tribal nations who occupied the Black Hills.

**Commelinaceae**

**The Spiderwort Family**

*Tradescantia* species are the only ones reported from this family in the Black Hills. Spiderworts are common in the northern and central plains (Kindscher 1987:217-219). In the Black Hills, there are two species, *Tradescantia bracteata* [longbract spiderwort] and *T. occidentalis* [prairie spiderwort]. The bracketed spiderwort is commonly found in the Black Hills at low to mid elevations in grasslands, meadows, and open pine forests, whereas the prairie spiderwort is found in rocky and sandy soils often extending to higher elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:190). The former is located at Wind Cave National Park. Neither of these is identified in ethnobotanical sources, although the Lakotas are known to have used *T. reflexa.* The Lakota called spiderwort *canhlogan papanla* [soft stalk] or *hanpi'natopi* [they use it to dye moccasins blue] (Buechel 1970:117, 167; Rogers 1980: 26). The flowers of this plant produce a blue, jelly-like paint that the Lakotas used to paint their moccasins (Buechel 1970:117). Melvin Gilmore (1919:70) tells of a Dakota love song, which young men sang when they found this flower in bloom. Although the Cherokees are reported to have prepared this plant for food (Kindscher 1987:219), there is no information on such use for the tribal nations who lived in the region of the Black Hills. Among the tribal nations who inhabited this region, only the Lakota are reported to have used the plant.

**Convolvulaccae**

**The Morningglory Family**

Two species from this family are found in the Black Hills, and both have names and/or uses reported in the ethnobotanical literatures on the tribal nations who lived in the area.

**Convolvulus arvensis**

*[field bindweed]*

This is a frequent plant in the Black Hills, where it grows at low to mid elevations in a wide range of habitats, including those at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:190; Pisarowicz 2001k:1). Although this particular species is not identified in ethnobotanical sources, the related *C. sepium* [hedge bindweed] is named by the Lakotas. It is called *kimimila tawanahca* [butterfly flower] or alternatively *pstio'lahu tyececa* [like the arrowhead] (Buechel 1970: 307; Rogers 1980:43). Lame Deer (in Fire and Fire and Erdoes 1972:171), a Lakota medicine man, reports that it is used to make people vomit.

**Ipomoea leptophylla**

*[bush morningglory]*

Known for its large taproot, this plant is widely distributed in the high plains regions of the West (Johnson and Larson 1999:164).

**Names:**

- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970:440; Rogers 1980:43) *pejuta nige tanka* [big stomach medicine]
- **Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:112) *ciye.yedagol.*ist. [ghost throw at you] alternate: *ohciczte. ize* [grass bone medicine]

**Habitat:** This plant is largely restricted to the southern and eastern portions of the Black Hills, especially in the dry sandy grasslands at the south end of the Red Valley (Larson and Johnson 1999:192). Surprisingly it is not reported for Wind Cave National Park.

**Use:** Bush morningglory was used as an emergency food by many Plains Indian nations and also for medicinal purposes.

**[food]** Lakotas ate the root raw (Buechel 1970:440), and so did the Cheyennes, Arapahos, Pawnees, and Kiowas but mostly as

**[medicinal]** The scrapings from the root were eaten raw by the Lakotas to treat stomach ailments (Buechel 1970:440). Even though the Plains Apaches feared this plant, the root was chewed and used in treatments to relieve the pain that accompanied a broken bone or other injury (Jordan 1965: 112-113).

**[fuel]** The Lakotas used the roots as a fire starter. A fire was set in the roots and then these were wrapped and hung outside. The fire could last up to seven months (Buechel 1970:440). Lame Deer (in Fire and Fire and Erdoes 1972: 172) said about this plant, 

In the old days, before we had matches, when you lit this herb it would keep smoldering for months. It used to be hung up before the tipi. If you needed a fire you just blew on it until it glowed, then you hung it up again to smolder some more.

### Cornaccae
**The Dogwood Family**

*Cornus canadensis* [bunchberry dogwood], also known as dwarf cornel, is located in the moist aspen, birch, and mixed coniferous forests at mid to high elevations in the northern and central regions of the Black Hills. Although there are no reports on its applications by tribal nations in this region, it was used as an antidote for certain poisons by tribes farther north (Larson and Johnson 1999:192). Modern herbalists also use it as an anti-inflammatory and analgesic (Tilford 1997:22).

### Crassulaccae
**The Stone Crop Family**

*Sedum lanceolatum* [spearleaf stonecrop] is the only species reported for the Black Hills. It is found frequently throughout the Black Hills at all elevations in dry open pine forest or pine-juniper woodlands and grasslands (Larson and Johnson 1999:194). It grows at Wind Cave National Park in prairie habitats (Pisarowicz 2001:12). There are tribal na-tions known to have used it to treat sore eyes and throats, but none of these lived historic-ally in the region of the Black Hills. Euro-pean Americans use the plant’s mucila-ginous juice to treat burns and other skin irritations (Tilford 1997:140).

### Cucurbitaceae
**The Cucurbit Family**

A wide variety of wild and domesticated plants in the Cucurbit family were very important food staples in the diets of Plains Indians and also used for a variety of medicinal purposes. Some of them, including *Cucurbita foetidissima* [buffalo or Missouri gourd], are located in areas of Nebraska just south of the Black Hills. This plant was believed to have mystical powers, and its root was considered dangerous to pick (Kindscher 1987:106-107, 1992:76-79). The Lakotas call it *wagaman pejuta* [pumpkin medicine], the Poncas name it *niashiga makan* [human being medicine], and the Kiowas know it as *ko-kon-baw* [no translation given]. It had a variety of medi-cinal applications among the Poncas, La-kotas, and Kiowas. It was also used by the Kiowas to clean hides (Gilmore 1919: 116-117; Vestal and Schultes 1939:54; Lewis, T. 1990:135).

**Echinocystis lobata**
**[wild cucumber]**

Wild cucumber is the only *Cucurbitaceae* species noted for the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:196), but it is not found at Wind Cave National Park.

### Names:

**Lakota** (Gilmore 1919:129; Buechel 1970:519; Rogers 1980:44)  
*wahna hnahecha* [it is a groaning thing]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:129)  
*watangatha* [ghost squash]
Habitat: This plant, which appears occasionally in the Black Hills, is found at low elevations near streams and other moist locations (Larson and Johnson 1999:194).

Uses: Only the Lakotas are known to have any applications for this plant.

[art & manufacture] The Lakotas are reported to have used the plant’s seeds as beads (Gilmore 1919:129).

**Euphorbiaceae**

The Spurge Family

A number of different spurge species are found in the central high plains, but only *Euphorbia esula* (leafy spurge) and *E. robusta*/*brachycera* [Rocky Mt. spurge/ horn-ed spurge] are described in Larsen and Johnson’s work (1999:196) on the Black Hills. At Wind Cave National Park, two species are reported, *Euphoriba*/*Chamae-syce sticospora* [carpetweed/ small slimeed sandmat] and *Euphorbia esula* [leafy spurge /sandmat] (Pisarowicz 2001k:4). None of these plants have any documented uses. The Lakotas and the Poncas had medicinal uses, however, for *Croton texensis* [skunkweed/ Texas croton], *E/C.geyeri* [Geyer’s spurge/ sand-mat], *E.marginata* [snow-on-the-mountain], *E/C. missurica* [prairie spurge/ sandmat], and *E/C.serpyllifolia* [thymeleaf spurge/ sandmat]. Snow-on-the-Mountain is found widely in southern South Dakota near prairie dog towns, road edges, and other disturbed areas (Johnson and Larson 1999: 166).

Names:

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:36)
khaw-lo-dam-a [no translation given]
* E. marginata
* tai-me [Sun Dance weed]
* Croton texensis

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:117, 242, 437, 520; Rogers 1980:45)
as an ’pi’ pejuta [milk root]
* E. marginata
alternate: itopta sapa tapejuta [Blackfooted ferret medicine]

*apela tapislecala iyececa* [leaves are shaped like a spleen]

*E. missurica*

*canhlogan wapostan* [stalk to cover the head]

*E. geyeri*
alternate: pava pejuta [head root]

*wahpe hcahca* [flower leaf]

*Croton texensis*

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:94)
naze ni pezhi [milk weed]

*E. serpylliola*

Habitat: None of the spurges used by tri-bal nations are reported for the Black Hills.

Uses: Various species of *Euphorbiaceae* were used largely for medicinal purposes by the tribes who lived in the region of the Black Hills.

[food] The Kiowas made a chewing gum from thymeleaf spurge (Vestal and Schultes 1939:36-37).

[medicinal] The Lakotas called Geyer’s spurge “head root” because it was used as a protection for the head (Buechel 1970:117, 437; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972: 171). The Lakotas also applied the crushed leaves of snow-on-the-mountain for a liniment to treat swellings, and they used them in a tea to promote milk production in nursing mothers (Buechel 1970:242). The Poncas used this as a remedy to increase milk production in nursing mothers, and it was employed to treat dysentery and abdominal bloating in children (Gilmore 1919: 94). The Lakotas brewed skunkweed leaves in a tea for stomach pains (Buechel 1970: 520). Spurges were also commonly used in European American folk medicine (Kind-scher 1992: 110-11).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Kiowas claimed that they received their knowledge of skunkweed from the Crows in the 18th century, and that they once used it in their Sun Dance (Vestal and Schultes 1939:36).
**Fabaccae**

**The Legume Family**

This was one of the most significant plant families for Plains Indians because it contained many important food staples. Indeed, most of the plants from this family that are located in the Black Hills had food, medicinal, or other uses among the tribal nations who occupied the area.

**Amphicarpaea bracteata**  
**[hogpeanut]**

Hogpeanut seeds were a very important food delicacy for tribal nations in the region. The plant was very abundant along the Missouri River and its tributaries. The Platte River was also a good site for this member of the legume family (Kindscher 1987:37-40; Larson and Johnson 1999:200).

**Names:**

Lakota (Buechel 1970:330, 394; Rogers 1980:45)  
*maka'toomnicha* [ground beans]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:95)  
*Hinbhi-abe* [beans]

**Habitat:** This plant is uncommon in the Black Hills, restricted largely to the moist understory of hardwood drainages in low to mid elevation locations of the central and eastern parts of the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:200).

**Uses:** Hogpeanuts were primarily a source of food, although the Lakotas used the plant’s leaves for medicinal purposes.

[food] The women of the Ponca, Omaha, and Lakota tribes were known to gather the fleshy underground pods from the caches of field mice or voles (Denig in Denig in Ewers 1961:11; Standing Bear 1978:57). Dakota (and presumably Lakota) women, however, left gifts of corn or other acceptable foods in exchange (Gilmore 1919:96). The underground seeds were gathered in early spring and late fall, while the aboveground seeds were collected only during the fall (Kindscher 1987:38). The beans were eaten raw or boiled with meat fat to make a soup, and the smaller lentil-sized seeds from the aboveground pods were cooked (Gilmore 1919:96 Ewers 1961:11; Kindscher 1987: 38-41).

[medicinal] Lakotas added the pulverized leaves of the hog peanut to salves for the treatment of swellings (Buechel 1970:394).

[symbolic & ceremonial] Melvin Gilmore (1925:183-184) relates a moral story about a woman who took beans from a mouse’s storehouse without returning a gift and the calamity that befell her community as a result.

**Apios americana**  
**[groundnut]**

The groundnut or wild potato was another important food source for local tribes, but this legume plant is located primarily in regions east of the Black Hills (Kindscher 1987:46-53). Larson and Johnson do not even mention it in their extensive listing of plants for the Hills. The Cheyennes called it *aestome-mesehehostose* [tasteless potato], and they probably ate the tubers (Hart 1981:28). The Lakotas called it *blo* [potato] (Buechel 1970:111) and included it in their diets.

**Astragalus spp.**  
**[milkvetch]**

Milkvetches form one of the most diverse groups in the legume family with many different varieties found in the Black Hills and surrounding regions (Larson and Johnson 1999:200). Many milkvetches contain substances toxic to humans and animals (Kindscher 1992:66-67). Others were used as food and medicine by tribes in the region, although known native names are not always unambiguously linked to specific botanical species.

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:179; Hart 1981:28)  
*ma?xe-heooovo?estse* [big scabby weed plant]
A. crassicarpus  
*mahk ha’ nowas* [poison weed medicine]

A. adsurgens  

cante yazanpi icuwa  [heart pain treatment]

unidentified milkvetch variety

locipsni pezijota  [grey appetite herb]

A. carolinianus  
peju’ ta ska hu  [white stem medicine]

A. canadensis or A. racemosus

alternate: peju’ ta zi  [yellow root]

peju’ ta skuya  [sweet medicine]

A. gracilis

pteta tawote  [buffalo food]

A. crassicarpus  
sunkle’ ja hu  [horse urine stem]

A. racemosus

alternate: sunkleja  [horse urine]

sunko wasakala  [easy to get for horse]

A. canadensis

tasusu canhlogan  [small bean weed]

A. ceramicus  [painted milkvetch]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:91)

gansatho  [rattle]

A. carolinianus

tdika shande  [no translations given]

A. crassicarpus

alternate: wamide wengithe

**Habitat:**  
*A. adsurgens* is widespread in the Black Hills and found in many different habitats from open pines to grasslands at low to high elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:200). *A. agrestis* is a low to mid elevation plant of the grasslands and meadows, while *A. alpinus* is found at mid to high elevations in the meadows and open pine or mixed deciduous forests in the central and northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:202). *A. americanus, A. canadensis* and *A. australis* are also found in the central and northern Black Hills at mid to high elevations. *A. crassicarpus* is frequently found throughout the Hills in a wide range of habitats, including in Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:1). *A. flexuosus* is frequent in similar environments, but its distribution is restricted to the central and northern Hills. *A. gilviflorus* and *A. gracilis* are common at low to mid elevations in dry grasslands especially in the Red Valley and Hogback (Larson and Johnson 1999:206). One additional species is reported at Wind Cave National Park: *A. bisculcatus* [biscuit milkvetch].

**Uses.** While *A. crassicarpus* was an impor-tant food staple for many tribal nations in the region, most of the other milkvetch species were used for medicinal and veterinary purposes.

**[food]** The Lakotas and Poncas were known to collect and eat fresh groundplum (Gilmore 1913b:365; Gilmore 1919:91; Buechel 1970:440). The immature pods were gathered in the spring and eaten raw or cooked (Kindscher 1987:61).

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas used many different *Astragalus* species for medicinal purposes. *A. carolinianus* was a febrifuge for children and also employed to treat loss of appetite (Densmore 1918:257; Gilmore 1919:91). The pulverized roots of *A. canadensis* or *A. racemosus* were chewed for heart and back pain, to relieve coughing, and to promote urination (Buechel 1970:440; Rogers 1980:45; Lewis, T. 1990:134). Both were also used in an infusion to lower fevers in children (Gilmore 1913b, 365). Lakota women chewed on *A. gracilis* to promote milk production (Buechel 1970:440). Another unidentified milkvetch, known as *cante yazanpi icuwa*, was an ingredient in a tea for stomach and heart pain (Densmore 1918: 260; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972: 170).

The Cheyennes powdered the leaves and stems of *A. adsurgens* and sprinkled them on parts of the body afflicted by poison ivy and other plant toxins (Grinnell 1972:2: 179).

The Arikaras were also reported to use milkvetches for medicinal purposes, although the native names and specific botanical varieties have not been identified (Kind-scher 1992:66).

**[veterinary]** Lakotas fed the seeds of *A. canadensis* to their horses (Buechel 1970: 469). The Cheyennes applied *A. crassi-carpus* as an ointment to treat horses suffering from difficulty urinating (Hart 1981: 28), and the
Lakotas used this plant as a medicinal preparation for horses too (Buechel 1970: 440).


[art & manufacture] The Poncas used the seeds of *A.crassicarpus* in children’s rattles, and they wove the leaves into mats for butchering meat (Gilmore 1919:91).

**Dalea spp.**  
[prairie clover]

The tribes of the northern Plains used several different species of prairie clover, including *Dalea aurea* [golden prairie clover], *D.candida* [white prairie clover], *D.enneandra* [slender prairie clover], *D.purpurea* [purple prairie clover], and *D.villosa* [silky prairie clover].

**Names:**

*Comanche* (Carlson and Jones 1939:523)  
*pake:tse* [no translation given]

*Lakota* (Gilmore 1919:94; Buechel 1970:110,117, 128, 172, 178, 495, 519; Rogers 1980:46, 47)  
*canhlogan suta* [tough weed]  
*D. enneandra*  
alternate: *hehaka tapejuta* [elk medicine]  
*toka'la tapejuta hu bloka* [male kit-fox medicine stem]

*D. candida*  
alternate: *hitunkala tawoyute* [mouse food]  
*tokala tapejuta hu winyela* [female kit-fox medicine stem]

*D. purpurea*  
*Bla ye zitka 'tacan hu stola* [small stem for bird to sit on]

*D. villiosa*  
alternates: *casmu 'huholhota* [gray sand stem]  
*waptaya huholhota* [grey wood stem]  
*wahcai kanta mna umna hu' tanka* [other yellow flower with big stem that smells like plum]

*D. aurea*  
*wanahcha* [cultivated flower]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:94)  
*makan skithe* [sweet medicine]

**Habitat:** The white prairie clover appears frequently in the Black Hills from low to mid elevations especially in open pine forest and grasslands, while the purple variety is even more widely distributed extending into sagebrush steppe, mixed grass prairie, and meadow habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999: 212-14). The other three varieties with purported uses among local tribes, *D.aurelia*, *D. enneandra*, and *D.villosa*, are not mentioned in Larson and Johnson’s botanical survey of the Hills, although these are found in the adjacent prairies (Johnson and Larson 1999:178-180). *D.Aurelia, D.enneandra,* and *D.purpurea,* however, appear at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:1).

**Uses:** *Dalea* species were used for both food and medicine by the tribal nations of the region.

[food] Many tribes, including the Poncas, Lakotas, and Comanches, chewed the roots of the white and pink varieties as a gum (Gilmore 1919:94; Carlson and Jones 1939: 523; Buechel 1970:495; Bordeaux 1929: 131; Kindscher 1987:111). The Lakotas also used them to make a pleasant beverage tea (Gilmore 1919:94).

[medicinal] The Lakotas used the roots of *D.villosa* as a purge, and its leaves and blossoms were taken to cure a sore throat (Buechel 1970:110, 549). *D.enneandra* was included in Lakota treatments for dysentery and intestinal ailments (Gilmore 1913b: 366), while the Plains Apaches burned it as a moxa for headaches, rheumatism, and pneumonia (Jordan 1965: 109). The Lakotas also took *D.purpurea* as a medicine for unidentified maladies (Densmore 1918:271).

**Desmodium Canadense**  
[Canada tickclover or showy ticktrefoil]

Also known as ticktrefoil, this plant is restricted to the moist meadows and steam
banks in the central Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:214). The Lakotas identified this plant with three different names: hante pepe’iyeca [like a prickly juniper], wahpe-‘inkpa pepe [prickly leaf ends], and wokahtan blaskaska [small flat burs that stick to clothing] (Buechel 1970:520, 601; Rogers 1980:46). No uses have been report-ed for this plant, however.

**Glycyrrhiza lepidota**  
**[American licorice]**

This is another plant that is common and widely distributed throughout the western United States in prairies and pastures. It is also one that has a scientifically documented medicinal value (Kindscher 1992:116-117).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:178; Hart 1981:28)  
*haht’ novasspoph* [yellow-jacket stinger plant]  
alternate: *ma’kehaha-novaso*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:587; Rogers 1980:46)  
*winawizi cik’ala* [little jealous woman]  
*Gilmore (1919:92) writes that the name derives from the word for jealous woman and refers to the burr which take hold of a man.*

**Habitat** This plant appears frequently over the entire Black Hills on stream banks, floodplains, and meadows at low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:216). It is located at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:1).

**Uses:** Licorice was used for food and many other purposes by tribal nations in the re-gion.

**[food]** The roots were an important food in the diets of tribes in the northern Plains (Kindscher1987:120-21). Lakotas peeled and dried large quantities for winter use (Gilmore 1919:92), while Cheyennes ate the young shoots of the licorice plant raw when they budded in early spring (Grinnell 1972: 2:178).

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas mixed the root with pejuta ska in a treatment for the flu (Buechel 1970:587; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:170), and they also used it as a remedy for toothaches, earaches, and other ailments (Densmore 1918:263; Gilmore 1913b:365;1919:92). The leaves were steep-ed for earache treatments, and a decoction of the root was employed for treating fever in children (Gilmore 1919:92). The Cheyennes relied on the dried leaves and the dried roots to make a medicinal tea for stomachaches and diarrhea (Hart 1981:28-29; 1992:35). The Arapahos treated sore throats with the root of the wild licorice (Nickerson 1966: 48). This plant was also employed as a folk remedy for a variety of ailments in European American folk medicine (Kindscher 1992: 115; Tilford 1997:90).

**[veterinary]** The Lakotas made a poultice out of licorice as a remedy for a horse’s sore back (Gilmore 1919:92).

**[art & manufacture]** Lakota men used the burrs of this plant to hold their hair back when shooting bows (Red Cloud High School 2001).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Cheyennes chewed the roots for their cooling effect during sweatlodges and the Sun Dance (Hart 1919:92).

**Hedysarum alpinum**  
**[alpine sweetvetch]**

Frequently found in the mid to high elevation meadows and forests in the central and northern Black Hills, Alpine sweetvetch is used by tribes farther north, but it is not associated with any name or application among local tribal nations (Larson and John-son 1999:216-217).

**Lathyrus ochroleucus**  
**[cream pea or vetchling]**

This is another plant of the northern and central Black Hills found in dense forest environments. It is not known to have any
names or uses for the tribes who lived in the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:218). The Poncas, however, used *L. polymorphus* [manystem pea] as a source of food and called it *hinbthi-si-tanga* [large seeded bean] (Gilmore 1919:96).

**Lupinus argenteus**  
[silvery lupine]

Silvery lupine is common from the northern to the central Hills, and it is abundant on the western side of the Hills. It appears from low to high elevations in meadows and open forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:218), and it is found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:1). The Lakotas call a related species, *L. pusillus* [low or rusty lupine], *canhlogan nablag*a [burst open weed] (Buechel 1970:117; Rogers 1980:46).

**Medicago lupulina**  
[black medic]

This plant was introduced from Eurasia, and it has become very common in the Black Hills in a wide range of environments at all elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:220). It is reported at Wind Cave National Park. No names or uses for it have been documented in the ethnobotanical literature.

**Melilotus spp.**  
[sweetclover]

*M. alba* [white sweetclover] and *M. offici-nalis* [yellow sweetclover] were introduced by European Americans, and both spread rapidly across the plains where they com-monly appear along roadsides, in range-lands, and fields (Johnson and Larson 1999: 186). Yellow sweetclover is common in the Black Hills in a wide range of environments from low to mid elevations. White sweet-clover is also present but not as common (Larson and Johnson 1999:220). Both are present at Wind Cave National Park. The Lakotas call white sweet clover *wachanga iyechecha* [like sweetgrass] (Gilmore 1919: 91). The Poncas and Dakota quickly adapted the sweetclover because its pleasant scent reminded them of sweetgrass. They hung it in their homes as an air freshener (Ibid.) Yellow sweetclover was named *wahpe swula* [fine leaf] (Gilmore 1913b: 365; Bue-chel 1970:520; Rogers 1980:47), but no use for it has been reported.

**Oxytropis spp.**  
[crazyweeds or locoweeds]

Also known as locoweeds, these species are well known for their ability to intoxicate horses (Larson and Johnson 1999:222). The varieties reported for the Black Hills include *O. campestris* [slender crazyweed or locoweed], *O. lamberti* [Lambert/purple crazyweed], and *O. sericea* [white crazyweed] (Larson and Johnson 1999:222-223).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:179)  
*wi ke isse e yo* [sweet root] applies to *O. sericea*

alternate: *ve?ohke-heseeo?otse* [bitter medicine]

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:470; Rogers 1980:47)  
*sunkt peju’a* [horse root]  
*O. lamberti*

**Habitat:** The Slender crazyweed is com-mon throughout the Black Hills from mid to high elevations and in a variety of different habitats, while the Lambert and white crazy-weed species are found at low to mid eleva-tion ranges. The Lambert crazyweed is fre-quent in the Hills, particularly in the Hog-back and Red Valley, and the white crazy-weed is seen occasionally in mixed grass prairies, sagebrush steppes, and open pine forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:222-223). Both species are reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:1).

**Uses:** In the Black Hills area, only the Cheyennes and Lakotas are reported to have had any use for crazyweeds.
Although other tribal nations in the West used crazyweeds for various medicinal purposes (Kindscher 1992:265-67), the Cheyennes are the only nation with an historical connection to the Black Hills that employed it medicinally. They used the powdered root of *O. sericea* and mixed it with their “blue medicine” [Sheperd’s purse] to increase the milk flow of a nursing mother (Grinnell 1972:2:179).

The Lakotas report that horses eat and even dig out the roots of the *O. lamberti* variety of crazyweed (Buechel 1970:47).

*Psoralea spp.*

This was a very significant group of legumes for the tribal nations of the Plains. One of its species, *esculenta*, served as a major source of food, but many others were used for a wide range of benefits too.

*Psoralea argophyllum*

Like many other members of the scurfpea family, *argophylla* is widely distributed in the prairies and plains of the United States (Kaye, Berry and Moodie 1978:329-336; Kindscher 1992:176; Johnson and Larson 1999:188).

Names:

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:178; Hart 1981:29; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988: 53)

*to’wan i yuhk ts* [ingredients to cool]

alternates: *hestamo*a?eno [devil’s turnip]

*he?ka?e?o*e-mota?eno*

*hestamokan*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:487; Rogers 1980:47)

*ticanicahu* [curlew’s plant]

alternate: *ticanicahu hlohota* [grey curlew’s plant]

Habitat: Silver scurfpea is found over the entire region of the Black Hills at low to mid elevations. This plant grows in the mixed grass prairie, sagebrush steppe, meadows, and open pine forest of the Hogback, Red Valley, and Gray Shale Foothills (Larson and Johnson 1999:224). It is found at Wind Cave National Park too (Pisarowicz 2001h: 1).

**Uses:** The Cheyennes and Lakotas are the only two populations from the Black Hills for which names and specific applications for this plant are recorded, although other tribes in the northern Plains are known to have made use of it (Kindscher 1992:176-177).

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970: 487; Red Shirt 2002:9).

**[art & manufacture]** The Lakotas and the Cheyennes used the tough green stems of this plant to weave baskets for transporting meat (Buechel 1970:487; Whiteman in Sch-wartz 1988:53). This may have been the plant on which Lakotas butchered buffalo meat, when they put on demonstrations at the park in 1937 (Freeland 1938:4).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Cheyennes have a story about how this plant could lead young girls astray while they were looking for breadroot (Hart 1981:21).

*Psoralea aurea*

This scurfpea is not reported for the Black Hills. The Lakotas called it *pejuta pa* [bit-ter medicine], and they prepared a decoction of the leaves for colic and dysentery (Gilmore 1919:94; Buechel 1970:519).
Psoralea cuspidate  
[tall breadroot scurfpea]

Although this scurfpea is not reported for the Black Hills, it is abundant on gravelly uplands, hilltops, and slopes in south central and southwestern South Dakota and adjoining areas of Wyoming and Montana (Johnson and Larson 1999:188). Lakotas call it mato' tatinpsila [bear’s turnip], and they say that it has the same qualities as aunyeyapi or sandcherries, which I suspect means that one must approach it from opposite the windward side. It is used as a medicine, the purpose of which is undis-closed (Buechel 1970:334; Rogers 1980:47). The Plains Apaches regarded this plant as unpalatable and saw it as a “mate” to P. esculenta (Jordan 1965:47).

Psoralea esculenta  
[breadroot scurfpea]

Historically, this was one of the most important foods for the tribal nations of the northern Plains, and it is one of the most commonly reported as well (Kindscher 1987:183-189). Notwithstanding its importance, this is not an easy plant to harvest because its roots are generally compacted in hard soil. Historically, women used specially carved digging sticks to pry the turnips from the ground, and today, Lakota and Cheyenne women often use crowbars to do the job (Albers 1966-1976; Hart 1981: 29). Also, because the plant’s top breaks off and scatters its seeds soon after ripening, it is difficult to identify once this happens (Kindscher 1987:184-185). As a result, the win-dow of opportunity for identifying and dig-ging these tubers is limited. Melvin Gilmore (1919:92-93) notes that Lakota mothers told their children to take note of the direction in which the plants point and follow these to find other plants because it is said that the plants ‘point to each other.’

Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:178; Hart 1981:29)  
mohk’ ta en’ [black face]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:489; Rogers 1980:48)  
ti’psila [no translation given]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:46)  
^o‘a. [no translation provided]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:92)  
nugthe [no translation given]

Habitat: This important source of food is abundant, and it appears over the entire Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park from low to mid elevations in mixed grass prairie and open pine forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:226).

Uses: Although one of the most important sources of food and carbohydrates for Plains populations, wild turnip had other functions too.

[food] This is still a very important root to the Cheyennes and Lakotas who gather it in early summer, usually in the month of June. Historically, the root was dried, braided, and stored for winter use. It was often boiled with meat and sometimes used with a sweetener for pudding (Gilmore 1919:92; Bor-deaux 1929:129; Hassrick 1964:178-179; Grinnell 1972:2:178; Standing Bear 1978: 57, 1988:111; Hart 1981:29-30). It is still gathered today by women and men, and it is an important ingredient in soups served on ceremonial occasions (Albers 1966-1976; Lewis, T 1990:59). This was considered the most important root crop for the Plains Apaches, and it has remained so in post-reservation times (Jordan 1965:46). Hidatsa women pounded the roots to a fine powder, which was used as a flour to thicken soups and puddings (Nickel 1974:72). The Arikaras and Hidatsas frequently acquired their supplies of breadroot in trade with the Lakotas, Apaches, and other tribal nations who lived on the high plains near their villages (Gilmore 1926:14; Jordan 1965:47; Nickel 1974:72).

[medicinal] The Cheyennes used it as an ingredient in various decoctions, including one
for healing burns and another for treating diarrhea (Hart 1981:29).

[symbolic & ceremonial] This plant occupied such an important place that it found its way into many important stories in the oral traditions of the tribal nations in the region (Gilmore 1919:93), including the Fallen Star story cycle. Among the Plains Apaches, it appears in one of their origin stories (Jordan 1965:47). It was also one of the ceremonial foods served at the Chey-enne’s Animal Dance or Massaum (Hart 1981:29).

\textit{Psoralea hypogeaum}  
[subterranean Indian breadfruit]

This is another scurfpea not reported in the Black Hills. The Cheyennes called it \textit{ma im mohk’ ta’ en} [red and black face], and they ate it fresh or dried it for winter use (Grinnell 1972:2:178). The Comanches, who ate the roots raw, knew it as \textit{e’kakoni} [no translation given] (Carlson and Jones 1939: 523).

\textit{Psoralea lanceolata}  
[lemon scurfpea]

Although not located in the Black Hills, this scurfpea is found in sandy habitats in west-ern South Dakota and in neighboring Wyo-ming (Johnson and Larson 1999:192). The Lakotas named it \textit{canhlogan hukan hanka} [tall root stem/our translation] (Buechel 1970:116; Rogers 1980:48), but there are no reports that they used it. The Arapahos, on the other hand, chewed the roots to reduce hoarseness, used the leaves to moisturize the skin, and brewed a tea from the flower’s head to treat headaches (Nickerson 1966: 48).

\textit{Psoralea tenuiflora}  
[slimflower scurfpea]

Also called few-flowered psoralea, this scurfpea is widely distributed in the United States, extending from Kentucky in the east to Arizona in the southwest (Larson and Johnson 1999:226).

Names:

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:34)  
\textit{fii-yan-tzon}

Lakota (Buechel 1970:487, 521; Rogers 1980:48)  
\textit{ticanicahu tanka} [large curlew’s plant]  
alternate: \textit{wahtpo’kijata} [branched leaf]

Habitat: Slimflower scurfpeas are found mostly at low elevations in the Red Valley and Hogback regions of the central and southern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:226). Surprisingly, it is not listed at Wind Cave National Park.

Uses: This variety of scurfpea was used medicinally, and it had hygienic and manufacturing applications as well.

[medicinal] The Lakotas prepared treat-ments for headaches from its root, and they also combined the roots with other uniden-tified plants in a remedy to treat consump-tion (Gilmore 1919:93; Buechel 1970:487). Garlands were made from the tops of the plant to protect the head from the heat of the sun (Gilmore 1919:93).

[cosmetic & hygienic] A smudge was pre-pared by the Lakotas from the plant’s root to use as a mosquito repellent (Buechel 1970: 487).

[art & manufacture] The Plains Apaches employed a section of the plant’s lower stem as a scoop to remove marrow from long animal bones (Jordan 1965:75), and the Kiowas used it as a fork to eat buffalo steak (Vestal and Schultes 1939:34).

\textit{Thermopsis rhombifolia}  
[goldenpea]

Also known as prairie thermopsis, buck-bean, yellow bean, or false lupine, it is wide-ly distributed in the high plains regions of the
West (Johnson and Larson 1999:192). In the Black Hills, it is common at all elevations and in a range of habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:226). It is also reported at Wind Cave National Park. Melvin Gilmore (1919:91) learned that this plant was dried to use in a smoke treatment for rheumatism, although he does not identify the tribal origin of this practice. The Cheyennes used it in a similar manner, and they also brewed a medicinal tea from it (Hart 1981:30).

**Trifolium spp.**

*Trifolium hybridum* [alsike clover], *T. pratense* [red clover], and *T. repens* [white clover] were all introduced to North America from Europe for animal forage. They are frequent from low to high elevations in all kinds of domesticated and disturbed environments in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:228-30), but they are not listed among the plants at Wind Cave National Park. Euro-pan Americans made tea from dried red clover flowers as a blood purifier and for coughs, skin problems, liver and gall bladder disorders (Tilford 1997:124). There is no documentation of their names and uses in ethnobotanical sources on the tribal nations who were associated historically with the Hills.

**Vicia Americana**

*American vetch*

The Lakotas refer to this plant as *tasusu* [buffalo testicles] (Buechel 1970:482), but no uses have been reported for it. It is found throughout the Hills in a wide range of low to high elevation environments (Larson and Johnson 1999:232), and it also grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:1).

**Fumariaceae**

**Fumitory Family**

Only one species of this family, the *Cory-dalis aurea* [scrambled eggs], is reported for the Black Hills, and it is not associated with any names or uses in the ethnobotanical literatures on European American or Amer-i-can Indian populations in the region. It is found occasionally in the Hills in moist and shady locations in pine forests and deciduous woodlands at low to high elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:231).

**Gentianaceae**

**Gentian Family**

Of the gentian species reported for the Black Hills, only three are identified by name in the botanical nomenclatures of local tribal nations, and of these, two, *Gentiana Andrewsii* [closed bottle gentian] and *G. puberulenta* [downy gentian], are also common-ly found in neighboring grassland habitats (Johnson and Larson 1999:196).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:184; Hart 1981:26)

* e kon i mohk ta’en (hard black face)

* Frasera speciosa* [elkweed]

alternate: *he’kone-mo’kohta’ene* [strong turnip]

**Lakota** (Gilmore 1919:109; Buechel 1970:287, 519; Rogers 1980:49)

* pejuta zi* [yellow root]

* G. puberulenta* [gowney gentian]

 alternate: *kapo’papi* [makes popping noise]

**Habitat:** *Frasera speciosa* [elkweed] is common to occasional in the northern and western portions of the Black Hills where it is found on the Limestone Plateau in open pine and aspen forest, while *Gentiana affinis* [northern gentian] is located in the same area but in moist locations at low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:234). On the eastern side of the Hills, *G. Andrew-sii* [closed gentian] is uncommon and found at low to mid elevations in moist meadow or stream bank environments, while *G. puberulenta* [gowney gentian] is rare and confined to sites in Pennington County (Larson and Johnson
Also present and frequent in the Black Hills at mid to high elevations is the Dwarf gentian, *G. amarella*, which grows in moist meadows and clearings, and the Spurred gentian, *Halenia deflexus*, which is found in moist forests and ravines (Larson and Johnson 1999:236).

**Uses:** Elkweed and downy gentian are the only two gentian species for which there are reported uses in the botanical literatures on the tribes who occupied the Black Hills. No uses were reported for the other two species identified in Lakota nomenclatures.

**[medicinal]** The leaves of the showy frasera were dried and pulverized by the Cheyennes to make an infusion for diarrhea (Grinnell 1972:2:184). The Arapahos used it for unidentified medicinal purposes (Nickerson 1966:49). The Dakotas (and possibly the Lakotas) made a root tea from the downey gentian for a tonic and also combined it with other medicines (Gilmore 1919:109).

**[art & manufacture]** The Arapahos used the large stems of showy frasera to make an elk-calling whistle (Nickerson 1966:49).

**Geraniaceae**

**The Geranium Family**

Only one native species in this family, *Geranium richardsonii* [Richardson’s Geranium], is reported in the Black Hills, and it appears in the northern and central Black Hills at mid to high elevations along stream margins and in moist meadows (Larson and Johnson 1999:238). Only the Cheyennes are reported to have named and used this plant. They called it by several names: *mat’ o min is to’ a* [nose bleed medicine], or alternatively *matomene-vo?-estse* or *matomene-hesee-ova?otse* (Grinnell 1972:2:179-80; Hart 1981: 26). The Cheyennes made a medicine from the pulverized leaf, which was rubbed on the nose or powdered and sniffed. The dried roots of this plant were also powdered and administered in a liquid infusion (Grinnell 1972:2:180). European American herbalists employ this and other *Geranium* species to treat diarrhea and other intestinal irritations (Tilford 1997:43).

**Iridaceae**

**The Iris Family**

Two species, *Iris Missouriensis* [Rocky Mountain iris] and *Sisyrinchium Montanum* [mountain blue-eyed grass], are reported in the Black Hills, and although both are common in the Hills and the surrounding plains, neither have been named or described in any of the ethnobotanical sources for the tribal nations who inhabited the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:240). The Rocky Mountain Iris or Western blue flag is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisa-rowicz 2001:1).

**Lamiaceae**

**The Mint Family**

Of the eleven species from this family reported in the Black Hills, five of them can be identified with names in tribal nomenclatures and four are associated with important cultural uses. Indeed, two of the species in this family had significant medicinal and ceremonial functions. The Lakotas also named and identified two other species not reported in the Black Hills, *Phsostegia virginiana* [false dragonhead],* which they called *wahpe yatapi iyeca* [it is like lavender hyssop], and *Pyncanthemum virginianum* [mountain mint], which they called *i wahpe ceyaka* [mint leaf]. From the leaves of the mountain mint, they made a medicinal tea for coughing (Buechel 1970:520, 521; Rogers 1980:50).

**Agastache foeniculum**

[lavender hyssop]

This plant is largely restricted to, but widely distributed in, the northern Plains and western Great Lakes regions (Kindscher 1992:224-25),
and along with its western relative, *Agastache urticifolia* [nettleleaf giant hyssop/horsemint], it was used by several tribal nations in the region.

Names:

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:186; Hart 1981:27)
- *mo e' emok'shin* [elk mint]
  - alternate: *mo?ehe-moxesheene*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:521; Rogers 1980:49)
- *wahpe'yata'pi* [chewing leaf]

Habitat: Lavender hyssop is found occasionally in moist meadows and thickets or open forests and woodlands near streams at low to high elevations in the central and northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:242).

Uses: Three of the tribal nations with known historical associations to the Black Hills used this plant for food, medicine, and hygiene.

**[food]** The Cheyennes, Hidatsas, and Lakotas boiled the leaves of the lavender hyssop for a beverage (Buechel 1970:521; Grinnell 1972:2:186; Nickel 1974:58). Other tribes in the region are reported to have used the related species *A.anaethiodora* [giant hyssop] as a culinary sweetener (Gilmore 1919:113).

**[medicinal]** An infusion made from the hyssop was used by the Cheyennes to treat a weak heart and sore lungs (Grinnell 1972: 2:186), and it was also a remedy for colds and fevers (Hart 1981:27). Modern herba-lists rely on it for its carminative, sedative, and diaphoretic properties (Tilford 1997: 102).

**[cosmetic & hygienic]** Hidatsas attached the leaves of the lavender hyssop to their fans because they gave off a fragrant odor (Nickel 1974:58).

*Dracocephalum parviflorum*

**[American dragonhead]***

The American Dragonhead is restricted in its distribution to the northern and central portions of the Black Hills where it appears occasionally. No names or uses have been reported for this plant in ethnobotanical sources (Larson and Johnson 1999:242).

**Hedeoma drummodi***

**[false penny royall]**

For more information, see *Salvia reflexa*.

**Lycopus americanus**

**[American bugleweed]**

Also known as “water horehound,” this plant is common and found along the margins of water habitats at low to mid elevations throughout the entire Black Hills. The tubers are edible. While European Americans and tribal nations outside the region are known to have used this bugleweed (Kindscher 1987:87; Tilford 1997:22), noth-ing has been reported for those who occupied the Black Hills in historic times. And of these nations, only the Lakotas are known to have had a name for this plant, *skiskita hu* [rough stem] (Buechel 1970:464; Rogers 1980:49).

**Mentha Arvensis**

**[field mint]**

Field mint is ubiquitously present in the northern Plains where it is typically found along stream banks and at the margins of lakes and sloughs. It is widely used by European Americans and the tribal nations of the region for culinary and medicinal purposes (Kindscher 1992:152-155).

Names:

**Arapaho** (Nickerson 1966:50)
- *paquanah* [no translation]

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:186; Hart 1981:27)
- *mahpe'-moxeshe'n* [water mint or perfume]
  - alternate: *he heyuts 'ts'hiss'ots* [vomiting medicine]

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:131, 799; Rogers 1980:49)
- *ceya'ka* [mint]
  - *peju'ata cik'ala* [small wood medicine]
  - *applies to the roots only
**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:112)
*Pezhe nubthon* [fragrant herb]

**Habitat:** Mint is ubiquitous in the Black Hills, and it is found at all elevations in moist locations especially along stream banks and lakeshores (Larson and Johnson 1999:244). It grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:2).

**Uses:** All of the tribal nations who occupied the Black Hills in historic times have reported uses for this important plant.

**[food]** The Cheyennes, Lakotas, and Poncas boiled the dried leaves for a culinary tea (Gilmore 1919:112; Bordeaux 1929: 129; Standing Bear 1978:58; Hart 1981: 27). This tea is still served today at Lakota feasts and other ceremonial occasions (Albers 1966-1978; Nurges 1970:67, 82). The Dakota (and possibly the Lakotas) flavored their cooked meat with mint and packed the plant with their dried meat too (Gilmore 1913b:363, 1919:112).

**[medicinal]** The Kiowas chewed the fresh leaves or brewed a tea to treat stomach ailments (Vestal and Schultes 1939:49). The Lakotas made a tea from the roots to treat headaches (Buechel 1970:799), swellings (Lewis, T. 1990:134), and abdominal pain (Suka sni win n.d:15; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:170), while the Cheyennes used the leaves and stems in a tea to induce vomiting and to strengthen the heart and stimulate other vital organs. The Cheyennes also believed it could function as an aphrodisiac (Grinnell 1972:2:186; Hart 1981:27). The Hidatsas made a medicinal tea for unidentified purposes (Nickel 1974: 67). Mint has a long history of use in Euro-pean American folk medicine, and it is one of the most popular herbal teas in the United States today (Kindscher 1992:153-54).


**[symbolic & ceremonial]** A bed of mint was used in the Cheyenne Sun Dance for its cooling effects (Hart 1981:28).

*Monarda fistulosa* [bergamot]

Also popularly known as beebalm and horsemint, there are two major varieties, *M.fistulosa/menthafolia* [wild bergamot] and *M.clinopodia/fistulosa* [white bergamot] (Larson and Johnson 1999:246). Bergamot is widespread and common in the grasslands surrounding the Black Hills, where it is typically located on prairie hillside, steam banks and roadsides (Kindscher 1992:156; Larson and Johnson 1999b:198) Most of the tribal nations in the Plains recognized differences in the two varieties by the names they applied to the plant, and as Kelly Kindscher (1987:151) writes, this indicates “their knowledge, observation, and use of this plant.”

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:186; Hart 1981:28)  
*wi'us kimohk'shin* [bitter perfume]  
*mo in' a mohk'shin* [horse perfume]  
alternate: *ve?ohk e-moxeshene*

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:49)  
*po-et-on-sai-on* [perfume plant]

**Lakota** (Gilmore 1919:111; Buechel 1970:172, 521; Rogers 1980:50)  
*wahpe wastemma* (sweet smelling leaf)  
*M. menthafolia*  
*hehaka tawote* (elk food)  
*M. fistulosa*  
alternate: *heha' ka tapejuta* (elk medicine)  
*maka ceyaka iyececa* [like earth mint]  
*M. pectinata* [pony beebalm]

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:143)  
*ita.co* [big leaf]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:111)  
*pexhe pa* [bitter herb]  
*izna-kithe-i* [no translation]

**Habitat:** This is a very common plant throughout the Black Hills, where it is loca-
in meadows and open forests and along roadsides at all elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:246). The Lakotas distinguish between the one that grows on the open grasslands, *M. menthafolia*, and the one located in the forests, *M. fistulosa* (Buechel 1970: 172). Surprisingly, neither varieties of wild bergamot are reported at Wind Cave National Park.

**Uses:** This had many important medicinal, hygienic, and ceremonial uses for the tribal nations who occupied the Black Hills in historic times.

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas had many different medicinal applications for this plant. In one, a tea was brewed from the blossoms of *M. fistulosa* to soothe sore throats and to treat colds and fevers, and in another the roots were used to doctor whooping cough. The boiled leaves were also wrapped in cloth and placed on sore eyes to provide overnight relief, and the chewed leaves were applied to wounds to stop blood flow (Buechel 1970:172). In yet another application, the leaves and flowers were mixed together in a treatment for abdominal pain, and in still another, the leaves were used to prevent fainting (Gilmore 1913b:363; Densmore 1918:270). The Kiowas used bergamot to treat insect bites and stings (Vestal and Schultes 1939:49), while the Crows made a tea from it for respiratory ailments (Hart 1992:70). Early European American settlers found this plant useful for medicinal purposes and applied it in a wide variety of remedies (Hart 1992:70; Kindscher 1992: 158; Tilford 1997:18).

**[cosmetic & hygienic]** The Poncas used one variety as a fragrance in hair pomade (Gilmore 1919:111). Cheyenne and Lakota men used it to perfume their bodies, cloth, and robes (Gilmore 1913b:363; Grinnell 1972:2:186). The Hidatsas used *M. fistulosa* as a perfume (Nickel 1974:67). The Plains Apaches held top quality varieties of this plant in high esteem and considered its perfumed leaves one of their most treasured possessions. The leaves were prepared as an infusion and sprinkled on blankets, garments, ritual paraphernalia, and on the body. They recognized wide variations in the aromatic qualities of the plants and distinguished these by names, identifying those without a strong fragrance as “look alikes” or not the “real perfume.” Individuals who had the ability to “sniff out” the true plants, which were rare, were held in high regard, and when stands of highly fragrant plants were found, their locations were kept secret (Jordan 1965:143-147).

**[veterinary]** Young Cheyenne men perfumed their favorite horses with the plant (Grinnell 1972:2:186).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** Lakota singers and dancers chewed the leaves of *M. menthafolia* (Buechel 1970:521), especially during the Sun Dance (Gilmore 1919:111). Lakotas also smudged the dance area with it (Dorsey, J. 1894:454). The stems and flow-ers were once used by the Cheyennes to make pillows for young girls from puberty to marriage to insure their health and fertility (Grinnell 1972:2:186). The Plains Apaches believed the plant had properties that could attract and arouse the opposite sex (Jordan 1965:148-149). The association of this plant with elk, known for their seductive powers, suggests a similar use of the plant among the Lakotas (Densmore 1918:178).

**Nepeta cataria**

[catnip]

Introduced to North America from Europe, this is a popular plant in European American folk remedies where the leaves are typically used in herbal treatments to aid digestion and to reduce gas and stomach bloating (Tilford 1997:28). It is common all over the Black Hills, including Wind Cave National Park, from low to mid elevations in a wide variety of disturbed environments (Larson and Johnson 1999:246-247; Pisorowicz 2001k:2). There are no reports on its identification and use in ethnobotanical sources on the area’s American Indian populations.
**Prunella vulgaris**  
*[selfheal]*

Selfheal occurs occasionally at all elevations in the Black Hills in moist or wet habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:248), and it is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:2). In European American folk medicine, it is a popular remedy for a variety of maladies (Tilford 1997:70). Yet, its healing applications have not been reported in ethnobotanical sources on the tribal nations who lived in the region.

**Salvia reflexa**  
*[lanceleaf sage]*

Two varieties of salvia are located in the Black Hills: *S. pratensis* *[meadow sage]* and *S. reflexa* *[lanceleaf sage]*. Meadow sage was introduced from Europe, and it is now locally abundant in the northwestern Black Hills, while lanceleaf sage, a native, is occasional in a variety of environments throughout the hills from low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:248-250). The Lakotas call lance-leaved sage *maka ceyaka* *[earth mint]*, a name also used in reference to the pennyroyal that is not located in the Black Hills. *Hedeoma drummodi* *[false penny royal]*, also absent in the Black Hills, is known as *ih’e maka ceyaka* *[rock earth mint]* (Gilmore 1919:112; Buechel 1970: 329, 702; Rogers 1980:50). The Lakotas flavored their soups with false pennyroyal (Buechel 1970:329), and they used it as a tonic in diets for the sick (Gilmore 1919: 112). Melvin Gilmore (Ibid.) also writes that *maka ceyaka* was used as an infusion to cure colds. Whether any of these applications were used for lance-leaved sage is unclear.

**Scutellaria spp.**  
*[skullcaps]*

*S. galericulata* *[marsh skullcap]* located at Wind Cave National Park, and *S. lateriflora* *[mad dog or blue skullcap]* are the two skullcap species reported in the Black Hills. Both of these occur occasionally near streams, lakes, ponds, and springs from low to mid elevations throughout the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:250-252; Pisarowicz 2001j:2). They are found throughout the United States, and their native names and uses have been described for various tribal nations (Kindscher 1992: 279-281) and also in European American herbal remedies (Tilford 1997:136). No information on these plants was uncovered, however, for the tribes who lived in the Black Hills region.

**Stachys palustris**  
*[marsh hedgenettle]*

Also called woundwort, this plant is located occasionally in riparian environments at low to mid elevations over the entire region of the Black Hills, including Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999: 252; Pisarowicz 2001j:2). Early settlers used it medicinally, and it is now included in modern herbal remedies to treat sore throats, headaches, and joint inflammations (Tilford 1997:72-73). Again, there is no information on its use for the American Indian populations who lived in the region.

**Liliaceae**  
**The Lily Family**

The bulbs of many plants in the lily family were used for food and medicinal purposes by tribal nations who lived and traveled in the environs of the Black Hills.

**Allium spp.**  
*[wild onion]*

Wild onions contain important micronutrients, including vitamin C and A (Kindscher 1992:222-23), and as Kelly Kindscher (1987:16) writes, they would have been a
“nutritious complement” to the buffalo-meat diet of the tribal nations who lived in the central and northern Plains. Several different species of wild onions can be found in the Black Hills and surrounding areas, including A. cernuum [nodding onion], A. textile [textile Onion], and A. stellatum [autumn or pink onion], and A. geyersi [Geyer’s onion] (Johnson and Larson 1999:200; Larson and Johnson 1999:254; Pisarowicz 2001h:2).

Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:171; Hart 1981:12)  
kha-okh-ksi-me-isi’-tsi-hi [smells like skunk]  
alternates: xaoe-hehestavo [skunk nuts]  
pat se’ wots [no translation given]  
tohtoo’e-xaoe-nestavo [prairie skunk]

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:520)  
pakoik [large onion]  
t?diekiok [small onion]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:447; Rogers 1980:27)  
psin [onion]  
psin sica’imma [bad smelling onion]  
specifically A. drummondi

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:27)  
libicilcinah [horses don’t eat them]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:71)  
manzhonka-mantanaaha [no translation given]

Habitat: Onions, particularly the cernuum variety, are frequent in the Black Hills at low to high elevations in a variety of habitats including open pine forests and mixed grass prairie (Larson and Johnson 1999:254), and they also appear at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2).

Uses: American Indian and European American populations throughout the area collected wild onions for food and medicine.

[food] Wild onions were a popular food, eaten alone or as a condiment for meats and soups among all tribes in the region (Kindscher 1987:12-17). The Lakotas and their neighbors ate them raw as a relish, and they fried or cooked them to enhance the flavor of other foods (Gilmore 1919:71; Buechel 1970:447; Standing Bear 1978:58). Royal Hassrick (1964:179) quoted a Lakota woman who said: “wild onions were larger and sweeter than turnips. It was time to pick them when the prairie grass was thickest. Mixed with meat, either fresh or jerked, onions were extremely good.” The Cheyennes, Arapahos, and Plains Apaches flavored meat with wild onions, especially in the absence of salt (Jordan 1965:27; Nic-kerson 1966:46-47; Grinnell 1972:2:171; Hart 1981:12). The Comanches typically roasted them (Carlson & Johnson 1939:520).

[medicine] Poultices were made by the Cheyennes from the pulverized roots and stems of onions to heal carbuncles (Grinnell 1972:2:171-72), and the Dakotas were reported to use bruised onions to treat bee stings (Kindscher 1992:29). The Hidatsas relied on onions as medicine to heal bone disorders (Nickel 1974:58). In European American folk medicine, onions were employed to treat a variety of respiratory ailments including colds and pneumonia, and they were used as laxatives, expectorants, diuretics, and stimulants (Kindscher 1992:30; Tilford 1997:160).

Calochortus gunnisoni  
[Gunnison’s mariposa lily]

Gunnison’s mariposa lily and the closely related Sego lily, C. nuttallii were sources of food for tribal nations in the northern Plains and adjoining regions of the Inter-mountain West.

Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:172; Hart 1981:12)  
ehka’i ni’kan [no translation given]  
alternate: exaa-no?kane

Lakota (Buechel 1970:447; Rogers 1980:27)  
psin tan’ka [big onion]  
applies to C. gunnisoni and C. nuttallii

Habitat: The mariposa lily is commonly found in mixed grass prairies, open forests, and upland meadows from low to mid elevations in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:256). The sego lily is the only one
reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001i:2).

**Uses:** Both varieties of lily were a common source of food and medicine for the tribal nations of the region.

**[Food]** Among the Cheyennes, the bulbs of the mariposa lily were dried, pounded, and stored for winter use to make a sweet mush, and the flower buds were eaten as well (Grinnell 1972:2:172; Hart 1981:12)

**[Medicinal]** The Cheyennes included the dried and cut up bulbs in a mixture for un-specified medicinal uses (Hart 1981:12).

**[Veterinary]** Cheyennes placed the roots in their horses’ mouths before they raced (Hart 1981:12).

*Disporum trachycarpum*  
**[Roughfruit fairybells]**

Fairybells are abundant in the moist forest environments of the central and northern Black Hills from low to mid elevations. The berries and young shoots are edible (Larson and Johnson 1999:256). There is no evidence, however, of this or any other use for the American Indian and European American populations who lived in the region.

*Fritillaria atopurpurea*  
**[Leopard lily or spotted fritillary]**

This plant is found infrequently at mid elevations in the northern and western regions of the Black Hills. Larson and John-son (1999:258) claim that the bulbs of this plant are tasty either in a raw or cooked form, but because they are so small they are not often harvested for food. The Lakotas called the leopard lily *canhlogan makatola* [little blue earth stalk] or *pejuta whinheya ipiye* [gopher medicine], and they used certain parts of the plant as an ointment for scrofulous swellings (Buechel 1970:117; Rogers 1980:27; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:170).

*Leuocorinum montanum*  
**[Star lily]**

Also called sand or mountain lily, this plant appears in mixed grass habitats, but it is more commonly found in association with sagebrush (Johnshon and Larson 1999:202). It is very common at all elevations and in many different habitats throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:258). The Lakotas called *L. montanum* [mountain lily], found at Wind Cave National Park, *yapi zapi iyececa* [like the spikenard], a name also given to the false dandelion (Buechel 1970:626; Rogers 1980:27; Pisarowicz 2001i:2). The Crows are reported to have consumed the roots of this lily (Johnshon and Larson 1999:202).

*Lilium philadephicum*  
**[Wood lily]**

This plant, which is very common in the eastern United States, does not appear frequently in the central Plains and western parts of South Dakota and Nebraska (Larson and Johnson 1999b:202), although it does grow at Wind Cave National Park in ravine environments. The Black Hills is an important outlier area for its growth. While this plant is rarely found in the grasslands and sagebrush steppes surrounding the Black Hills, it frequently appears at low to high elevations in the central and northern Hills in woodland habitats and riparian meadows (Larson and Johnson 1999:260). The Lakotas know it as *mnacha’ heca* [very fragrant flower] (Buechel 1970:337; Rogers 1980:27), and they pulverized or chewed the flowers of the plant and applied them as an antidote for the bites of certain small poisonous brown spiders (Gilmore 1919:71).

*Maianthemum canadense*  
**[Canada mayflower]**

Also known as Canada mayflower, it is found in the understory of spruce, aspen, birch, pine, and mixed forests at mid to high elevations in the central and northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson
In Lakota, it is called *yapi’zapi iyeececa* [like a mouth organ], which probably refers to the fact that the leaves can be used to produce musical tones (Buechel 1970:626). The same name is given by the Lakotas to several other plants, including the false dande-lion and False Solomon’s seal.

*Nuphar polysepal* [spatterdock]*

This plant is located in regions west of the Black Hills. Its roots were a source of food for the Cheyennes who called it *heh pan’?* [green spongy] (Grinnell 1972:2:173; Hart 1981:31).

*Polygonatum biflorum* [Solomon’s seal]

This plant does not commonly appear in the Black Hills, and when it does, it is found at low to mid elevations in the central regions of the Hills in moist and shaded habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:262). No reports of its use by tribal nations associated with the Black Hills were found, but the Lakotas called it *zuzeca tawote hu tankinyan heca* [large plant with a stem like snake food] (Buechel 1970:659-660; Rogers 1980:27).

*Smilacina ssp.* [False Solomon’s seal]

Two *smilacina* species, *S.racemosa* [False Solomon’s seal] and *S.stellata* [starry false Solomon’s seal, starry false lily of the valley, or spikenard] are found in the Black Hills. *S.racemosa* is uncommon and restricted to moist forest and woodland habitats at mid to high elevations in the northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:262), whereas *S. stellata* is common at all elevations in open forest and woodland locations over the entire region (Larson and Johnson 1999:264). The latter species is located in the region of Wind Cave (Pisarowicz 2001j: 2). The Lakotas called both varieties *yapi’-zapi hu* [mouth organ plant] or *zuzeca ta-wote hu iyeececa* [like snake food stem], and they used the leaves of both to produce musical tones (Buechel 1970:626, 660; Rogers 1980:27). While *Smilacina* species were used as food and medicine by tribal nations farther to the east and the west, there are no reports of such use among the tribes who lived near the Black Hills (Kindscher 1992:282-283; Tilford 1997:58). This is a popular European American herbal remedy employed as a laxative, anti-inflammatory, and cough suppressant (Tilford 1997:58).

*Smilax herbacea* [carrion flower]

Also known as Jacob’s Ladder, this plant is not reported in the Black Hills but is more typically found in the eastern prairies of South Dakota and Nebraska. The Lakotas called it *caniyawi cik’ala* [little wood calls a man/ little wood mouth speaks] or *zuzeca tawote ptapta ikoyaka* [like snake food with clusters attached]. The Poncas ate the fruit of the *S. herbacea* to treat hoarseness (Gilmore 1919:71).

*Zigadenus spp.* [deathcamus]

Two varieties of the deathcamus, *Z.elegans* [mountain or showy deathcamus] and *Z. venenosus* [meadow deathcamus] are commonly found in the Black Hills and in the surrounding grasslands as well. The latter is also located at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001i:2). While *Z.elegans* occurs at mid to high elevations in open forest and woodland environments, *Z. venenosus* exists at lower elevations in open pine forests, sagebrush steppes, and mixed grass prairies. Both are highly toxic to humans (Larson and Johnson 1999:264, 266, Johson and Larson 1999:204). The Lakotas knew the meadow deathcamus to be poison ous and called it *psin hubloka* [male onion stem] (Buechel 1970:447; Rogers 1980:28). It was featured in the cycle of stories associated with the Four Winds (Walker 1983:353-355).
**Linaceae**  
**The Flax Family**

Two species of flax, *Linum Lewissi* [prairie flax], named after Meriwether Lewis, and *L. rigidum* [stiffstem flax] are reported in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:266-68) and the surrounding grasslands (Kindscher 1987:244). Another variety *L. perenne* [blue flax] grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:2).

**Names:**

Lakota (Buechel 1970:96, 117; Rogers 1980:50)
*ata'sosapina nabla'ga* [they spit on it and it spreads out]
*L. rigidum*

alternate: *canhlogan nablag* [stalk that swells and bursts]

**Habitat:** In the Black Hills, both species occur at low to mid elevations in mixed grass prairies and open forest habitats. But while *L. Lewissi* is frequent in its occurrence, *L. rigidum* is common but not abundant (Larson and Johnson 1999:266-68).

**Uses:** Although the tribal nations who lived in the area of the Black Hills used *Linum* as a food condiment, they do not appear to have applied it medicinally.

[food] Tribes in the region used the seeds of both varieties to flavor food (Gilmore 1919:96; Kindscher 1987:244).

[medicinal] The tops were made into infusions for eyewashes by tribal nations located in the Intermountain West, and the cultivated varieties of flax were used by European Americans in decoctions to treat digestive, lung, and urinary complaints (Kindscher 1992:258-59).

[arts & manufacture] Many tribal nations, especially those west of the Black Hills, used the *L. Lewissi* variety to make cordage (Larson and Johnson 1999:266).

**Loasaceae**  
**The Stickleaf Family**

There are three *Mentzelia* species in the Black Hills, *M. decapetala* [tenpetal blazingstar], *M. nuda* [sandily or bractless blazingstar], and *M. oligosperma* [stickleaf or chickenthief], but only the sandily is report-ed to have had any use for tribal nations in the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:268-69).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:30)
*wo?ome-hese'eo?ote* [white medicine]
*M. nuda*

Lakota (Gilmore 1919:103; Buechel 1970:117, 190; Rogers 1980:50)
*hu'pe'pe* [Prickly stem]
*M. nuda*

alternate: *to'kahu hu'pe'pe* [Prickly stem thistle]
*M. nuda*
*canhlogan mah'awanglakela* [Locust stalk]
*M. decapetala*

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:72)
*ita'edil'ise* [leaves stick to you]
*M. stricta*

**Habitat:** *M. decapetala* is found occasionally on the dry clay, rocky, or shale hillsides of the Hogback, Red Valley, and Gray Shale Foothills, whereas *M. nuda* is less frequent in the region and located on barren sandy and gravelly soils in the southern Black Hills at low elevations. *M. oligosperma* is the rarest of the three and confined largely to dry rocky ledges and slopes in the low elevation regions of the southern Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:268-269).

**Uses:** The tribal populations of the Black Hills used the *Mentzelia* primarily for medicinal purposes.

[food] None of the *Mentzelia* varieties found in the Plains are used as a food by local tribal nations, although Kelly Kindscher (1987:245) writes that the Hopi of the Southwest ate the seeds from the *M.albi-caulis* variety.
Melvin Gilmore (1919:103) reports that Dakotas stripped the leaves off the stems of *M. nudum* [sandlily] and pounded them into a gummy yellow juice that was applied externally to treat fever. The Cheyennes considered the sandlily to be one of their oldest medicines and held it in high regard; the plant was never used alone but in combination with other medicines to treat fevers, earaches, and arthritis (Hart 1981: 30).

**Malvaceae**

**The Mallow Family**

Larson and Johnson (1999) report only one species from this family, the Scarlet (false red) globemallow, in the Black Hills. Other species, widely distributed in the immediate environs of the Hills, are recognized by local tribal nations and need to be considered as well (Kindscher 1987:68-71, 1992:229-30).

*Callirhoe involucrata* [purple poppmallow]

The Black Hills stand literally at the center of this plant’s restricted distribution in North America, so it is surprising that it is not covered in Larson and Johnson’s book (1999) on the plants of the Black Hills and Bear Lodge Mountains (Kindscher 1987: 69). The Lakotas knew it as *pezhuta nantia-zilia* [smoke treatment medicine], and, as the name implies, they used the dried leaves in a smoke treatment for colds (Gilmore 1919: 103). The purple poppmallow’s sweet starchy root was also reported as a food used by tribes along the Oregon Trail in many 19th century sources, but surprisingly, little has been written about its culinary uses in more contemporary ethnographic sources (Kindscher 1987:69-70).

*Hibiscus trionum* [flower-of-an-hour]

This plant was originally introduced from Africa but is now reported to be a nuisance in much of the southern parts of the West where it is primarily located. The Lakotas call the flower-of-an-hour *utahu canhlogan* [oak stalk] but have no reported use for it (Buechel 1970:508; Rogers 1980:51).

*Sphaeralcea coccinea* [scarlet globemallow]

Culturally, this was a very important plant for at least two tribal nations in the region, the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, both of whom used it for medicinal and ceremonial purposes.

**Names:**


**Comanche** (Carlson and Jones 1939:523) *yekanatsu* [no translation given]

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:174; Rogers 1980:51; Lewis, T. 1990:149) *heyo'ka tapeju'ya* [Heyoka’s medicine] alternate: *utahu canhlogan* [oak stalk]

**Habitat:** This plant is common over the entire Black Hills at low to mid elevations in mixed grass prairie, open pine woodland, and sagebrush steppe habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:270), and it is also widely located on the neighboring grasslands (John-son and Larson 1999:206). It is listed among the plants at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2).

**Uses:** Although the scarlet globemallow is also documented for tribes in the Southwest, most of the ethnobotanical reports on it come from the Plains region (Kindscher 1992:207-209).

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas prepared a salve from the roots of the scarlet globemallow to treat skin sores and burns (Gilmore 1919:55; Buechel 1970:174), while the Comanches made a tea from it to reduce swelling (Carl-son and Jones 1939:523). The Cheyennes pounded the entire plant and steeped it in boiling water with other herbs to make them more palatable (Grinnell 1972:2:180), and the Arikaras combined the herb with a gum from the
chokecherry tree to relieve post-partum hemorrhage (Gilmore 1930:74). In European American folk medicine, it is used as an emollient to soothe skin irritations and in treatments for respiratory ailments (Tilford 197:94).

[symbolic & ceremonial] In their ceremonies, the Lakota Heyoka [Contraries] rubbed the mucilaginous substance over their arms and hands to prevent them from burning when they plunged them into boiling water to take up pieces of hot meat (Densmore 1918:167-168; Gilmore 1919:55; Buechel 1970:174; Lewis, T. 1990:149). Susie Hollowhorn related a story to Helen Beckwith (1930:415-416) about the relation between Heyoka and the scarlet globe-mallow. Members of the Cheyenne Contrary Society had a similar use for this plant in their ceremonies (Hart 1981:31; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53).

Monotropacea
The Indian Pipe Family

Only one species from this family, Ptero-spora andromedea [pinedrops], is reported in the Black Hills, and only one of the region’s tribal nations, the Cheyennes, are known to have named and used them. The plant appears occasionally over the entire Black Hills at mid to high elevations in varied forest habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999: 270). The Cheyennes call pinedrops mutu’ minis’ tois se’ e yo [nose bleed medicine] or matomene-heseeo?osse (Grinnell 1972:2: 183; Hart 1981:25) and employ them to prevent bleeding from the nose and lungs. The stem and berries were ground and combined in an infusion that was snuffed up the nose or drunk for treat-ments of the lungs (Grinnell 1972:2:183).

Nyctaginaceae
The Four O’Clock Family

Also known as narrowleaf umbrellawort, Mirabilis linearis [narrowleaf four o’clock] and the related M. nyctaginea [heartleaf four o’clock] and M. hirsuta [hairy four o’clock/umbrellawort] are found in a wide variety of prairie, plains, and pasture habitats in the northern and central Plains region (Kind-scher 1992:263-264). M. linearis is the most common four o’clock in the Black Hills. Although much less frequent, the other two varieties are located in the Hills as well (Larson and Johnson 1999:272).

Names:

Lakota (Buechel 1970:117, 189, 445; Rogers 1980: 51, 52)
luokha hanskaska [tall jointed stem]
cahlogan okiheton [jointed stem]
M. hirsuta
poipie [medicine for swellings]
M. nyctaginea
Ponca (Gilmore 1919:78)
makan-wasek (strong medicine)

Habitat: M.linearis and its less common relatives are found in the southern regions of the Black Hills in low elevation mixed grass prairie, open pine woodlands, and sagebrush steppe (Larson & Johnson 1999:272).

Uses: Mirabilis species were used entirely for medicinal purposes.

[medicinal] The Lakotas made a tea from the roots of M.linearis to treat urinary problems (Buechel 1970:117; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972:170). The root of a related variety M.nyctaginea was one of the ingredients the Lakotas used for making a tea to reduce fever, and it was also combined in a mixture boiled with Echi-nacea angustifolia to get rid of intestinal worms. The Lakotas treated limb swellings and broken bones with the grated and moistened roots, while the Poncas masti-cated the roots to heal wounds (Densmore 1918:270; Gilmore 1913b:361, 1919:78).
Onagraceae
Evening Primrose Family

Nine different species from the evening primrose family are reported in the Black Hills, and, of these, at least four are described in ethnobotanical sources for the tribes who lived in the region.

Calylophus serrulatus
[yellow evening primrose or yellow sundrops]

The yellow evening primrose is widespread in the Great Plains, and it is a common plant over the entire Black Hills where it grows in mixed grass prairie and open pine forest as well as limestone outcrops and rocky slopes at all elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:272-274). It is located at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:1). The Lakotas called it wahe’zi cik’ala [little yellow flower], but they apparently had no specific use for the plant (Buechel 1970:519; Rogers 1980:53). It is not documented among other American Indian populations in the region or European Americans.

Epilobium angustifolium
[fireweed]

Fireweeds are found in the northern and central Black Hills in moist, mid to high elevation forests, thickets, and clearings (Larson and Johnson 1999:274). The Cheyennes are the only tribe in the immediate region reported to have named and used the plant. They knew it as ma’e-heseeo?otse [red medicine] and made a medicinal tea out of the dried and pulverized leaves as a remedy for rectal hemorrhaging (Grinnell 1972: 2:181; Hart 1981:31). European American herbalists and tribes outside the area used it for medicinal purposes too (Tilford 1997: 62).

Gaura coccine
[scarlet guara or bee blossom]

This plant, which is native to the western regions of the United States, is typically found in open dry areas of the prairies and plains (Kind scher 1992:247-48).

Names:

Lakota (Buechel 1970:399, 483; Rogers 1980:52)
tata’wabluska taczahlogan [horsefly’s weed]
alternate: sunkoyuspepe [they use it to catch horses]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:65)
ka zaye [little arrow]

Habitat: This plant is common and widespread in the Black Hills, located largely in mixed grass prairie and open forest regions at low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:276). This plant is not reported at Wind Cave National Park, but the G.mollis parvilfora [velvetweed] is located here (Pisarowicz 2001h:1).

Uses: Only the Lakotas and Plains Apaches are reported to have had uses for this plant.
[medicinal] Although medicinal uses are reported for tribal nations outside the Plains and among European American herbalists (Kindscher 1992:247-248), there is no documentation for tribes in the Black Hills area.

[veterinary] The Lakotas chewed and rub-bed it on their hands as a salve to attract horses (Buechel 1970:399). Standing Bear (1978:60) described another use for this plant as follows: “On the plain also grew a small-leafed, low growing plant which was valuable in treating horses when they be-came afflicted with distemper.”

Several different *Oenothera* species are found in the Black Hills, including *O. biennis* [common evening-primrose], *O. caespitosa* [gumbo or shortfruit evening-primrose], and *O. coronopifolia* [cornleaf evening-primrose]...

**Names:**

Lakota (Buechel 1970:116, 190; Rogers 1980:52,53)

*canhlogan hu'na* [rattle weed]

*O. biennis*

*canhlogan hu sansan* [whitish stemmed weed]

*O. pallida*

**Habitat:** All *Oenothera* appear occasionally in the Black Hills at low to mid elevations. *O.biennis* inhabits sandy or gravelly stream banks and bars and other moist, disturbed habitats throughout the Black Hills, whereas *O.caespitosa* is largely restricted to the Hogback and Red Valley and *O. coronopifolia* is located mostly in the open forest and grassland areas of the southern areas of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:278-80). Another, *O. albicaulis* [white evening-primrose], is recorded at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:1, 2001i:1).

**Uses:** Primroses were used primarily for medicinal purposes.

**[food]** Although the roots are edible (Kindscher 1987:246-247), there is no evidence that the tribal nations who lived in the area ever consumed them.

**[medicine]** The Poncas made a poultice from *O.rhombipeta* [fourpoint evening-primrose], a species not reported in the Black Hills, and several tribes outside the immediate region also had medicinal uses for different *Oenothera* species (Kindscher 1992:162). European Americans in the West had a variety herbal remedies derived from the members of this subfamily, including diuretic, laxative, and antispasmodic applications (Moore, M. 1979:75; Tilford 1997: 56).

**Orchidaceae**

**The Orchid Family**

Many different orchid species are found in the Black Hills, and with a few exceptions, most occur in the central and northern regions of the Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:280-288). One exception is *Epipactis gigantea* (giant helleborine). This is a rare plant, restricted to the calcareous stream banks along Cascade Creek south of Hot Springs, South Dakota (Larson and Johnson 1999:288). Although *Coerallorhza maculata* [spotted coralroot] was held in high regard by some unidentified tribal nations in the West and used in teas to treat colds (Larson and Johnson 1999:282), this has not been established for any of the tribes who lived in the vicinity of the Black Hills. The only orchid species named and used by local tribes is *Cypripedium calceolus* [greater yellow lady’s slipper], which is found on the northern and eastern sides of the Black Hills at low to mid elevations on moist rocky slopes (Larson and Johnson 1999:286). The Lakotas called it *maka canakpa* [earth groin swelled up] and ate its bulbous roots as an emergency food (Buechel 1970:329; Rogers 1980:28).

**Orobanchaceae**

**The Broomrape Family**

There are several different *Orobanche* species in the Black Hills, and these are found occasionally in proximity to *Artemisia* at low elevations in the mixed grass prairies, dry open forests, and sagebrush steppe habitats of the Red Valley, Hogback, and Minnelusa Foothills (Larson and Johnson 1999:290). The only species reported at Wind Cave National Park is *O. fasciculata* [clustered broomrape] (Pisarowicz 2001h:1). Although this plant was reportedly used as a food by some of the Numic speaking tribal nations in the West (Kindscher 1987:247), there is no...
documentation for this among the tribes who historically lived around the Black Hills.

**Oxalidaceae**

**The Woodsorrel Family**

Several species of the subfamily *Oxalis* are found in the Black Hills, including *O. priceae/dilleni* [tufted yellow or greygreen woodsorrel], *O. stricta* [common yellow woodsorrel], and *O. violacea* [violet woodsorrel] (Larson and Johnson 1999:290-292). Woodsorrel is commonly found in the moist prairies and open woodlands in the eastern regions of South Dakota and neighboring states (Kindscher 1992:159), but some varieties, like the greygreen woodsorrel, are adapted to drier environments in the west.

**Names:**

- **Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:35)
  
  aw tawt an ya [salt weed]
  
  *O. stricta*

- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970:520; Rogers 1980:53)
  
  wahpe skuya [sweet leaf]
  
  *O. stricta*, also used for *Rumex venosus*

- **Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:98)
  
  hade-sathe [sour herb]
  
  *O. violacea*

**Habitat:** The greygreen woodsorrel is frequent at all elevations in a variety of grass-land and forest environments, while the related yellow woodsorrel is less common and found in moister habitats. The violet woodsorrel is found occasionally at low to mid elevations in the meadows and open forests of the central Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:290-292).

**Uses:** Woodsorrels were edible and also used medicinally by the tribal nations of the region.

- **[food]** The leaves of yellow woodsorrel were chewed by the Kiowas to relieve thirst on long walks (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 35). These species may have been ingested by the Lakotas who reported that their leaves tasted bitter (Buechel 1970:520).

- **[medicinal]** The Poncas used the leaves of *O. violacea* for a poultice to treat swellings (Gilmore 1919:98).

**Papaveraceae**

**The Poppy Family**

Both species in the Poppy family, reported in the Black Hills, were named and used by tribal nations who lived in the region during historic times.

**Argemone polyanthemos**

**[Crested pricklypoppy]**

The Crested pricklypoppy grows in the central Plains region of North America from Montana in the north to Texas in the south (Kindscher 1992:228).

**Names:**

- **Comanche** (Carlson and Jones 1939:520)
  
  pitsiteya [no translation given]

- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970:494; Rogers 1980:53)
  
  to’ kahu wahinkpe on ziyapi [thistle to dye arrows yellow]

**Habitat:** The Crested pricklypoppy is frequently found at low elevations primarily in the central and northern portions of the Red Valley and the Hogback (Larson and Johnson 1999:292), but it also grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2).

**Uses:** The Comanches and Lakotas are the only tribes with reported uses for it.

- **[medicine]** The Comanches used the sap in a treatment for sore eyes (Carlson and Jones 1939:520).

- **[art & manufacture]** The Lakotas made a dye from it to color their arrows yellow (Buechel 1970:494).
**Sanguinaria Canadensis**  
*Bloodroot*

Although this plant is fairly common in the eastern prairies of South Dakota and Nebraska, it is rare farther west and confined largely to locales in the Black Hills. Here it is uncommon and found in the moist under-story of mixed and deciduous forests at low to mid elevations in the northeastern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:294). The Poncas called it *minigaagthe maken wau* [woman seeking medicine]. Ponca men employed the root as a love charm to attract members of the opposite sex, and sometimes used it for a facial paint (Gilmore 1919:83).

**Plantaginaceae**  
*Plantain Family*

Even though several members of the Plantain family are common in the Plains, Larson and Johnson (1999) do not list any of them in the Black Hills. *Plantago patagonica* [woolly plantain or Indianwheat] is widely found in the dry upland plains of the western Dakotas and adjoining states (Larson and Johnson 1999b:212). It is also located at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2). *P. major* [common plan-tain] is a wetlands plant that is more common on the prairies east of the Missouri River, but it also exists at the park too (Pisa-rowicz 2001k:4).

**Names:**

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:51)  
*bo-u-na* [no translation given]  
*P. patagonica*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:117, 531, 584; Rogers 1980:53)  
*canhlogan wapostankagapi* [stalk that spread out like a warbonnet]  
*P. patagonica*  
*wihutahu iyececa* [like a cattail]  
*P. major*

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:74)  
*‘iza’o libenida kase* [some kind of grass, horse racing]  
*P. patagonica*

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:115)  
*sinie maken* [no translation given]

**Uses:** Several different tribal nations are reported to have had uses for members of the Plantain family.

**[medicinal]** The Poncas heated the leaves of *P. major* to draw out thorns and splinters from the foot (Gilmore 1919:115). The seeds of this variety of plantain are widely used by European American herbalists for their laxative effects and as a source of dietary fiber. The leaves are also used for their anti-inflammatory properties for skin irritations and wounds (Tilford 1997:112).

**[art & manufacture]** The spikes of *P. patagonica* were used in a game played by Plains Apaches boys (Jordan 1965:75).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Kiowas tied garlands of *P. patagonica* around their heads during dances as a symbol of health (Vestal and Schultes 1939:51).

**Polyemoniaceae**  
*The Phlox Family*

Of the species in this family, only the ballhead gilia and the plains phlox are described in the ethnobotanical literature for tribes who lived in the Black Hills region.

**Collomia linearis**  
*[slender collomia or tiny trumpet]*

Slender collomia is widely distributed in the Hills in many different environments and at all elevations, including Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:294; Pisarowicz 2001h:1). No names or uses for this plant have been uncovered in the ethnobotanical literature.
**Ipomopsis congesta**  
*ballhead gilia*

The ballhead gilia is frequently found in the grasslands and open forests of the Hogback, Red Valley, and Minnelusa Foothills at low to mid elevations over the entire range of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:296). Another gilia, not reported in the Hills, *I. Longiflora* [flaxflowered ipomopsis] was called *yazokapi* [to suck the stem] in Lakota (Buechel 1970:632; Rogers 1980:53).

**Phlox spp.**  
*phlox*

Only one of the phlox species, *Phlox andicola* [prairie phlox], listed in the Black Hills is documented in the ethnobotanical literature. Closely related to *P. hoodii* [Hood’s or carpet phlox], which is common in the Hogback and Red Valley (and at Wind Cave National Park), prairie phlox is largely found in the sandy soils of the lower elevation foothills (Larson and Johnson 1999:296-298; Pisarowicz 2001h:2). The Lakotas called it *wahpe pepe* [prickly leaf] (Buechel 1970:520; Rogers 1980:53). *P. multifora* [flowery phlox], although not reported for the Hills, was employed by the Cheyennes to make a mild stimulant, which was rubbed over parts of the body for numbness. It was named *esk o wan i’ o* [gritty] in Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:184).

**Polygonaceae**  
The Buckwheat Family

**Eriogonum spp.**  
*wild buckwheat*

There are many different and often locally restricted species of wild buckwheat in the northern and central Plains, some of which had specific uses for tribal nations in the region (Kindscher 1992:243-245). Two of the species reported in the Black Hills are identified in the Lakota language, but no specific uses were designated for them. Other *erigonum* species with reported uses among the tribal nations of the region are not listed in the Hills, although *E.annum* [annual wild buckwheat] is apparently very common in surrounding rangelands (John-son and Larson 1999:218).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:172)  
*hisse e yo* [no translation given]  
*E. umbellatum* [sulphur-flower buckwheat]

**Comanche** (Carlson and Jones 1939:521)  
*ekamatsu* [no translation given]  
*E. lancifolium* [lanceleaf buckwheat]
Lakota (Buechel 1970:116-117, 227, 399, 470; Rogers 1980:54)
canhlogan hutkan subsapa [black root medicine]
E. flavum [alpine golden buckwheat]
i’niyan pejuta [breathing medicine]
E. annum
alternative: on wahinyuntonpi [to rub on hides]
sunktawote [horse’s food]
E. pauciflorum [fewflower buckwheat]

Habitat: E.flavum [wild yellow buck-wheat] is common in the Black Hills at low to mid elevations on dry limestone and sand-stone outcrops and in red stone soils, and E. pauciflorum [fewflower buckwheat] is found occasionally in the Hogback and Red Valley at low elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:300). Both are reported at Wind Cave and so is E.annum [annual buckwheat] (Pisa-rowicz 2001h:1).

Uses: Wild buckwheats had a number of different uses for the tribal nations who lived in the region of the Black Hills and also for those who resided in the Southwest (Kindscher 1992:244).

[medicinal] The Cheyennes made a tea from E.umbellatum to shorten the length of menses, and they considered this medicine scarce and so valuable that they would give a horse for a small quantity of the prepared medicine (Grinnell 1972:2:172). The Lakotas brewed a tea from E. annum to treat sore mouths in children and also to promote urination (Buechel 1970:227), while E.flavum, judging by its Lakota name, was prob-ably used for some unidentified medicinal remedy (Buechel 1970:116-117). The Comanches are also reported to have made a tea from E. longifolium to doctor stomach disorders (Carlson and Jones 1939:521).

[veterinary] The Cheyennes used E. sub-alpinum* to strengthen their horses (Grinnell 1972:2:172).

[art & manufacture] Reverend Eugene Buechel (1970:227, 399) reports that hides were rubbed and bleached by the Lakotas with a solution of the blossoms of E.annum and brain, liver, gall, or spleen.

Polygonum spp. [smartweed]

Two varieties Polygonum amphibian/lcoccineum [marsh smartweed] and P.douglasii [Douglas’ knotweed], are reported in the Black Hills, but many others exist in the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:302-303). The Lakotas had names for six different Polygonum species.

Names:

Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:173; Hart 1981:32)
aestome-mesehestotse [tasteless potato]
P. bistortoides [American bistort]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:476, 702; Rogers 1980:54)
psito’la hu iyececa [its like yucca]
P. convolvulus [black bindweed]
alternate: ta’ku sasala [a red thing]
P. coccineum
ta’ku sasala ececa unma’ inkpa sasa un he [its full of things]
P. pennsylvanicum*
ta’ku sasala huswula [fine red stem]
P. persicaria [Lady’s thumb]
wahepe pepela [prickly leaf]
P. arenastrum [oval-leaf knotweed]
Alternate: ta’ku sasala refers to [curly top knotweed]

Habitat: P. coccineum is common over the entire region of the Black Hills along stream banks and pond margins at low to mid elevations, while P.douglasii is located occasionally at higher elevations in the northern and central Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:302). Neither is reported, how-ever, at Wind Cave National Park.

Uses: Many Polygonum species are edible, and the two tribes for which there is information did eat them. Only one medi-cinal use has been reported in the ethno-botanical literature, however.

[food] The Cheyennes considered the roots of P. bistortoides a delicacy and boiled them with meat (Grinnell 1972:2:176). The Lakotas
reported that *P.coccineum* was edible (Buechel 1970:476).

**[medicinal]** The Lakota medicine man, Lame Deer (in Fire and Erdoes 1972:170), did not identify a specific variety, but he noted that smartweed was good for stomach cramping and diarrhea.

**Rumex spp. [dock]**

Many of the various *Rumex* species have known uses among tribal nations in the Plains, including the five reported for the Black Hills: *R. acetosella* [sheep sorrel] and *R. occidentalis/aquaticus* [western dock] are native species, while *R. crispus* [Indian rhubarb or curly dock], *R. stenophyllus* [toothed or narrowleaf dock], and *R. patiens-tia* [patience dock] are introduced species, commonly seen along ditches and roadsides (Larson and Johnson 1999:304). *R. venosus* [veiny dock or wild begonia], although not reported for the Hills, is very common in the mixed grass prairies of the greater plains region (Johnson and Larson 1999:220).

**Names:**

Arapaho (Nickerson 1966:47)

hewovey [no translation given]

* R. venosus

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:172; Hart 1981:32)

*ma’i tuk ohe* [red steeping in water]

* R. venosus

alternate: *ma’i-tohko-o-he’e*

*hohaso’e* [no translation given]

* R. crispus

Lakota (Gilmore 1919:77; Buechel 1970:476, 520; Rogers 1980:55)

shiakipa [no translation given]

* R. crispus

* This probably from the word *siya’ka* [a boil] (Buechel 1970:463).

*taka sasala hu iyeececa* [like the red plant stem ]

* R. altissimus[pale dock]

wahpe skuya [sour leaf]

* R. venosus

**Habitat:** Sheep sorrel and western dock are located occasionally at the mid to high elevations of the central and northern Black Hills, while the introduced docks occur in disturbed habitats throughout the Hills and neighboring grasslands (Larson and Johnson 1999:304). Only the non-native curly dock, *R. crispus*, is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:2).

**Uses:** The tribal nations of the Plains had many different uses for members of the *Rumex* subfamily.

**[food]** The Poncas ate the leaves of *R. crispus* like European Americans (Gilmore 1919:77), while the Cheyennes consumed the inner portion of the plant’s stem (Hart 1981:32).

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas made a decoction from *R. altissimus* to treat stomach cramps and diarrhea (Buechel 1970:476), from *R. crispus* to draw out a boil’s suppuration (Gilmore 1919:77), from *R. venosus* to expel the afterbirth (Buechel 1970:520), and from an unspecified *rumex* species to treat fevers and headaches in children (Densmore 1918: 267). Thomas Mails (1991:164) reported that the dock was one of Fools Crow’s preferred medicinal plants; he wrote:

He used its leaves and powdered root to make a poultice or a salve to treat skin problems and to stop bleeding. It as applied to boils and burns. It also reduced arthritis, rheumatism, bruises and swellings. When made into a tea, dock reduced fevers, helped kidney problems and treated sore throats, constipation, and diarrhea.

The Cheyennes dried the root of *R. crispus*, pulverizing and boiling it into a decoction to treat lung hemorrhages; they also used it in a poultice for wounds or sores (Grinnell 1972: 2:173). The Arapahos made a wash from the stems and leaves to treat sores (Nickerson 1966:47). According to Gary Tilford (1997:134, 168-169), European American herbalists rely on sheep sorrel and other *Rumex* species for poultices in treating skin disorders, metabolic imbalances, diarrhea, fevers, and inflammations.
The Cheyennes made yellow and red dyes for quills and feathers from the roots of the veiny dock (Grinnell 1972:2:173), and the Hidatsas and Arapa-hos did so as well (Nickerson 1966:47; Nickel 1974:69). The Cheyennes also used the roots of *R. crispus* as a source of yellow dye for porcupine quills (Grinnell 1972: 2: 173) and so did the Lakotas, who also added the roots to berry dyes to give them a richer color (Lyford 1940:42).

**Primulaceae**

**The Primrose Family**

None of the members of the Primrose family located in the Black Hills have reported uses among the European American and American Indian populations who lived in the region, although one species does have a Lakota name.

**Dodecatheon pulchellum**

*darkthroat shootingstar*

This plant is common in the open pine and mixed forest areas of the Black Hills at low to high elevations. Although tribal uses for this plant have been documented, none of these are associated with tribal nations from the immediate region (Tilford 1997:136; Larson and Johnson 1999:306).

**Lysimachia spp.**

*[loosestrife]*

*L. cilata* [fringed loosestrife] is a very common plant throughout the northern Plains, and it is frequently found on the edges of streams, ponds, and springs over the entire range of the Black Hills. *L. thyrsiflora* [tufted loosestrife], on the other hand, is restricted to the northern and central Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:306). The Lakotas are the only local tribal nation whose ascriptions for *Lysimachia* species are documented in the ethnobotanical literature (Buechel 1970:116, 117; Rogers 1980:55). *Can-hlogan huwanjila* [plant with only one stalk] is their name for *L. alatum,* while *Canhlogan wahcazi panspanjela* [soft bun-chy yellow flower stalk] refers to *L. thy-risflora.*

**Pyrolaceae**

**The Wintergreen Family**

Several different species from the wintergreen family are found in the Black Hills, including *Chimaphila umbellata* [prince’s pine] and *Pyrola asarifolia* [pink or liver leaf shinleaf]. Many of the species are rare, existing as outliers from the eastern regions of North America where they are much more common. Wintergreens were used by American Indians to treat a variety of ailments, although none can be documented for tribes who historically used the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:308-09). They also have a long history of use in European American folk medicine (Tilford 1997:120). *Wahpe blaskaska* [flat leaf] is the Lakota’s generic name for wintergreens (Buechel 1970:520; Rogers 1980:44)

**Ranunculaceae**

**The Buttercup Family**

Several species in this family were used by tribal nations in the region, and some, like the baneberry and pasqueflower, had significant uses and meanings.

**Aconitum columbianum**

*Columbian monkshood*

This plant frequently appears in the moist forest and meadow environments of the mid to high elevation central and northern Black Hills. Although it has reported uses in European American folk medicine, nothing has been uncovered for the tribal nations who lived in the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:310).

**Actaea rubra**

*red baneberry*

Even though this was a very important and sacred plant to the Arikaras, Cheyennes, and Hidatsas, there is surprisingly no mention of it
in the ethnobotanical literatures on other tribal nations who lived in the area, including the Lakotas.

**Names:**

**Arikara** (Gilmore 1930:75)
- *shkanikit* [no translation given]

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:174; Hart 1981:33)
- *motsi’ iun* [sweet medicine]
- alternate: *motse’eoi te* [about raising children]

**Habitat:** This plant occurs frequently at all elevations in the northern and central Black Hills where it is located in moist coniferous or mixed deciduous forest habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:311).

**Uses:** The baneberry plant had very important medicinal and ceremonial uses for the Arikaras, Cheyennes, and the Hidatsas.

[medicinal] The Cheyennes dried the roots and stems for an infusion to increase the flow of a nursing woman’s milk and to strengthen the blood (Hart 1992:8). The plant also served as a sweetener to make other medicinal remedies palatable (Randolph 1937:193). The plant’s roots were used by the Arikaras to aid in childbirth, to treat menstrual cramping, to heal breast abscesses, and to clean the nostrils, eyes, and mouth of a newborn child (Gilmore 1930:73, 75, 76, 77).

[symbolic & ceremonial] This is one of the most sacred plants of the Cheyennes who believe that their culture hero brought “to help the people save and bring up their children” (Grinnell 1972:2:174; Randolph 1937:193). To the present day they keep its roots in their Sacred Arrow, Sacred Hat, and Sun Dance bundles. They also use the root in the ‘throwing it at him’ ceremony, in which a spiritual leader bites tiny fragments of the root and spits it on his hands and those of others who conduct sacred tasks. Historically, it was employed in ceremonies to ‘blind’ the Cheyennes’ enemies (Hart 1992:8). The Hidatsas also considered the root sacred and used it in their River Cere-mony (Nickel 1974:57).

**Anemone spp.**

*Anemone* [anemone]

Five different anemone species are reported in the Black Hills, and of these, three are associated with names and/or uses in ethnobotanical sources for tribal nations in the region.

**Names:**

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:178, 183; Rogers 1980:55)
- *hitun’kala tunkce* [mouse feces]
  - *A. cylindrica*
- *hoksi’ cekpa* [boy child’s navel]
  - *Pulsatilla patens*
  - alternative name: *hoksi’ wana nahca* [the boy child has come]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:82)
- *te-zhingga-makan* [little buffalo medicine]
  - *A. canadensis*
- *wathibaba-makan* [playing card medicine]
  - *A. cylindrica*

**Habitat:** The meadow anemone, *A. canadensis*, is common in the wetter prairies of the eastern parts of South Dakota and adjoining states, but it occurs as a rare outlier plant in the Black Hills and is restricted to the mid to high elevation meadows in the central and northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:312; Johnson and Larson 1999:220). By contrast, the candle anemone, *A. cylindrica*, is common in the Black Hills. It is found at all elevations throughout the region in open forest, woodland, and meadow habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:312). The cutleaf anemone, *A. multi-fida*, and the pasqueflower, *Pulsatilla pa-tens*, are both frequent in the northern and central areas of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:312). While the former is restricted to locations at mid to high elevations, the latter, which is the state flower of South Dakota, is found at low to mid elevations, including locations at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999: 314;
The Tall anemone, *A.virginiana*, is also found in these areas, but it is a rare plant (Larson and Johnson 1999:312).

**Uses:** Members of the anemone subfamily were important medicinally and symbolically to some of the tribal nations who lived in the vicinity of the Black Hills.

**[medicinal]** The root of the meadow anemone was one of the most highly es-teemed medicines of the Poncas and their close relatives the Omaha. It was prescribed for wounds and many other ailments, but the right to use it was confined to members of the Tekesinde gens (Gilmore 1919:82). The Dakotas (and probably the Lakotas as well) crushed the leaves of the pasqueflower to use as a counter irritant for rheumatism. The Arapahos, Poncas, and Omahas used it for the same ailment (Gilmore 1919:82; Nicker-son 1966:47). The Cheyennes also used the pulverized root in treatments for unknown medicinal purposes (Hart 1981:34). Various species of anemones are also associated with uses in European American folk medicine (Kindscher 1992:39-40).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Poncas used the woolly fruits of the candle anemone as charms for good luck in gambling (Gilmore 1919:82). The pasqueflower blossoms on the high plains before the snows completely melt, and as a result, they were considered a harbinger of spring, renewal, and rebirth for several of the tribes in the region. Arikaras and Pawnees hung pasqueflowers each spring on their sacred cedar tree, which symbolized the return of spring and the renewal of life (Gilmore 1987:188). The Dakotas had many stories about this flower (Gilmore 1987:205-208), and they sang songs to celebrate its appearance in the early spring (Gilmore 1919:81).

**Aquilegia spp. [columbine]**

Of the two columbine species noted in the Black Hills, *A.brevistyla* [blue or small-flower columbine] and *A.canadensis* [red columbine], only the latter has any reported ethnobotanical use.

**Names:**

*Ponca* (Gilmore,1919:82)

*inubthon-kithe-sabe-hi* [black perfume plant]

**Habitat:** The blue columbine is occasion-ally located in moist coniferous and mixed deciduous forests of the northern and central Black Hills at mid to high elevations. The wild columbine is frequently found in the Black Hills but in the eastern regions at low to mid elevations, in moist and shady deciduous woods which border local streams (Larson and Johnson 1999:316).

**Uses:** Of the tribes who lived in the region, only the Lakotas and Poncas are reported to have used the wild columbine.

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas made a tea from the wild columbine by pouring hot water over its leaves. It was used to treat diarrhea in children (Densmore 1918:267). European American herbalists have a long tradition of using columbines for treating a wide variety of maladies, but it must be used with extreme care because of its toxicity (Tilford 1997:192).

**[cosmetic & hygienic]** The Poncas crushed and chewed the seeds of the wild columbine to create a fragrant paste that was applied to clothing (1919:82)

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Poncas rubbed the pulverized seeds of the wild columbine in their hands to apply as a love medicine (Gilmore 1919:82-83).

**Clematis tenuiloba/ Columbiana [rock clematis]**

Rock clematis is a common plant in the Minnelusa Foothills and the Limestone Plateau (Larson and Johnson 1999:318). There is no evidence on its names or uses in the ethnobotanical literature.
**Delphinium spp.**

**[larkspur]**

*Delphinium bicolor* [little larkspur] is the species reported in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:318), but it is not reported in association with the region's tribal nations. *D. virescens/carolinianum* [prairie larkspur], which is documented in ethno-botanical sources, is widespread, but not abundant in the prairies of South Dakota (Johnson and Larson 1999:222; Larson and Johnson 1999:318).

**Names:**

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:28)

*ton-a* [gourd seed]

* D. virescens

Lakota (Buechel 1970:536; Roger 1980:55)

*wanagi t'inpisila* [spirit turnip]

* D. virescens

**Habitat:** *Delphinium bicolor* [low lark-spur] is found west of the Missouri River, and it is especially abundant in the Black Hills area (Larson and Johnson 1999:318).

**Uses:** The Kiowas and Arapahos are the only native population with connections to the Black Hills that have any reported use for larkspurs.

[cosmetic & hygienic] Michael Moore (1979:96), in his work on the medicinal uses of western plants, notes that delphinium seeds and flowers were an ingredient in tinctures used by European Americans to kill lice. Larson and Johnson (1999:319) also report that American Indian populations crushed the foliage and used it as an insecticide, but the tribal attributions of this usage are not noted.

[art & manufacture] The Kiowas used the seeds from this plant in their peyote rattles (Vestal and Schultes 1939:28), and the Arapahoes and Shoshones made a blue dye from the blossoms (Nickerson 1966:47).

**Ranunculus, spp.**

**[buttercup]**

There are several different buttercup species in the Black Hills, but none of these have any reported ethnobotanical uses (Larson and Johnson 1999:320-322). Two species are reported at Wind Cave National Park: *R. abortivus* [little leaf or early wood buttercup] and *R. glaberrimus* [crowfoot or sage-brush buttercup] (Pisarowicz 2001h:1,2001j:1). Only one species, which is not identified with the Hills, is named in any of the native nomenclatures we have studied, and this is *R. cardiophyllus* [heartleaf buttercup] or *canhlogan wicagnaske* [gooseberry stalk] in Lakota (Buechel 1970:118; Rogers 1980:55).

**Thalictrum dasycarpum**

**[purple meadowrue]**

This is a common plant in the moist prairie and wet meadow environments of eastern South Dakota, and it is also found in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:322; 1999b:224).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:174; Hart 1981:34)

*mo i’name it se’e yo* [elk, horse medicine]

*T. sparsiflorum*

alternate: *mo:ehe-no?name-heseeo?ote*

Lakota (Gilmore 1919:80; Buechel 1970:574; Rogers 1980:56)

*wazi’mminkpa* [pine top]

*T. polygonum/pubescens* [king of the meadow] and *T. dasycarpum*

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:80)

*nisude-hi* [flute plant]

*T. dasycarpum

**Habitat:** Blue or purple meadowrue is found occasionally over the entire Black Hills region at low to mid elevations in moist meadow, open forest, and woodland habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:322-23).

**Uses:** Meadowrues were used by a number of different Native populations in the Plains for a variety of purposes.
The Lakotas picked the mature fruits in August and stored them with clothes and other personal articles because of their pleasant odor (Gilmore 1913b:360), and they also rubbed the seeds on their hands as a lotion (Buechel 1970:80). The Hidatsas considered the seeds a young woman’s perfume (Nickel 1974:74), and the Cheyennes mixed the flowers with other plants for perfumes (Hart 1981:34). The Arapahos used the seeds and roots for perfume too and in a powdered form for shampoo (Nickerson 1966:47).

The Cheyennes dried and ground the plant into a fine powder to make their horses spirited and to give them endurance (Grinnell 1972:2:141, 174). The Lakotas used the seeds to make their horses lively (Buechel 1970:80), and the Hidatsas did the same (Nickel 1974:74).

Ponca bachelors are reported to have used the meadowrue’s top as a love charm (Gilmore 1919:80).

**Rodseaceae**

**The Rose Family**

A number of different non-woody species in the rose family are found in the Black Hills. Of these, only two are associated with ethnobotanical uses for either European American or American Indian populations in the region.

**Agrimonia striata**

*Roadside agrimony*

Agrimony is common in the Black Hills in a variety of moist habitats at low to mid elevations, but it has no reported cultural associations (Larson and Johnson 1999:324).

**Fragaria virginiana**

*Virginia strawberry*

Two species of strawberry are found in the Black Hills, the rare Woodland strawberry, *F. vesca*, and the much more common Virginia strawberry, *F. virginiana*. Both are found in similar environments (Larson and Johnson 1999:326).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:34; Hart 1981:34)
ve’shkee’?ehe-menoste [sweet berries]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:475, 575; Roger 1980:56)
takan yecala [string like runners]
alternates: wazi’skeca [pine mink]
wahpe’skuya [sweet leaf]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:146)
bashte [no translation given]

**Habitat:** This popular food plant is com-mon over the entire range of the Black Hills. It grows at all elevations in moist meadows and open pine, spruce, and deciduous forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:326).

**Uses:** This was an important food plant for American Indian and European American populations in the region.

**food** All of the tribal nations in the northern Plains ate the wild strawberry fresh when it ripened in June, and some appar-ently dried them to season other foods (Gil-more 1919:146). They were also desired and sought after by early travelers and settlers in the region (Kindscher 1987:117).

**medicinal** Although the Blackfeet of the northern Plains and many tribal nations in the upper Great Lakes used wild strawberry medicinally, there are no reports of such use among the tribes who lived in the region of the Black Hills in historic times (Kindscher 1992:245-246).

**Geum spp.**

*Avens*

Prairie smoke or old man’s whiskers, *Geum triflorum*, and yellow avens, *G. aleppicum*, are two of the *geum* species that are widely distributed over the entire Black Hills region at all elevations from mixed grass prairies and sagebrush steppes to open forests and...
meadows (Larson and Johnson 1999:328-29). Prairie smoke and white avens \([G. \text{ canadense}]\) are found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2; 2001j: 2). Although ethnobotanical uses for \(G. \text{ triflorum}\) have been described (Kindscher 1992:249-50), none of these have been re-reported for tribes who historically lived in the Black Hills region.

**Potentilla spp.**  
[Cinquefoils]

There are more than ten different cinquefoil species in the Black Hills. They are commonly found at all elevations in a diverse range of habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999: 330-336). Only the woody variety (see section on Woody Plants) has any reported name and/or use among local tribes. Names and uses for the non-woody species, however, have been documented for tribal nations outside the region (Kindscher 1992: 271-272). Cinquefoils were often used in European American folk medicine to treat sore throats, gum inflammations, and a wide variety of intestinal maladies (Moore, M. 1979:132).

**Rubiaceae**  
The Madder Family

Only *Galium* or bedstraw species are reported in the Black Hills, including *G. \text{ boreale}*[northern bedstraw] and *G. \text{ aparine}*[cleavers, catchweed bedstraw, or sticky-willy]. Another species, which is more common to the prairies farther east, is *G. \text{ triflorum}*[Fragrant bedstraw]. Both species grow at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001i:2) and are associated with names and/or uses in American Indian and Euro-American American cultural contexts.

**Names:**

**Lakota** (Buechel 1971:520, 521; Rogers 1980:57)  
*\text{wahpe wacanga hu winyela}* [sweet smelling leaf for women]

*G. \text{ trifolium}*

*\text{wahpe wacanga hu bloka}* [sweet smelling leaf for men]

*G. \text{ aparine}*

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:115)  
*\text{wau-pezehe}* [women’s herb]

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**G. \text{ trifolium}**

**Habitat:** The northern bedstraw is the most common in the Black Hills where it is located in a great variety of moist habitats in mixed grass prairies and forests. Cleavers and fragrant bedstraws are not as common and restricted to moist forest environments [Larson and Johnson 1999:338).

**Uses:** For local tribes, the members of this subfamily were used predominately as a perfume.

**[cosmetic & hygienic]** Fragrant bedstraw was used as a perfume for women among the Poncas (Gilmore 1913b:367, 1919:115), and we can suspect, since its name carries a similar meaning, it had the same function among the Lakotas as well. The catchwood variety would have been used as a fragrance for men (Buechel 1970:520-521).

**[art & manufacture]** Northern bedstraw was used as a source of red dye for some tribal nations including the Arapahos and Shoshones (Nickerson 1966:50) and a stuffing for European American bed mattresses (Tilford 1997:36).

**Santalaceae**  
The Sandalwood Family

Only one species from this family, *Comandra \text{ umbellata}*[bastard toadflax], is reported in the Black Hills. It is a very common plant throughout the region where it grows in varied habitats and at all elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:338-39). While known as a food among Numic-speaking tribal nations in the West (Kindscher 1987:95-97), the only tribal nation from the Black Hills region with a reported use for it are the Arapahos who made a blue dye from the root bark (Nickerson 1966:50).
**Saxifragaceae**  
**The Saxifrage Family**

Three species from this family are reported in the Black Hills, but only one has any reported cultural associations.

**Heuchera richardsonis**  
**[Richardson’s alumroot]**

Richardson’s alumroot was an important medicinal plant for European Americans and tribal nations in the northern plains (Kindscher 1992:122-125).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:176; Hart 1981:38)  
*e hyo’ isse’ eyo* [yellow medicine]  
alternate: *heove-heseeo?otse*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:118, 520; Rogers 1980:58)  
*wakpe t’oga* [dries out the mouth leaf]  
alternates: *canhlo’hsnasnala* [little rustling leaf]  
*canhloh t’agela hu* [tough weed stem]

**Habitat:** Alumroot is generally found in rocky soil or rock crevices in open to dense forests and woodland meadows from low to high elevations over the entire Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:340).

**Uses:** American Indians and European Americans used alumroot primarily for medicinal purposes alike.

[medicinal] Among the Lakota, the root was prepared as a tea for chronic diarrhea, and it was also administered in powder form as a treatment for wounds and skin sores (Densmore 1918:269; Buechel 1970:520). The Cheyennes used a remedy from the alumroot to treat rheumatism and another for healing skin rashes (Grinnell 1972:2:176; Hart 1981: 38). The Arapahos employed it as well but for unidentified remedies (Nickerson 1966: 48). European Americans applied the root in ways that were nearly identical to native remedies (Kindscher 1992:124).

**Lithophragma parviflorum**  
**[prairie woodland-star]**

Although the prairie star is frequently found at many different elevations and in a wide variety of environments in the northern and central Black Hills, its native names and uses have not been documented in the ethnobotanical literature (Larson and Johnson 1999:340).

**Saxifraga spp.**  
**[saxifrage]**

Alberta saxifrage, *S. occidentalis*, is restricted to Lawrence county in the northern Black Hills, where it occurs infrequently at mid to high elevations on moist forested rocky slopes and high meadows (Larson and Johnson 1999:342). Although there is no ethnobotanical information on this plant, a related species, *S. jamesi*, was used by the Cheyennes and named *mah is se’e yo* [red medicine]. The dried plant was rubbed in the hands until finely powdered and then boiled as a tea to treat lung hemorrhage (Grinnell 1972:2:175).

**Scrophulariaceae**  
**The Figwort Family**

Of the sixteen different species in the Figwort family found in the Black Hills, most of the ones reported to have any cultural use are those belonging to the Beardtongue species.

**Besseya wyomingensis**  
**[Wyoming kittentails]**

This is a very common plant throughout the Black Hills, but it is not associated with any cultural uses among American Indian or European American populations in the area (Larson and Johnson 1999:342-343)
Two *Castilleja* species are located in the Black Hills, *C. sessilifora* [downy paintbrush or paintedcup] and *C. sulphurea* [sul-ph-er Indian paintbrush], but only the former is associated with any cultural uses.

Names:

**Cheyenne** (Hart 1981:39)  
*stseke'hapeomeestse* [no translation given]  
*C. sessilifora*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:521; Rogers 1980:59)  
*wahpe yazokapi* [suck leaf]  
*C. sessilifora*

**Habitat:** Downy paintbrush is especially common to the Hogback, Red Valley, Minnelusa Foothills and surrounding grasslands, while Sulphur paintbrush is restricted to the central and northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:344). It grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:1).

**Uses:** Only the culinary value of the Downy paintbrush is described in the ethnobotanical literature for the tribal nations of the Black Hills.


[medicinal] Although tribal nations outside the Black Hills region used *Castilleja* species for medicinal purposes (Tilford 1997:82), there are no reports for local tribes.

[art & manufacture] The Shoshones and the Arapahos used these species to make a red-tan dye (Nickerson 1966:50).

Neither of the two *Linaria* species reported in the Black Hills, *L. dalmatica* [Dalmatian toadflax] and *L. vulgaris* [butter and eggs], are associated with any tribal names or uses. The latter grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2). Both plants were introduced by European Americans as ornamental species, and both were rapidly naturalized in the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:346).

**Mimulus guttatus**  
[monkeyflower]

The habitats of this plant are located mainly in the central and northern Black Hills, where it is found only occasionally at the margins of springs from mid to high elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:348). It is also found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:1). In Lakota, the plant is called *ceski kan iyececa* [like a button] (Buechel 1970:130; Rogers 1980:59), but no applications have been reported for it.

**Orthocarpus luteus**  
[yellow owl’s clover]

This is a common plant in the Black Hills where it grows in a wide variety of habitats at all elevations. Although the Blackfeet are reported to have used it to make a red dye, no applications for it have been documented for the tribal nations who lived in the Black Hills region (Larson and Johnson 1999:348).

**Penstemon spp.**  
[beardtongues]

Five species of beardtongues are reported in the Black Hills, and these are *P. albidus* [white beardtongue or penstemon] *P. an-gustifolius* [narrow/leaf/broadbeard beard-tongue or penstemon], *P. glaber* [smooth/ sawsepal beardtongue or penstemon], *P. gracilis* [slender/lilac beardtongue or pen-stem-on], and *P. grandiflorus* [shellleaf/ large beardtongue]. This is an important subfamily of plants for the
Lakotas, who have names and/or uses for four of the species found in the Black Hills.

**Names:**

- *P. albidus* (slippery skin weed)
- *P. augustifolias* (rattle weed)
- *P. grandiflora* (snake’s root)
- *P. gracilis* (like what’s used)

**Habitats:** White penstemon is especially common to the Hogback and Red Valley at low to mid elevations in mixed grass prairies and sagebrush steppe, and the arrowleaf variety is located there occasionally as well but at low elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:350). Smooth and slender penstemons are found throughout the Hills at all elevations and in a wide range of environments (Larson and Johnson 1999:352). The shell-leaf or large beardtongue is found only occasionally at low to mid elevations largely in the Hogback, Red Valley, and Minnelusa Foothills (Larson and Johnson 1999:354). Four of these species, the white, the slender, large, and shellleaf varieties grow at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2).

**Uses:** These species had very important medicinal uses for a number of tribes in the region.

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas used *P. grandiflorus* as a remedy for chest pain (Gilmore 1919:114), and the Kiowas made a tea from the roots to cure stomachaches (Vestal and Schultes 1939:51). The Lakotas also made a remedy for snakebites from *P. gracilis* (Buechel 1970:659). Southwestern tribes used *P. glaber* to treat bites of various kinds (Kindscher 1992:267). Beardtongues were also used medicinally in European American folk medicine (Moore 1979:125; Kindscher 1992:268).

**[art & manufacture]** The Lakotas prepared *P. augustifolias* to make a blue dye for moc-casin painting (Buechel 1970:167).

**Scrophularia lanceolata**

**[lanceleaf figwort]**

Lanceleaf figwort is found occasionally in the Black Hills at all elevations and in a wide variety of habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:354). The Lakota name for it is *wahpe yatapi iyececa* [its like the leaf they chew on], but no uses for it have been reported (Buechel 1970:521; Rogers 1980:59).

**Verbascum thapsus**

**[common mullein]**

This plant, which was introduced from Eurasia, has become a common roadside plant throughout the American west. In the Black Hills, it is common and sometimes abundant in a range of habitats from low to high elevations. It grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:3). Widely used in European American folk medicine as a remedy for the treatment of asthma and bronchitis, it was adapted by many tribal nations who also applied it in the treatment of respiratory ailments (Tilford 1997:102; Larson and Johnson 1999:356). No evidence of its use, however, has been found for tribes who lived historically in the vicinity of the Hills.

**Veronica spp.**

**[speedwell]**

*V. Americana* [American speedwell] is common at all elevations over the entire Black Hills near springs and spring-fed streams, and *anagallis-aquatica* [water speedwell] is also common but only up to mid elevations where it grows near streams and ponds (Larson and Johnson 1999:356, 358). *V. arvensis* [corn speedwell] is found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:4). The leaves of *americana* are edible, but the roots may be poisonous. Modern herbalists use it as an expectorant (Tilford 1997:14). There are no
reports, however, on its use among the tribal nations who resided in the region.

**Solanaceae**

**The Potato Family**

Four plants, *Hyoscyamus niger* [black henbane] and three species of *Physalis*, are reported in the Black Hills. Black henbane is poisonous and occasionally found in the Hills and at Wind Cave National Park, but there are no cultural uses associated with it (Larson and Johnson 1999:358; Pisarowicz 2001k:2). Another member of the potato family, *Solanum rostratum* [buffalo bur nightshade], is not mentioned in Larson and Johnson’s plant inventory on the Black Hills, but it is common in disturbed areas throughout the Great Plains (Johnson and Larson 1999:234). It is also found in Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2). The Lakotas called it *spansni yutapi iyecceca* [it is like what they eat uncooked] (Buechel 1970:467; Rogers 1980:60). *Solanum triflorum* [cutleaf nightshade], a close relative, was known as *canhlogan skiskita* [woodduck weed]; the Lakotas used the berries of this species for stomach aches (Buechel 1970:117).

**Physalis spp**

**[Virginia groundcherry]**

Also commonly known as tomatillo, Chinese lantern, and popweed, three groundcherry species are identified in the Black Hills. These are *P. virginiana* [Vir-ginia groundcherry], *P. heterophylla* [clam-my groundcherry], and *P. longifolia/hispida* [longleaf/prairie groundcherry], but only the clammy variety has been reported on in ethnobotanical sources.

**Names:**

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:477; Rogers 1980:60)
*tamnichpi hu* [womb, fetal membrane, and nest stem]

*P. heterophylla*

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:113)
*pe igatush* [forehead, to pop]

*P. heterophylla*

*maka bashahon shon* [crooked medicine]

**P. lanceolata**

**Habitat:** *P. virginiana* is distributed across a wide variety of habitats in the Black Hills, while *P. heterophylla* favors the sandy and rocky soils of open grassland environments. *P. longifolia* is also found in the Hills but less frequently (Larson and Johnson 1999:360).

**Uses:** The berries of all of these varieties are edible.

[food] Ground cherries were picked opportunistically and eaten fresh by Lakota children (Buechel 1970:477), but they were also made into a sauce and dried for the winter when quantities were sufficient (Gilmore 1913b:362, 1919:113; Red Cloud High School 2001). The Hidatsas and Kiowas also valued them as food (Nickel 1974:69).

[medicine] The Lakotas believed that the consumption of ground cherries increased peoples’ appetite (Buechel 1970:470). They also used them in a treatment for snakebites (Red Cloud High School 2001). The Poncas brewed a tea from the root for headaches and stomach ailments, and they also used the root to heal wounds (Gilmore 1919:113). The roots of this plant were associated with the healing traditions of the Buffalo Medicine Society among the related Omahas (Fletcher & La Flesche 1972:2:487, 488, 584).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Lakotas are also reported to have an unspecified use for them in their Sun Dances (Red Cloud High School 2001).

**Typhaceae**

**The Cattail Family**

Two members of this family are reported in the Black Hills: *Typha latifolia* [broadleaf cattail] and *T. angustifolia* [narrowleaf cattail] (Larson and Johnson 1999:360-361). Native names for cattails appear to be generic to the family.
Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:170; Hart 1981:13)
wi’ tan ots [tongue plant]
alternates: vo’heneotse-vo’e (stse) [fat plant]
 vohpo’heneotse-vo’e
veta-no’estse

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:524)
pisbumi [no translation given]

Lakota (Gilmore 1919:64; Buechel 1970:177, 584; Rogers 1980:32)
wihuta’ hu [tent bottom plant]
alternate: hantkan [hair scraped off]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:50)
ka.zol [translation not given]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:64)
wahab’igaskonthe [similar to corn]

Habitat: Cattails are found over the entire Black Hills near streams, ponds, lakes, and boggy areas at all elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:361). They are also found in ravine environments at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001:i:1).

Uses: Cattails had a wide range of uses among the tribal nations of the region.

[food] The Plains Apaches ate the root-stocks occasionally (Jordan 1965:50).


[art & manufacture] The Lakotas also relied on the fuzz as a filling for pillows (Gilmore 1919:65; Buechel 1970:177), and the Hidatsas employed the seeds as an all-purpose padding for packing and pillows (Nickel 1974:75). The Cheyennes once used cattail leaves in their basketry (Hart 1981: 13). The Lakotas applied the roots of the common cattail in making of a yellow dye (Lyford 1940:42).

[symbolic & ceremonial] Pieces of the cattail were essential in the making of ceremonial objects for the Ponca Wawan ceremony (Gilmore 1919:64-65).

Utricaceae
The Nettle Family

The stinging nettle, U. dioica/gracilis, is the only Utrica species reported in the Black Hills.

Names:

Lakota (Buechel 1970:188; Rogers 1980:61)
cani ca’pe hu [woody whip stalk]
U. dioica

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:77)
hanuga-hi [no translation given]
U. gracilis

Habitat: Stinging nettle, especially the U. dioica variety, is found frequently in moist areas bordering streams at all elevations over the entire region of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:362).

Uses: The Lakotas and Poncas had medicinal or manufacturing uses for these nettles.

[medicinal] The Lakotas prepared a tea from the roots to administer for stomach pain (Buechel 1970:188). European Ameri-can herbalists consider this a good nutritive tonic (Tilford 1997:210).

[art & manufacture] The dried stalks were crumpled by the Poncas to free the fiber from the woody part, and the fiber was used for twine and cordage (Gilmore 1919:77).
**Valerianaceae**

The Valerian Family

Two species in the Valerian family are reported for the Black Hills, *Valeriana dioica* [marsh valerian] and *V. edulis* [edible valerian or tobacco root]; both have ethnobotanical applications. Marsh valerian is occasionally found in the northern and central Black Hills where it grows in moist habitats at mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:362), while edible valerian is located occasionally at mid to high elevations in the Minnelusa Foothills and the Limestone Plateau in the northwestern and western portions of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:364). Although members of the valerian family are popular herbs in European American medicine (Tilford 1997: 150), there is no documentation on their use among the tribal nations who lived in the vicinity of the Black Hills. Both varieties are used as a popular sedative in European American folk medicine (Moore 1979:158). The cooked rootstalks of these species are edible, and they can also be dried and pulverized to make flour (Larson and Johnson 1999:362, 364). Their culinary uses, which are widely reported for the tribal nations of the Northwest, have not been documented for the tribal nations who covered the Black Hills.

**Verbenaceae**

The Verbena Family

Three species of the verbena family, *Glandularia bipinnatifida* [Dakota mock vervain], *Verbena hastata* [blue or swamp vervain], and *Verbena stricta* [wooly or hoary verbena] are reported in the Black Hills. The last two grow at Wind Cave National Park in various habitats. Another species in this family, *Phryma leptostachya* [loposeed], also grows at the park (Pisarowicz 2001i:3, Pisarowicz 2001j:3).

**Names:**

**Lakota** (Gilmore 1919:111; Buechel 1970:500, 520; Rogers 1980:61)

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:111)

**Habitat:** Dakota mock vervain is occasionally located in the low elevations of the southern Black Hills in mixed grass prairies and pastures (Larson and Johnson 1999:364), while blue vervain and wooly vervain are found at low to mid elevations in moist habitats in the southern Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:366).

**Uses:** Although tribes outside the region are reported to have relied on verbena for various applications, the Lakotas and Poncas are the only two associated with the Black Hills with documented uses for them (Kind-scher 1992:211-212).

**[food]** The Poncas steeped the leaves of blue vervain for a culinary beverage (Gilmore 1919:111).

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas prepared the leaves of the blue vervain in a tea as a remedy for stomachache [Gilmore 1913b:363, 1919: 111; Lame Deer in Fire and Erdoes 1972: 170]. This was also a popular plant in Euro-pean American folk remedies (Kind-scher 1992:212).

**Violaceae**

The Viola Family

Although there are many different species in the violet family growing in the Black Hills and a few at Wind Cave National Park too (Larson and Johnson 1999:368-374; Pisarowicz 2001h:3, 2001i:3, 2001j:3), none are reported to have had any special cultural uses except as markers in an Omaha (and Ponca) children’s game (Gilmore 1919:103). The Lakotas called the *Viola pedatifida* [prairie violet] *wahpe to* [blue leaf] (Bue-chel
1970:520; Rogers 1980:61). Outside the region, European American and Ameri-can Indian herbalists are reported to have used violets as an emetic to induce vomiting (Tilford 1997:152). In the Black Hills, the prairie violet appears occasionally in the central and northern regions at low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:372). This and other violet species are potentially edible (Kindscher 1987:222).

III. VASCULAR PLANTS: GRASSES, SEDGES, RUSHES, FERNS, AND HORSETAILS

Poaeeae
The Grass Family

Hundreds of different grass species grow in the plains and prairie regions of North America with over eighty varieties reported in the Black Hills alone. Many of these grasses were important to the tribal nations of the region because they provided nutritious fodder for their horses. The locations where these grasses were abundant would have been recognized as good places for local tribes to camp and pasture their horses. Knowledge of grasses and their growing seasons would also have been important in locating bison and other ungulate species who depended on them for their forage. Unfortunately, very few of the anthropologists and botanists who studied the native uses of plants in the region gathered information on tribal knowledge of forage conditions in their various areas of occupation. The ethnobotanical data on grasses are sparse relative to other plant families, and even where a fairly detailed nomenclature exists for grasses, as is the case with the Lakotas for whom over thirty different names have been recorded, much of the knowledge associated with them is not documented.

Agropyron cristatum
[crested wheatgrass]

Introduced from Siberia and naturalized in the Black Hills and surrounding plains regions, the names and uses of crested wheatgrass are not documented in ethno-botanical sources (Larson and Johnson 1999:380; Johnson and Larson 1999:16). Nor are the names and uses for the other wheatgrasses reported in the area, including A. Repens [Quackgrass] and A. intermedium [Intermediate wheatgrass] (Larson and Johnson 1999: 408, 410).

Agrostis spp.
[tickleglass]

Two species of this subfamily A. scabra [tickleglass/rough bentgrass] and A. solon-ifera or gigantea [redtop], a European introduction, are common in a variety of different habitats in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:380). Neither of them is asso-ciated with any cultural uses in the ethno-botanical literature.

Andropogon spp.
[bluestems]

A. gerardii [big bluestem] was a major species in the tallgrass prairie (Kindscher 1992: 226), and it is the only one listed in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 382). Other bluegrasses, however, were recognized and named in the ethnobotanical nomenclatures of Plains tribes.

Names:

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 13)
so-wangs- kson [no translation given]
  A. saccharoides

Lakota (Buechel 1970: 440, 452; Rogers 1980: 28, 31)
peji sasa okihe tankinkinyan [large red joint grass]
  A. gerardii
alternate: santhuhu okiheiton [jointed santhuhu]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965: 60)
  ñoci.s [red grass]
  A. gerardii and A. scoparius
alternative: ‘a.ý ohe [native grass]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919: 68)
hade-zhide [red hay]
A. gerardii

**Habitat:** In the Black Hills, big bluegrass is located on north and east-facing slopes with deep soil and added moisture (Larson and Johnson 1999:382). It grows at Wind Cave National Park.

**Uses:** This grass had a number of different cultural associations for tribes in the region.

[medicinal] The Omahas and probably the Poncas as well made a decoction from the grass to treat lethargy and fatigue and to reduce fever (Gilmore 1919:69).

[cosmetic & hygienic] The Kiowa used the stems of A. saccharoides to clean their teeth (Vestal and Schultes 1939:13).

[veterinary] The Plains Apaches considered blue grasses to be the most nutritious for their horses (Jordan 1965:62).

[art & manufacture] The Poncas used the thick jointed stems of big bluestem in the construction of their earth lodges (Gilmore 1919:69). For the Plains Apaches, this was the prime material for making sleeping mat-tresses and also for manufacturing brooms to sweep out the tipi (Jordan 1965: 56). The Lakotas lined this grass on the floor of their tipis to absorb moisture, and they used it for insulation in their moccasins (Red Cloud High School 2001).

[fuel] Plains Apaches used bunches of blue stem grass as tinder to start their fires (Jordan 1965:156).

### Aristida longiseta [red three awn]

This warm-season, short grass is oc-casionally found in the dry grasslands of the southern Black Hills especially in barren and eroded locations, and it is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001g:3). The Lakotas call it peji taken kaza (Buechel 1970:440; Rogers 1980: 8).

Bouteloua spp. [grama]

Three species of the warm-season, short grama grass are located in the Black Hills: B. curtipendula [sideoats grama], B. gracilis [blue grama], and B. hirsuta [hairy grama]. This was an important group of grasses for bison.

**Names:**

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 14)  
son-pa-pa [no translation given]  
B. hirsuta

Lakota (Buechel 1970: 439, 544; Rogers 1980: 28, 31)  
wapaha kamnimmila peji [banner waving in wind]  
B. curtipendul

peji okijata [forked grass]  
B. gracilis  
possible alternate: peji hinkpila [fur grass]

**Habitat:** Sideoats grama is common in a wide range of upland habitats in the Black Hills, including the dry prairies and pine savannas of the foothills (Larson and Johnson 1999:384). Blue grama is found in most of the Black Hills’ dry grassland hab-itats, and it is a primary species of shortgrass and mixed-grass prairie environments found at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1996:386; Pisarowicz 2001g:2). Hairy grama, also located in the park, is largely confined to the sandy or rocky grass-land soils of the foothills (Pisarowicz 2001g: 3).

**Uses:** Only the Lakotas, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches are reported to have had uses for these grasses.

[medicinal] Plains Apaches used sideoats grama in a medical procedure to remove cataracts from the eyes (Jordan 1965:105)

[veterinary] The Kiowas reported that B. curtipendula and B. hirsuta were good fodder for horses (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 14).
The Kiowas believed that sideoats grama resembled a lance decorated with feathers, and so it was worn by warriors who killed an enemy with a lance (Vestal and Schultes 1939:14). Young Lakota women searched for four-headed spears of grama grass to bring them good fortune in love and romance (Hassrick 1964: 241).

**Bromus spp.**

**[Brome]**

There are many different brome species in the Black Hills, including *B. anomalus* [nodding brome], *B. carinatus* [mountain/California brome], and *B. inermis* [smooth bromegrass], and many of them are excel-lent forage (Larson and Johnson 1999: 388, 390,392). *B. communitatus* [hairy chess/meadow brome] and *B. tectorum* [cheat-grass], however, are the only ones listed at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001:g:2-3). The only native name reported for a brome grass is *peji hanskaska* [long grass] (Buechel 1970:439; Rogers 1980: 390), a name which refers to the smooth brome grass introduced to the region from Europe.

**Buchloe dactyloides**

**[buffalograss]**

Buffalo grass, which provides excellent forage for bison, is found in the foothills and lower elevations of the Black Hills, including Wind Cave National Park, where it appears in mixed grass and shortgrass prairie environments (Larson and Johnson 1999: 382; Pisarowicz 2001g: 3). The Lakotas call this warm-season grass, *peji iwicakoyaka* [grass that sticks to people’s clothes] (Buechel 1970:439) or *sipa wicakase* [getting tangled in people’s toes] (Ibid: 455).

**Calamagrostis spp.**

**[reedgrass]**

*C. canadensis* [bluejoint reedgrass] is found in wet habitats at mid to high elevations, while *C. purpurascens* [purple reedgrass] is restricted to the open pine and spruce forests of the Harney Range (Larson and Johnson 1999: 394). Neither of these grasses is mentioned in ethnobotanical sources for the tribal nations of the region, although Dilwyn Rogers (1980:31) suggests that the Lakota name *peji okihe toto* [grass with blue joints] may refer to *C. canadensis*. Neither of these grasses is reported at Wind Cave National Park.

**Calamovilfa longifolia**

**[prairie sandreed]**

This warm-season, tall grass is most frequently found in the sandy or gravelly soils of mixed grass prairies at lower elevations in the Black Hills, including the area of Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:396; Pisarowicz 2001g:3). The Lako-tas knew it as *santuhu hcaka* [like the grass santuhu], and they used the culms to clean their pipes. Crazy Horse, the famous Oglala war leader, wore the top of this grass on his head as a *wotawe* [war charm] instead of a feather (Buechel 1970:452).

**Catabrosa aquatica**

**[brookgrass/water whorlgrass]**

No ethnobotanical information was found on this grass, which is located occasionally at higher elevations in the northern and central Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:396).

**Cenchrus longispinus**

**[mat sandbur]**

This grass is especially common at lower elevations in the southern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:398), although it is not listed among the grasses at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001g: 1-6). The Lakota call it *peji unkcela* [cactus grass] (Buechel 1970:440; Rogers 1980: 29).
**Dactylis glomerata**  
*[orchardgrass]*

This tall grass was introduced from Europe and grows on park lands. It is now common in a wide range of environments in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 398). There is no information about it in ethnobotanical sources.

**Danthonia spicata**  
*[poverty oatgrass]*

Several *Danthonia* species are found in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:400), but only one is identified at Wind Cave National Park, *D. spicata* [poverty oatgrass] (Pisarowicz 2001g:2). There is no documentation, however, on this mid cool-season grass in ethnobotanical sources.

**Deschampsia caespitosa**  
*[tufted hairgrass]*

This uncommon grass is confined to the mid elevations of the northern and central Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:400), and it is also not reported in the ethnobotanical literature.

**Dichanthelium oligosanthes**  
*[Scribner dichanthelium]*

Several varieties of the cool-season dichanthelium are reported in the Black Hills, where they frequently appear in the area’s grasslands and open forests (Larson and Johnson 1999: 402). Wind Cave National Park is apparently not one of the locations where it grows, however. In Lakota, this grass was called *peji wakan* [sacred grass] (Buechel 1970: 440; Rogers 1980:30). The Lakotas believed that it had a toxic effect on horses, but according to Larson and Johnson (1999: 402), there is no evidence to support this idea. The Kiowas, however, viewed this as a palatable and nutritious grass to fatten their horses (Vestal and Schultes 1939:16).

**Distichlis spicata**  
*[inland saltgrass]*

Although not reported for the Black Hills, saltgrass is widespread in the Plains region where it typically grows in alkaline or saline soils (Johnson and Larson 1999:30). The Lakotas knew it as *peji suksuta* [tough grass] (Buechel 1970:440; Rogers 1980:29).

**Echinochloa muricata**  
*[rough barnyardgrass]*

Also known as wild millet, barnyard grass is a common warm-season grass throughout the Great Plains where it typically occupies cultivated fields, ditches, and feed grounds (Johnson and Larson 1999:32). It is one of the grasses listed for Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001g: 2). The Lakotas call *E. crusgalli*, the European variety, *peji’skuya* [sweet grass] (Buechel 1970:230; Rogers 1980:29).

**Elymus spp.**  
*[wildrye]*

*E. caandensis* [Canada wildrye], *E. elymoides* [squirreltail], *E. glaucus* [blue wildrye], *E. trachycaulus* [slender wheatgrass], *E. villosus* [hairy wildrye], and *E. virginicus* [Virginia wildrye] are the wildrye species reported in the Black Hills by Larson and Johnson (1999:402-408).

**Names:**

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939: 521)  
puitsaseni [no translation given]  
*E. canadensis*

Lakota (Buechel 1970: 449; Rogers 1980: 29)  
pteya hota [cow makes it gray with mouth]  
*E. canadensis*
**Habitat:** Cool season wildrye species occupy a wide range of habitats in the Black Hills, but many are occasional in their appearance or restricted to specific regions. The Canada wildrye, which is the only one named in native nomenclatures, is commonly found over the entire area in open grass-land habitats and along stream banks, including at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999:402; Pisarowicz 2001g: 2).

**Uses:** Only the Cheyennes are reported to have had uses for any of the wildrye species.

[art & manufacture] Cheyennes also used *E. cinereus* to make a black dye (Hart 1981:28).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The bedding for various Cheyenne ceremonies was made out of *E. cinereus* (not reported in the Black Hills) because it was known to help cool the dancers (Hart 1981:8).

*Eragrostis cilianensis*  
**[stinkgrass]**

The warm-season stinkgrass, although introduced from Europe, is common in the northern Plains (Johnson and Larson 1999: 38), and it is found at Wind Cave National Park too (Pisarowicz 2001g: 3). The Lakotas named it *peji sicamna*  

Hierochloe odorata  
**[sweetgrass/vanilla grass]**

Sweetgrass is not reported in the Black Hills nor is it mentioned in Larson and Johnson’s book on the grasses and plants of South Dakota, even though it is widely present in the northern and central plains. This plant is highly sacred to the tribal nations of the region, and it is widely traded by them as well.

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:9)  
*ve?ho?otsetse* [no translation provided]

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:15)  
*an-son-a* [no translation offered]

Lakota (Buechel 1970: 440, 512; Rogers 1980: 30)  
*peji wacanga*  
[ sweetgrass ]  
alternative: *wacanga*

Ponca (Gilmore 1919: 66)  
*pezhe sonsta* [no translation given]

**Uses:** Sweetgrass is one of the most important sacred plants used by the Lakotas and other tribal nations in the northern Plains for ceremonial purposes.

[cosmetic & hygienic] Kiowas wrapped the grass with articles of clothing to give them a sweet smell, and they also stuffed it in pillows and mattresses (Vestal and Schultes 1939:15).

[symbolic & ceremonial] Kiowas burned it as incense in many of their ceremonies (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 15). In Cheyenne creation stories, sweet grass is mentioned as the first plant the creator laid down when he made this world, and it is also a plant that Sweet Medicine, the Cheyenne’s culture hero, burned to purify the world (Hart 1981: 9). It remains an important ceremonial in-cense in the Cheyennes’ Sacred Arrow and Sacred Hat ceremonies, in the Sun Dance, in protecting warriors and contraries before they entered battle, in healing rituals, and in warding off evil influences in homes (Hart 1981:9-10).

The Lakotas use it in many different ceremonial contexts too. Indeed, it is ubiquitous in these contexts because the Lakota believe that its smell pleases the spirits, and as a result, it is used whenever the spirits are petitioned for assistance (Buechel 1970: 512; Walker 1980:113,119). For the Lako-tas, sweet grass attracts good spirits, while sage repels evil ones (Gilmore 1919: 66). It is used in consecrating a pipe and in praying with a pipe (Walker 1980:76-77, 81, 83, 87, 89), in seeking visions (Walker 1980: 86), in birthing (Hassrick 1964: 271), in the ceremonies performed by *wicasta wakan* (Hassrick 1964: 249; Walker 1980:94-95), in the adoption rituals of the *Hunka* cere-mony (Walker 1980:194, 197, 202, 209, 210, 214, 228-230, 235), in the Sun Dance (Sword in Deloria 1929; Hassrick 1964:244; Walker 1980:184).
the *Omaha wacipi* (Hassrick 1964:266), the *Pte San Lowampi* (Fletcher 1887c; Hassrick 1964: 266; Walker 1980:244-245, 247-248, 251), the Elk ceremony (Fletcher 1983b), Spirit Keeping ceremonies (Hassrick 1980: 262), and the rituals surrounding eagle-trapping (Standing Bear 1988:79). Historically, the wand used in the dances of the White Badges was decorated with sweet grass (Walker 1980:263), and it was attached to the armlets of *Tokala* [Kit Fox] society members (Walker 1980: 273). It is men tioned in the story of the White Buffalo Calf Woman, where it represents a tangible sign of Wohpe’s benevolence (Hassrick 1964: 215; Walker 1980:111,221). In mod ern times, sweet grass continues to be used in a variety of ceremonial contexts including *Yuwipi* (Kemnitzer 1970:66). The Poncas used it in their *Wawan* ceremony (Gilmore 1919:66).

**Festuca saximontona**
* [Rocky Mountain or sheep fescue]

This grass is common at higher elevations in the northern and central Black Hills (Larsen and Johnson 1999:410). Although it is not listed at Wind Cave National Park, another related variety, *Festuca/Vulpia octoflora* [sixweeks fescue] is reported at the park (Pisarowicz 2001g: 3). Neither of these is mentioned in the ethnobotanical literature.

**Glyceria grandis**
* [American mannagrass]

This grass is occasionally located in the shallow waters and exposed muds of streams and ponds in the Black Hills (Larsen and Johnson 1999:412). There are no reports on it in ethnobotanical sources.

**Hordeum jubatum**
* [foxtail barley]

Foxtail barley is commonly found at low to mid elevations along stream margins and in moist meadow habitats, including those at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001g:2). Its forage value is very low, and it is also avoided by many animals because of the abrasive effects of itsawns (Larson and Johnson 1999:412). The Lakotas call this cool-season grass by several different names, including: *ite asiniyanpi* [tickle face], *peji ite’on asiniyakiyapi* [one uses it to tickle the face], and *peji’ jiji* [light color-ed grass] (Buechel 1970:239, 439, 823; Rogers 1980:30).

**Koeleria spp.**
* [Junegrass]

Junegrass is very common in the Black Hills where it is found in mixed and shortgrass prairie habitats, meadows, open forests, and scrublands; (Larson and Johnson 1999: 414). It grows at Wind Cave National Park too (Pisarowicz 2001g:2). This is a highly nutritious cool-season grass, and one that many animals, including bison, elk, and deer favor (Larson and Johnson 1919:414). The Cheyennes are the only tribal nation who are reported to have named and used it, but given its sacred importance to them, it probably had significance to the Lakotas too. The Cheyenne name is *naaseto-vo’estse* [sacred plant]. The Cheyennes regarded this as a highly significant plant whose flowering culms were used in the Sun Dance to give the dancers strength. The grass also served as a brush to apply paint to the dancers, and it was applied in a medicinal mixture to treat cuts and abrasions (Hart 1981:10; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988: 53).

**Melica bulbosa**
* [oniongrass]

This is an uncommon grass in the Black Hills where it is restricted to moist rocky slopes or open forests in the northern Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 416); it is not
listed at Wind Cave National Park. No records on its cultural use are found in the ethnobotanical literature.

**Muhlenbegia racemosa**  
[green muhly]

This warm-season grass is frequent in a variety of environments throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 416). This and the related variety *M. cuspidata* [Plains mushy] are found at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001g: 2-3). No information was found on their tribal names or cultural associations in ethno-botanical sources.

**Oryzopsis spp.**  
[ricegrass]

Three species of ricegrass are reported in the Black Hills: *O. asperifolia* [roughleaf ricegrass], *O. hymenoides* [Indian ricegrass /Swallen's needlegrass], and *O. micranthum* [littleseed ricegrass]. The first is common in the forest areas of the central and northern Black Hills, while the second is found occasionally in the lower elevation dry grassland environments of the Hogback and Red Valley (Larson and Johnson 1999: 418). The third one is commonly located in open forest habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999: 420). Only the first two of these cool-season grasses are found at Wind Cave National Park, however (Pisarowicz 2001g: 2). Although ricegrasses were widely taken as food by tribal nations in the Southwest and Intermountain West (Kindscher 1992: 232-233), there are no reports of such use for tribes in the Plains. Nor is there any other information on them for the tribal nations who lived among the Hills. These varieties of grass are reported to be excellent forage for wildlife, and one of them, the rough-leaved variety, also keeps its green leaves through the winter -- a fact that may have had symbolic significance for local tribes.

**Panicum virgatum**  
[switchgrass]

This tall, warm-season grass is common throughout the plains of South Dakota (Johnson and Larson 1999: 48). In the Black Hills, it is found at lower elevations in grassland and open forest environments (Larson and Johnson 1999:420) and at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001g: 2). The Lakotas knew it as *peji blaskaska* [flat grass] (Buechel 1970:439), while the Poncas called it *hade wathazhinde* [no translation given] (Gilmore 1919:66). *P. capillare* [witchgrass] was called *tie awicasniyan hu* [plant that tickles the face] (Buechel 1970: 239; Rogers 1980:30).

**Pascopyrum smithi**  
[western wheatgrass]

This cool-season grass is common on sedimentary valley floors in the Black Hills where it grows in a wide range of dry to wet grassland habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999: 422). It is not reported at Wind Cave National Park. The Lakotas knew it as *peji hcaka* [real grass], and they said that when it is tall and abundant, the horses eat only the part that the snow has not reached (Buechel 1970:439; Rogers 1980: 27).

**Phalaris arundinacea**  
[reed canarygrass]

Located at Wind Cave National Park, this tall, cool-season grass grows at the edge of low elevation streams, ponds, and lakes throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:422; Pisarowicz 2001g:2). There is no information on it in the ethnobotanical literature we consulted.

**Phleum pratense**  
[timothy grass]

This widely used forage grass was introduced to the Black Hills and Wind Cave National
There are several different varieties in this family of cool-season grasses listed in the Black Hills in a wide range of habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:424-432). Six different varieties are reported at Wind Cave National Park: *P. arida* [plains bluegrass], *P. sandbergii/secunda* [Sandberg’s blue-grass], *P. compressa* [Canada bluegrass], *P.canbyi* [Canby’s bluegrass], *P. interior* [inland bluegrass], and *P. pratensis* [Ken-tucky bluegrass] (Pisarowicz 2001g: 3) With the possible exception of Kentucky bluegrass, which has a second period of growth in the fall and good forage for wildlife, most of the other species do not have good grazing potential (Larson and Johnson 1999:424-432; Johnson and Larson 1999:58). None of these varieties are named or described in ethnobotanical sources for the tribal nations in the region.

**Pseudoroegeneria spicata**  
[bluebunch wheatgrass]

This grass is local to the Black Hills, where it is found on sandstone ridges and dry slopes in the western regions of the Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 432). It is not listed among the grasses at Wind Cave National Park. There are no data on this cool-season grass in ethnobotanical sources.

**Schedonnardus paniculatus**  
[tumble grass]

This grass is not reported in the Black Hills but it is very common in the surrounding Plains, especially in open prairies and near prairie dog towns (Johnson and Larson 1999: 62). The Lakotas knew it as *wabluska hua ota peji* [many insect legs grass] (Bue-chel 1970:512; Rogers 1980:30).

**Schizachne purpurascens**  
[false melic]

Another grass, also not described in ethno-botanical sources, false melic is common in the moist forest habitats of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:432). It is not reported at Wind Cave National Park.

**Schizachyrium scoparium**  
[little bluestem]

This was one of the warm-season grasses that were valued by Plains Indians for its medicinal and spiritual properties.

**Names:**

**Comanche** (Carlson and Jones 1939:520)  
ekonip [no translation given]  
*A. scoparius*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970: 440,452; Rogers 1980:28,31)  
*peji sasa svula* (small red grass)  
*A. scoparius*  
possible alternate: *peji sasa* (red grass)

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965: 60)  
čoci.s [red grass]  
*A. gerardii* and *A. scoparius*  
alternative: ‘a.ő ohe [native grass]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:16)  
hade-zhide (red hay)  
*A. scoparius*

**Habitat:** Little bluestem is a common grass in the mixed grass prairies and dry open forests of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:434).

**Uses:** Plains Indians relied on this grass for many different purposes.

[medicinal] Omahas and probably Poncas made a decoction of the lower blades of little bluestem [*A. scoparium*] to treat leth-argy of unknown origin, and they also took it to treat fever (Gilmore 1919:16). The Comanches are
reported to have used ashes made from this grass to treat syphilitic sores (Carlson and Jones 1939:520).

[veterinary] The Plains Apaches considered little bluestems to be the most nutritious for their horses (Jordan 1965:62).

[art & manufacture] The Lakotas pro-cessed the dried culms and leaves of little bluestem into soft fibers to line and insulate their moccasins in winter (Buechel 1970: 440).

[fuel] Plains Apaches started their fires with tinder made from bunches of bluestem grass (Jordan 1965:156).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Comanches and the Plains Apaches made bundles of little bluestems into switches that they used to cure bodily pain and drive away evil spirits in their sweat lodges (Carlson and Jones 1939:520; Jordan 1965:98).

**Sorghastrum nutans (avenaceum)**  
**[Indiangrass]**

Indiangrass is more typical of the tall grass prairies east of the Missouri. It is an uncom-mon grass in the Black Hills where it is found primarily along low elevation road-sides and drainages on the Hills’ eastern ed-ges, including locations in Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999: 434; Pisarowicz 2001g: 2). It offers high quality forage prior to flowering in late sum-mer. The Lakotas knew it as peji sasa inkpa jiji [red grass with fluffy light-colored end] (Buechel 1970:440; Rogers 1980:30). The Kiowas called it son-ton-pa or son-ka [no translations given], and they considered this an excellent fodder for their horses (Vestal and Schultes 1939:17). The Lakotas called it peji takan [sinew grass] because of its toughness (Buechel 1970: 440; Rogers 1980: 31).

**Sporobolus spp.**  
**[dropseed]**

Three species of dropseed are identified in the Black Hills: *S. asper* [tall dropseed], which is uncommon, and *S. cryptandrus* [sand dropseed], which is frequent in occurrence. Both are among the warm-season grasses found at Wind Cave National Park. *S. heterolepis* [prairie dropseed] is also frequent, but it occurs only at higher elevations in open pine forests and meadows (Larson and Johnson 1999: 436-438; Pisarowicz 2001g: 2). The Kiowas knew sand dropseed to be an excellent fodder for their horses (Vestal and Schultes 1939:17). The Lakotas called it peji takan [sinew grass] because of its toughness (Buechel 1970: 440; Rogers 1980: 31).

**Stipa/Hesperostipa spp.**  
**[needlegrass]**

Three of the five different stipa species reported in the Black Hills are found at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and John-son 1999: 440-444); these are *Stipa/Hes-perostipa comata* [needle and thread], *Stipa/Hesperostipa spartea* [porcupine-grass], and *Stipa/Nassella viridula* [green needle-grass]. Only porcupine grass has been described in the ethnobotanical literature, however.

Names:

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970: 336; Rogers 1980: 31)  
micapec [to stab or pierce]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919: 66)  
mika-hi [comb plant]
Habitat: In the Black Hills, *S. comata* is typically found in mixed prairies at lower elevations in the Hills, while *S. spartea* is commonly found in moist grassland and open forest habitats. *S. nassella* appears in a wide variety of environments from mixed grass prairies to open forests (Larson and Johnson 1999: 441-443). All three are reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001:g:3).

Uses: Porcupine grass was used primarily to make brushes for utilitarian and ceremonial purposes.

[cosmetic & hygienic] After binding them into a bundle, the Poncas burned the pointed grains to make brushes for combing the hair (Gilmore 1919: 67).

*Cyperaceae*

The Sedge Family

*Carex* spp.

More than twenty different species of this subfamily are located in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 448-466), but only one of them has been documented in ethnobotanical sources. *C. nebrascensis* [Nebraska sedge] is frequently found in wet habitats at low elevations in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:148), and it is known as *mehne-mehno?este* [serpent or dragon plant] in Cheyenne (Hart 1981:7). The Cheyennes believed that this sedge lived in waters that serpents inhabited, and they placed it in the cavities of a buffalo skull during their Sun Dance and Massaum ceremonies (Hart 1981:7). It was also inserted in the cavity of a yellow-faced wolf skull during the Massaum ceremony (Hart 1981: 8-9). Symbolically, its use represented a prayer for an abundance of water and the growth of vegetation (Hart 1981:9). Another *Carex* species, *C. gravida* [heavy sedge], not reported in the Black Hills, was called *peji psumpsunla* [flexible, loose, fallen-out weed] by the Lakotas (Buechel 1970:439; Rogers 1980: 26). Standing Bear mentioned an unidentified sedge with long, jointed roots that was used to treat nervousness. He wrote:

Though very bitter, this medicine was a favorite with the women, who often wore a piece of it around their necks. It was also carried by the Duck-Dreamer medicine man, for it was one of the secrets imparted to him by the duck (Standing Bear 1978: 60).

*Cyperus* spp.

[flatsedges]

Although not reported in the Black Hills, various species of flatsedges are found in wetland habitats in regions to the east of the Black Hills (Johnson and Larson 1999: 84). The Lakotas called *C. schweinitzii* [Schweinitz’s flatsedge] *minisantuhu* [water santuhu] (Buechel 1970:336; Rogers 1980: 26). The Kiowas are reported to have used it in medicinal ways (Vestal and Schultes 1939:18). The Plains Apache name for *C. setigerus* [lean flatsedge] is *koya.^’oh* [water grass] or alternatively *wagozaya-dika.de* [it makes a baby skinny]. Apaches consumed the tender white part at the base of the culm, although nursing mothers avoided the plant because they believed it led to weight loss in their infants (Jordan 1965:31).

*Eleocharis erythropoda*

[bald spikerush]

Several spikerush species are reported in the Black Hills, although *E. erythropoda* is the most common and found in the shallows of wet habitats at low to mid elevations throughout the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:468). There is no information, how-ever, on spikerushes in ethnobotanical sour-ces for the tribal nations who lived in the region.
**Schoenoplectus and Scirpus spp.**

[bulrushes]

Several bulrush species are reported in the Black Hills.

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972: 2: 170)
mo um' stats  [stately plant]

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970: 439, 446, 542, 584, 824; Rogers 1980: 26-27)
pca  [rush]
generic for S. tabernaemontaini and Scirpus
pca obloton  [cornered rush]

S. tabernaemontaini alternates:
peji iwicayoka  [grass that sticks to people’s clothes]
pca popopela  [pithy rush]
wanyeca  [like an arrow]

wihuta hu swula  [lower border of tent]

* It is unclear whether or not all of these refer to S. tabernaemontaini.

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919: 69)
sa-hi  [no translation given]

**Habitat:** Scirpus pallidus  [pale/cloaked bulrush] is frequently found in low to mid elevation wet habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:470-472), while Schoenoplectus pungens  [threesquare bulrush] is common and found at low elevation stream banks and pond edges over the entire Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:468). Schoenoplectus tabernaemontaini, also known as Scirpus validus  [softstem bulrush], is common at similar elevations in the shallow waters of ponds and streams. It is located at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j: 2).

**Uses:** Softstem bulrush was an important source of food and also material for the manufacture of various kinds of mats.

**[food]** The Cheyennes ate the inner part of the softstem bulrush’s stem (Hart 1981:8) and so did the Lakotas (Gilmore 1913b:359; Bordeaux 1929:130). Standing Bear (1978:58) wrote:

A food that had an interesting history for us was the tall plant that grew in the swamps, commonly called the bulrush. The duck, who brought many good plants and roots to the tribe, told the Duck Dreamer medicine-man about it and named it pca. In the early spring and summer we welcomed this plant which was pulled up by the roots, and the white part eaten like celery.

**[art & manufacture]** Melvin Gilmore reports that all of the tribes in the central Plains region used the stems of softstem bulrush to make mats (Gilmore 1919:69). Cheyenne women wove mats that they spread like blankets (Grinnell 1972:2:170-171). The Lakotas did so as well, judging by the names which describe blankets, beds, and tent drops made of rush pca owinja  [rush blanket] or pca oyunke  [rush bed] (Gilmore 1913b: 359; Buechel 1970:446). Although Larson and Johnson (1999:469) claim that S. pungens was used widely for basket weaving, there is no confirmation in ethnobotanical sources for the tribal nations who lived and traveled in the Black Hills.

**[symbol & ceremony]** Another bulrush, not reported in the Black Hills, S. nevadensis  [Nevada bulrush] was used by the Chey-enness to mold the nose and eyes of the buffalo skull placed on their Sun Dance altar. It also went into making a foundation for their beds (Hart 1981: 8).

**Juncaceae**

**The Rush Family**

Six species of rush are reported in the Black Hills with varying degrees of occurrence (Larson and Johnson 1999:474-478). Juncus dudleyi  [wiregrass] is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001j:2). None of these are described in the ethnobotanical literature, although J. balticus  [Baltic rush], not reported in the Hills, is named and used by local tribes. It is widely distributed throughout the northern Plains (Johnson and Larson 1999:86). The Lakotas know it as mak uzanpi
[it gives good health], and they use it to cure diarrhea (Lewis, T. 1990:134). The Cheyennes call it ho oma’ wishemen oh’ to wits [robe ornamented with quills] or alternately, hoomame?she-meeeno?estovest-se [for robe ornamenting] (Grinnell 1972: 2:171; Hart 1981:12). Historically, the fine rootlets from this rush’s rootstock were applied as ornamentation on robes and other leather products, and its stems were used in basketweaving as well (Grinnell 1972:2:171).

**FERNS AND HORSETAILS**

Although there are more than eighteen different species of spleenwort, fern, poly-pody, and horsetail located in the Black Hills, only two are widely recognized by the tribal nations who historically occupied the region and both are in the horsetail family.

The vast majority of ferns are located in the central and northern Black Hills, mostly at high elevations, and only a few are common or widespread in their occurrence. The Brittle fern is very common throughout the Hills at all elevations in the shady locations of pine, spruce, and deciduous forests, and so are the Slender lip and Mountain cliff ferns. Venus’ hair fern is quite common along Cascade Creek south of Hot Springs (Larson and Johnson 1999:26-38). Tribes outside the region used some of these ferns for a wide variety of medicinal purposes (Tilford 1997:94).

Although many of them were no doubt recognized and named in the langua-ges of the tribes who once inhabited the Black Hills, and some of them may have even been used, this information has not been recorded in published ethnographic and ethnobotanical accounts.

**Equisetaceae**

Horsetail Family

Names:

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:169; Hart 1981:4)  
mo in’a am es e ohk [elk medicine]  

*E. arvense* alternate: nestoe-hestoto se  
heheva?xestse [his tall tail]  

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:12)  
do’npa [fat plant]  

*E. arvense*  

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:440)  
wanyecahu [stem like a big arrow]  

*E. hyemale*  

worjya swula [small, fine horsetail]  

*E. variegatum* alternative: Peju swula [fine medicine]  

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965: 64)  
koya oh [water grass]  

*E. hyemale*  

alternative: kazolbe’e.side [resembles cat tail]  

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919: 63)  
mande idhe shinaha [to make a bow smooth]  

**Habitat:** Three members of the horsetail family are common in the Black Hills. *Equisetacea arvense* [field horsetail] is confined to moist habitats in the low to mid elevation regions of the central and northern Hills. *E. laevigatum* [smooth scouring rush] and *E. hymale* [common scouring rush] are found throughout the Hills at the same elevations and in similar habitats. The third, *E. sylva-ticum* [wood horsetail] is occasional and restricted to the higher elevation regions of the northern and central Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:40-42).

**Uses:** Horsetails were named and used by a number of different tribal nations in the region for a wide range of purposes.

[food] The roots are edible, and the Kiowas are reported to have eaten the swollen base of *E. arvense* (Tilford 1997:76; Vestal and Schultes 1939:12).

[medicinal] While *equisetaceae* are reported to have medicinal uses as diuretics among European American and American Indian herbalists (Tilford 1997), no evidence of such usage has been found for the tribal nations who lived in the Black Hills.
The Lakotas maintain that horses grazed on *E. hymalae* have greater stamina (Buechel 1970:440). The Cheyennes used it as medicine to treat hard coughs in their horses (Grinnell 1972:2:169).

The high silica content of the smooth scouring rush’s stems and the closely related *E. hyemale* give them a gritty texture, which was useful to local Indians and early settlers for scouring and polishing (Gilmore 1919: 63; Kindscher 1992: 241-42; Larson and Johnson 1999:42). Field horsetail was used by the Cheyennes to make a dye for porcupine quills, robes, clothing, and lodges (Hart 1981:4), while the Plains Apaches made the plant’s hollow stems into toy whistles (Jordan 1965:64).

**IV. WOODY PLANTS: TREES, BUSHES, AND SHRUBS**

Over eighty different species of woody plants are reported in the Black Hills, with more than two-thirds of these identified by name and/or use in ethnobotanical and ethnographic sources for the tribal nations of the region.

*Aceraceae*

**The Maple Family**

Only one species in this family, the box elder, is located in the Black Hills, and historically, it was a very important source of food, fuel, medicine, and manufacturing material for tribes in the region. It was important in the ceremonial life of many tribes as well.

*Acer negundo*

**[box elder]**

This tree is widespread in the plains and prairies beyond the Black Hills (Johnson and Larson 1999: 238), and it is one of several trees prized for their sweet sap.

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:1: 249; Hart 1981:13) *mish ke mai’* [no translation given] alternate: *me’eshkemaha*

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40) *kaw-sen-an-daw* [no translation provided]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:123; Rogers 1980:32) *cansu ska* [sweet sap tree]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:101) *zhaba-ta-zho* [beaver wood]

**Habitat:** In the Black Hills, it is located at low elevations along streams and canyon floors in association with green ash, bur oak, and American elm (Larson and Johnson 1999:480), and it is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001f:1).

**Uses:** This tree was widely used for both practical and spiritual purposes by the tribal nations who inhabited the Black Hills.

*food* Many tribes relied on the tree’s sap to make sugar (Gilmore 1919:101). The Hidatsas, Kiowas, Lakotas, and Cheyennes produced sugar from its sap. This was an important productive activity for women during the spring (Gilmore 1913b:366; Grinnell 1972:1:249; Vestal and Schultes 1939: 40; Hassrick 1964:150; Nickel 1974: 57; Standing Bear 1978:59, 1988:98-99; Hart 1981:3, 1992:5). The Cheyennes boiled the sap in a kettle and combined it with shavings from the inner side of hides to make a candy, and they also mixed it with water for a beverage known as *mishke mai’ mapi* (Grinnell 1972:1:249; Hart 1981:13).

*medicinal* Tribes outside the Black Hills area are known to have used the inner bark in a tea used as an emetic (Vestal and Schultes 1939:41), but there are no reports of such use for tribes who lived in this region.

*art & manufacture* The Cheyennes made ceremonial bowls, as noted above, from its wood, the Hidatsas used it in their basketry (Nickel 1974:57), and the Lakotas used the wood in making pipe stems and the forked

[fuel] Larson and Johnson (1999: 480) mention that the wood of this tree produces long burning hot embers, making it attractive for culinary and ceremonial purposes. The Arikaras considered it a good source of fuel, although it was difficult to split (Nickel 1974:57). It was the favorite firewood of the Cheyennes (Hart 1981:13). The Lakotas used dried box elder wood for the fire at a young woman’s puberty ceremony (Walker 1980:244), the Kiowas fueled their altar fires with it at Native American Church ceremonies (Vestal and Schultes, 1939: 40), and the Cheyennes relied on it when making spiritual fires for medicines, lighting tobacco pipes, and the Sun Dance (Hart 1981:13, 1992: 5).

[symbolic & ceremonial] Several tribes employed the bark to make charcoal for ceremonial painting and tattooing (Gilmore 1919:101). The Cheyennes carved their ceremonial root digger for the Sundance from this wood (Grinnell 1972:2:171; Hart 1981:13). The Lakotas carved their ceremonial root digger for the Sundance from this wood (Grinnell 1972:2:60), and they used the knots of the wood to shape bowls in which medicines were mixed ceremonially and special feast foods were served (Grinnell 1972:1:171; Hart 1981:13). The Lakotas carved their grass dance whistles from box elder wood (Densmore 1918:471), and they also made wooden plates out of this wood for use in the Pte san lowampi (Flet-cher 1883c: 266). This tree is frequently mentioned in the oral traditions of the Arikaras (Gilmore 1987:119-125).

Anacardiaceae
The Cashew Family

Two shrubs in the cashew family, skunkbush and smooth sumac, were widely used by the tribal nations of the Plains for multiple medicinal and ceremonial purposes, and they were also favored for food and medicinal uses by European Americans who settled in the region (Kindscher 1987:190-94, 1992:182-88). Both shrubs range widely in the environs of the Black Hills (Johnson and Larson 1999:238,240). Notwithstanding its poisonous toxins, another member of the cashew family, poison ivy, has reported uses.

Rhus aromatica
[skunkbush]

Skunkbush, a.k.a. squawberry or stinking hazel, is widespread throughout the northern and central Plains (Kindscher 1987:191-92).

Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972: 2:180; Hart 1981:14)
ho a to’ o nuts [smoke issues]
alternate: ho?atoono?estse

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:524)
datsiv [no translation given]

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:39)
dtie-ai-pa-yee- go [bitter red berry]
alternate: i’a ‘npe-a’ [no translation provided]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:126; Rogers 1980:32)
canun ‘kemna [wood smells of feces]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:48)
cede.kose. [bitterseed]

Habitat: In the Black Hills, skunkbush is located from the low elevation grasslands to the mid elevation limestone meadows where it appears in open locations or at the base of ponderosa pines, including at Wind Cave National Park (Larson and Johnson 1999: 482; Pisarowicz 2001j:1).

Uses: Skunkbush was used for a wide variety of different purposes by the tribal nations who lived and traveled within range of the Black Hills.

[food] The fruit was eaten fresh and cooked, or dried for later use by the Kiowas and Plains Apaches (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 39; Jordan 1965:48). In fact, the Kiowas considered skunkbush fruit to be one of their ancient foods (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40, 72). The Plains Apaches used the berries in their green stage
for a sauce, and in their orange stage, the Utes mixed them with grass seeds to make a food called "tattie." (Albers and Lowry 1995:56). Other tribal nations from the Black Hills region do not appear to have consumed skunkbush berries as a regular part of their diet, but they were probably taken opportunistically.

[medicinal] Many tribes, however, relied on skunkbush for medicinal preparations. The Cheyennes boiled the leaves in decoctions to treat edema and headcolds; they chewed the fruits to treat toothaches and to protect the hands from being scalded in hot water (Hart 1981: 14, 40). The Comanche also used the plant to treat colds (Carlson and Jones 1939:524, 534), while the Kiowas relied on it to doctor influenza and stomach ailments (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40).

[veterinary] The Cheyennes treated their racehorses with a remedy made from skunkbush to prevent them from getting tired and also to promote urination (Hart 1981:14).

[art & manufacture] Skunkbush also had a variety of manufacturing uses: the stems and shoots for basketry, the roots for a yellow dye, the wood for making bows, and the leaves for tanning processes (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40; Nickerson 1966:48; Kind-scher 1987:192). The Lakotas used skunk-bush berries for making red dyes (Lyford 1940: 42).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Lakotas added the leaves to their tobacco mixtures (Buechel 1970:126; Lewis, T. 1990:47), and the Cheyennes, Kiowas, and Plains Apaches did so as well (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40; Jordan 1965:128; Grinnell 1972:2:180; Hart 1981:14). The Ta’aipeko, one of the Kiowas' six ceremonial societies, is reputedly named after the berry of this plant (Vestal and Schultes 1939:40).

**Rhus glabra**

[smooth sumac]

Also called lemonade sumac, since its berries are often used to make a cooling beverage, this plant is widely found in the northern and central Plains (Kindscher 1987: 190-194, 1992:182-188).

**Names:**


Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:524) dimeyov [no translation given]

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:39) maw-kho-la [tobacco mixture]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:127; Rogers 1980:33) canzi [yellow wood]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:128) ikasci.de [mix with something]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:47) mi bdi hi [no translation provided]

**Habitat:** This shrub is commonly located in upland prairies, thickets, and pastures or bordering fences, roads, and woodlands at low to mid elevations in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:482). It grows at Wind Cave National Park.

**Uses:** Smooth sumac played important medicinal and ceremonial roles in the cultures of the tribal nations who lived around the Black Hills.

[food] Tribal nations outside the Black Hills region are reported to have made a tea from the fruit and flowers (Kindscher 1987:92), but this has not been documented for local tribes. Comanche children ate the fruits, however (Carlson and Jones 1939: 524).

[medicinal] The Poncas boiled the fruits to stop postpartum hemorrhaging in women, they used the root in a diuretic decoction, and they crushed the leaves to make a poultice to treat wounds and skin irritations (Gilmore, 1919:48). They also combined the fruits and root in a remedy for skin sores (Kindscher 1992:184). The plant is also re-reported to be a herbal remedy in European American folk
[art & manufacture] The manufacturing uses of this plant were similar to skunkbush (Kindscher 1987:192). The Kiowas, for one, used roots dug during the spring to make a yellow-orange dye (Vestal and Schultes 1939;39).

[symbolic & ceremonial] When the leaves turn red, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, Co-manches, Plains Apaches, Kiowas, and Poncas were all reported to pick and dry them for their tobacco mixtures (Gilmore 1913b:367, 919:47; Carlson and Jones 1939: 524; Vestal and Schultes 1939:39; Jordan 1965:128; Buechel 1970:127; Hart 1981: 14). The Kiowas also smoked the leaves for their purifying effects, which were believed to be effective in the treatment of tuberculosis (Vestal and Stanley 1939: 38).

**Taxicodendron rybergii**

[poison ivy]

This well-known and toxic shrub is widely distributed throughout the northern and central Plains (Johnson and Larson 1999: 240).

**Names:**

- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970:586; Rogers 1980:33)
  - wikoskat tape’juta [medicine for women’s disease]

- **Ponca** (Gilmore 1913b:335)
  - hthi wathe [to make sore]

**Habitat:** It ranges from low to mid elevations in the Black Hills, where it is frequently sighted in rock outcrops, woodland mar-gins, deciduous drainages, and ponderosa pine forests (Larson and Johnson 1999:484). It is identified with a variety of habitats at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:1, 2001i:1, 2001j:1).

**Uses:** Since its resin is highly irritating to human skin, the plant is generally avoided.

[medicinal] Even though Reverend Eugene Buechel (1970:586) wrote that the plant has no medicinal value, its name does suggest that the root may have been used by the Lakotas to treat venereal disease in women. That this may have been the case is suggested by the Kiowas’ use of the plant; they rubbed it over the surface of boils, skin eruptions, and other types of running or non-healing sores. Dermatitis followed the application, but when it disappeared, the sores were healed (Vestal and Schultes 1939:39).

**Asteraceae**

**Aster Family**

Several species from this family, including various sagebrushes, rabbit brush, and broom snakeweed, were important to the tribal nations of the region.

**Artemisia spp.**

[sagebrush]

As noted in regards to the non-woody varieties of *artemisia*, it is not always clear how to gloss species in this genre with the varieties of names typically associated with them in American Indian botanical nomenclatures. *A. tridentata* [silver sage] for example, is often reported in the same ceremonial contexts as the non-woody variety, *A. ludoviciana*, while *A. filifolia* is often used interchangeably with the non-woody variety, *A. frigida*. The two woody varieties in the Black Hills, *A. cana* [silver sage] and *A. tridentata*, are found predominately in the drier western and southwestern areas of the Hills. Neither of these varieties is found at Wind Cave National
Park. However, *A. filifolia* or sand sagebrush, not reported for the Black Hills, is found in rangelands in the southwestern parts of South Dakota often in great abundance locally (Johnson and Larson 1999:242), and it is present at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001i:3).

**Names:**

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:55)

*h-taig-h-gai* [no translation]

*A. filifolia*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970: 439, 587; Rogers 1980: 35-36)

*peji hota tanka* [big grey leaf]

*A. tridentata*

*peji hota toto* [grey blue leaf]

*A. cana*

*peji hota swula* [small grey herb]

*A. filifolia* and *A. frigida*

alternate: *winyan tapeji‘ hota* [woman’s grey leaf]

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:140)

^ eldisgo.dedica.hi [big sage]

**Habitat:** *A. cana* is found in the foothills and valleys of the Black Hills, primarily in the southwestern portions of the region (Larson and Johnson 1999: 484). *A. tridentatata* is the much more common and wide-ly distributed species of sagebrush, and while it is frequent on the western slopes of the Hills, it is uncommon in the east (Larson and Johnson 1999:486).

**Uses:** Clearly, these varieties of sage were much more important to tribes who lived on the western side of the Black Hills, with much less information on their uses by tribes who lived and traveled in the east.

[**food**] The Lakotas ate *A. tridentatata* seeds raw or dried and pounded them into a meal (Rogers 1980:49).

[**medicinal**] *A. tridentata* was also used as a medicine among the Lakotas. Although Rev. Eugene Buechel (1970:439) did not report its specific applications, modern Lakota medicine men told Thomas Lewis (1990:135) that it was brewed in teas for earaches, respiratory complaints, diarrhea, and stomachaches.

*A. filifolia* is reported to be the sage the Lakotas identified as “women’s medicine,” which was used to treat irregular menstruation. This sage and *A. cana* were used to cleanse women after their period (Gilmore 1913b:369-370; Buechel 1970:587). The Kiowas made a decoction of *A. filifolia* to treat indigestion, flatulence, biliousness, and intestinal worms, and they also treated scalp diseases with it (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 55).

[**cosmetic & hygienic**] The Kiowas employed *A. filifolia* to dry their hands and as a “toilet paper,” and the Plains Apaches did the same (Vestal and Schultes 1939:55; Jordan 1965:140). The Lakotas use *A. cana* and *A. tridentata* to freshen the air in their homes (Kemnitzer 1970: 64).

[**art & manufacture**] Modern Lakota hunters rub silver sage on traps, guns, and themselves to disguise their own scent (Kemnitzer 1970: 64).

[**fuel**] Woody varieties of sage were pro-bably an important source of fuel for many of the tribal nations who lived in the high altitude deserts and steppes west of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 486).

[**symbolic & ceremonial**] *A. tridentata* is considered a potent purifier for many ceremonial activities among the Lakotas. Like cedar, sage does not die off in the winter, a fact noted in some discussions of the ceremonial roles it plays among the Lakotas (Kemnitzer 1970:65). It is very important in *Yuwipi* ceremonies, where, among its many different roles, it covers the floor in the sacred spot the ceremony is performed, it functions as a plug for the pipe, it is attached to the knots of thongs that tie up the medi-cine man, and it is placed on the water dish and on the kettle of dog soup (Kemnitzer 1970:64). This variety of sage is also spread on the floor of a sweat lodge, and it is used in the Sun Dance to fill the
orifices of the buffalo skull, to plug the pipes of dancers, and as a medicine to heal the wounds of those who make sacrifices (Kemnitizer 1970:65).

_Ericameria/Chrysothamnus nauseosus_  
**[rubber rabbitbrush]**

Rabbitbrush is a common plant in areas west of the Missouri River where it typically grows in dry rangelands (Kindscher 1992: 233-233; Johnson and Larson 1999:242).

**Names:**

_Cheyenne_ (Grinnell 1972:2:187; Hart 1981:20)  
_o’iv is se’ e yo_ [scabby medicine]  
alternate: _me?qeshkaatseh?estse_ [hairy plant]

_Lakota_ (Buechel 1970:439; Rogers 1980:36)  
_peji hota sicamana_ [bad smelling grey grass]

**Habitat:** Rabbitbrush is also more abundant on the western side of Hills where it is frequent in dry grassland and foothill localities (Larson and Johnson 1999:486).

**Uses:** Many of the uses associated with rabbitbrush are reported for tribal nations whose historic territorial ranges extended into areas west of the Black Hills

[food] The Lakotas pounded the roots to extract a black colored juice that was used as a chewing gum (Standing Bear 1988:101).

[medicinal] The Cheyennes prepared the leaves and stems in a decoction to treat skin sores, including those associated with smallpox, and they also burnt the leaves and branches on box elder wood to treat nightmares (Grinnell 1972:2:187; Hart 1981: 20).

_Gutierrezia sarothrae_  
**[broom snakeweed]**

In South Dakota, this plant typically grows in the western part of the state where it is found in habitats associated with western wheatgrass, big sagebrush, and short grasses (Johnson and Larson 1999:246). It grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:3).

**Names:**

_Comanche_ (Carlson and Jones 1939:522)  
sanaweha [no translation given]

_Lakota_ (Buechel 1970:440; Rogers 1980:37)  
_peji zizi_ [yellow grass]

_Plains Apache_ (Jordan 1965:65)  
bekozo.se [broom]  
alternate: ‘o’xe hac ‘a’ [grass burns quickly]

**Habitat:** Mostly found at lower elevations in sagebrush-grassland, mahogany shrub-land, open pine woodland, and open grass-land. It is widespread in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:488).

**Uses:** Apart from its use in making brooms, broom snakeweed was used as a medicine for treating ailments in humans and animals (Kindscher 1992: 251-252).

[medicinal] The Lakotas boiled the entire plant in a tea used for coughing and colds, and they also applied it as a remedy for dizziness (Buechel 1970: 440). Plains Apaches boiled the tops of mature plants in a tea to treat colds and respiratory conditions, and also as an external remedy for skin rashes and fungus (Jordan 1965:65-66). Colds were treated with this plant as well by the Comanches (Carlson and Jones 1939: 522). The Crows treated kidney problems with a tea made from the flowers, they produced a steam infusion to doctor sinus inflections, and they applied a liquid solution to swellings (Kindscher 1992:251).

[veterinary] Lakotas used the plant in a remedy to treat diarrhea in horses (Gilmore 1913b:368; 1919:133).

[art & manufacture] Its English name is derived from the popular use of its stems for making brooms (Kindscher 1992:251). Two tribes who once lived in the Black Hills area,
the Comanches (Carlson and Jones 1939:522) and Plains Apaches (Jordan 1965 1965:65), are reported to have done so too.

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Plains Apaches occasionally used this plant to sprinkle water on the fire in a sweat lodge (Jordan 1965: 66), and the Lakotas included it in one of the “war medicines” they rubbed on their body before battle (Densmore 1918: 350).

**Berberidaceae**

**The Barberry Family**

Only one species from this family is reported in the Black Hills, and its names and uses have been documented for only a few of the tribes in the general area.

**Mahonia/Berberis repens**

[Oregon grape or creeping barberry]

This is a plant that reaches its easternmost extension in the forested and high elevation landscapes of the Black Hills.

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:15)

mehne-menotse [spicy berries]

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939;28)

‘kawadl-shap-pa-a [no translation given]

**Habitat:** The Oregon grape is most commonly located along forested hillsides and canyons over the entire range of the Black Hills from the foothills to the high limestone plateau (Larson and Johnson 1999:488).

**Uses:** Uses for Oregon grape are much more common for tribal nations who lived and traveled in regions to the south and west of the Black Hills.

**[medicinal]** The Kiowas knew the plant but made no use of it (Vestal and Schultes 1939;28). The Cheyennes, on the other hand, used its roots as a medicine for un-specified purposes (Hart 1981:15). In fact, Larson and Johnson (1999: 488) report that the root contains an antimicrobial, which is effective in treating infections, liver dis-orders, and digestive ailments.

**Betulaceae**

**The Birch Family**

Several species in this family are named in native nomenclatures, but only two are reported to have any uses.

**Betula spp.**

[birch]

Three varieties of birch are located in the Black Hills, *B. occidentalis* [water birch], *B. minor/papyrifera* [dwarf water or paper birch], and *B. pumila* [bog birch]. The one tribal name found in the literature is generic to the family and does not distinguish between species. Most of the uses connected with it come from tribal nations outside the region.

**Names:**

Lakota (Buechel 1970:116)

*canha’san* [whitish bark tree]

*B. occidentalis* also applies to maple.

**Habitat:** The most common species in the Black Hills is *B. occidentalis*, which is found at mid elevations in moist locations along streams, hillsides, and boggy sites. *B. papyrifera* is also common in the area, and it can be found at lower elevations in canyons, cool drainages, and in the transitions be-tween forest and meadow (Larson and John-son 1999: 490-491). This is the only one noted for Wind Cave National Park (Pisa-rowicz 2001f:1). The least common, *B. pumila*, is restricted to higher elevation bog-gy sites in the central and northern Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 490-492).

**Uses:** The tribes in the Black Hills region appear to have had little use for birch trees, since there is not much information in ethnobotanical sources. Although tribes, such
as the Cheyennes, recognized them (Grinnell 1972:2:212, 245) and probably had important uses for them in their former Great Lakes homelands, many of their functions were now performed with hide.

[food] The Lakotas used the same name for the sugar maple tree, and this suggests that they may have tapped birch trees for their sap. This was a common practice among Numic speaking peoples in the Intermountain West (Albers and Lowry 1995:34).

[art & manufacture] The Arapahos used the bark to make an orange dye (Nickerson 1966:47).

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**Corylus cornuta**  
**[beaked hazelnut]**

The better-known *C. Americana* is reported in the Black Hills, but it is rare (Larson and Johnson 1999:492). The nuts of the hazel species are hard to collect in the plains region, not only because they bear less fruit, but also because they are a favorite source of food for birds and other small animals (Kindscher 1992:99).

**Names:**

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:508)  
*u’ta* [hazelnut, acorn]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:74)  
zhinga-hi [hazel bush]

**Habitat:** This tree is located outside the environs of Wind Cave National Park from low to high elevations in the northern and central portions of the Hills at the edge of meadows and moist woodlands (Larson and Johnson 1999:492). In 1875, however, Wal-ter Jenney (in Newton and Jenny 1880: 316) reported that they grew in extensive patches in the southeastern Hills.

**Uses:** Other than the opportunistic collection of the tree’s nuts, there are no other reported uses for this tree among the tribal nations who lived in the vicinity of the Black Hills.

[food] Notwithstanding the difficulties in collecting them, Lakotas and Poncas ate hazel nuts raw or pounded them into a meal for thickening soups (Gilmore 1919:74). In times of food scarcity, they became an important emergency food especially during the winter months (Hassrick 1964:156, 180).

**Ostrya virginiana**  
**[ironwood]**

Also known as hop hornbeam, this member of the birch family is located mainly in the northern and eastern sections of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:494). The Lakotas called ironwood *ispán spanheca* [to make something soft by using for pounding], or, alternatively, *can maza* [ironwood]. They are the only Native group with documented applications for this plant. The blossoms were applied in face paint, and the wood went into the construction of bows (Buechel 1970: 233). The Poncas and Omahas called it *he’tazhonta* (Fletcher and La Flesche 1972:106).

**Caprifoliaceae**  
**The Honeysuckle Family**

Five species from this family have been identified with names and uses in ethnobotanical sources, with coralberries and snowberries being the most important to local tribes.

**Lonicera spp.**  
**[honeysuckle]**

Two species of honeysuckle are reported in the Black Hills, *L. dioica* [limber honey-suckle] and *L. tartarica* [Tartarian honey-suckle] (Larson and Johnson 1999:494-96). Neither of these varieties is very common in the Black
Hills. *L. dioica* is found in moist locations in the northern and central Hills at low to mid elevations, while *L. tartarica*, which was introduced to the area from Eurasia, is typically found near towns at low elevations. Its Lakota name is *cañis̲kuye* [sweetened wood], which refers to *L. dioica* (Buechel 1970:118). No uses have been reported for either variety among the tribal nations who lived and traveled in the region of the Black Hills, despite the Lakota’s suggestive name for the plant.

**Sambucus racemosa**  
*[stinking elderberry]*

This particular species of elderberry is commonly associated with the eastern wood-lands. Other species, however, are widely found in the moist, mountainous locations of the greater Northwest where they were an important food for Native populations (Kindscher 1987: 249-250).

**Names:**

**Dakota** (Gilmore 1919:115)  
*canputa’hū* [upper lip skin tree]  
*S. Canadensis* but may include this variety too.

*Note:* There is no reference to elderberry in Buechel’s dictionary (1970), which suggests that this berry may have been consumed primarily by Dakotas east of the Missouri River.

**Poncas** (Gilmore 1919:115)  
*Wagathahashka* [elder bush]

**Habitat:** This plant frequently appears in the central and northern Black Hills at mid to high elevations in moist locations (Larson and Johnson 1999:496). It is found in ravine environments at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001:j: 1).

**Uses:** Elderberries were used mostly as a food by native peoples in the Plains region.  

[food] Larson and Johnson (1999: 496) note that this particular elderberry is poisonous if eaten in large quantities. Melvin Gilmore (1919: 115) reports that the Dakotas and the Poncas ate elderberries fresh; these two tribes also soaked their blossoms in hot water to make a pleasant tasting beverage. The Kiowas are also reported to have been fond of elderberries (Vestal and Schultes 1939:52).

**Symphoricarpos spp.**  
* [snowberry]

Two *Symphoricarpos* species are located in the Black Hills, white snowberry, *S. albus*, and western snowberry, *S.occidentalis*. Both are also widely distributed in areas adjacent to the Hills (Johnson and Larson 1999:246).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Hart 1981:17)  
mehme-menotse [spicy berries]  
probably refers to *S. occidentalis*

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:52)  
gu-la-ko-kee-a [no translation given]  
*S. occidentalis*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:399,575,659; Rogers 1980:43 )  
on’sunk’nasapi [stem to hunt dogs with]  
*S. occidentalis*  
Alternate: zuzeca tawote [snake food]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:116)  
*Inshtogahte-hi* [eye lotion plant]  
*S. occidentalis*

**Habitat:** *S. albus* is a very common under-story in the forests of the central and northern Black Hills from low to high elevations, while *S. occidentalis* is more widely distributed in the Hills at low to mid elevations in meadows and foothill grasslands (Larson and Johnson 1999: 498). Both species grow at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001:h:2, 2001:j: 1).

**Uses:** Larson and Johnson (1999:498) re-port that the two species had similar uses for native populations in the area, and some of these correspond with those documented for tribes in regions further west (Kindscher 1992:283-284).

[food] The Hidatsas ate snowberries fresh and collected them during the late winter and early
spring from the last season’s growth (Nickel 1974:74).

**[medicinal]** The Lakotas and Poncas steep-ed snowberry leaves to make a remedy for weak or inflamed eyes (Gilmore 1913b: 367; 1919:116). According to William Schweigman (in Lewis, T. 1990: 137), a Lakota healer, the plant was also relied on to treat sexual disorders in women. The Hidatsas used the bark in a decoction to treat snow blindness (Nickel 1974:74). Larson and Johnson (1999: 498) suggest that all parts of plant were employed in dressing wounds, but they do not give the tribal attributions for this.

**[art & manufacture]** When playing, La-kota boys are said to have made arrows from the stems of *S. occidentalis* to shoot at dogs (Buechel 1970:399). Hidatsa women made brooms, mattresses, and snares for prairie chickens from the stems of this plant (Nickel 1974:74), and the Lakotas made a red dye from its berries (Hassrick 1964:191).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Cheyennes placed branches of *S. occidentalis* at the four directions of their Sun Dance altar (Grinnell 1972:2:259; Hart 1981:17).

**Virbunum lentago**

**[nannyberry]**

This tree is frequently found in moist habi-tats at low to mid elevations in the central and northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 500). It also grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2002c:1). The Lakota name for it is *mma-hu* [our translation: swollen stem] (Gilmore 1919: 115) and in Ponca (Gilmore 1919:115) *nan-shaman* [no translation given]. The Hidatsas are known to have gathered large quantities of the fruits in season (Nickel 1974:75), but, according to Melvin Gilmore (1919:115), other tribes took them opportunistically.

**Virbunum opulus**

**[highbush cranberry]**

Restricted to wet habitats in the northern Black Hills, the berries are gathered by European Americans for flavoring jelly. European Americans also processed the bark for a medicinal tea to diminish cramps, and the flowers were mixed in a decoction for the treatment of skin conditions (Larson and Johnson 1999:500). No names have been found for this plant in native languages, nor have any uses been reported for it among the tribal nations who used the Hills in historic times.

**Celastraceae**

**The Staff Tree Family**

Only one species in this family, *Celastrus scandens* [American Bittersweet], is located in the Black Hills. It is a very common plant of the eastern deciduous forests, which extend into the prairie states through wood-ed river and stream valleys. It is frequent in the low elevation canyons on the northern, eastern, and southern sides of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 502). The Lakotas knew it as *wohlokapi sni pejuta* [medicine to ward off wounds/our transla-tion]. They believed that when the red roots are chewed and smeared on the body, a person would be protected from being wounded (Buechel 1970:599).

**Chenopodiaceae**

**The Goosefoot Family**

The only species from this family listed for the Black Hills, greasewood, is rare in its occur-rance. It has important uses among the Cheyennes. Two species, not reported for the Hills but common in the general region, were also named and/or used by local tribal nations.
**Atriplex canescens**
[fourwing saltbrush]

Although not reported specifically for the Black Hills, saltbrush is very common in the regions surrounding the Hills (Johnson and Larson 1999: 248). The Lakotas called it *pangi sasa* [red tuber] or alternatively, *tinpsinla sasa* [red turnip], but there are no references on how it might have been used if at all (Buechel 1970:430,489). The Arapa-hos and Shoshones applied all parts of the plant in the manufacture of a yellow dye (Nickerson 1966:47).

**Krascheninnikovia lanata**
[winterfat]

Winterfat appears occasionally in the mixed grass prairies of the Black Hills’ southern and western foothills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 502). In Cheyenne, winterfat is called *hetanevanós*, and it is the man sage used in the Sun Dance and other sacred ceremonies (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:52).

**Sarcobatus vermiculatus**
[greasewood]

This is another plant that grows occasionally in western South Dakota but is rare in the Black Hills (Johnson and Larson 1999:250). The Cheyennes are the only group reported to have named and used it. They knew it as *ve?ohke-vano?e* [bitter sage], and they ap-plied it for variety of different purposes (Hart 1981:17). In one medicinal applica-tion, the Cheyennes sharpened the ends of greasewood sticks for puncturing instru-ments to draw blood, and they also fash-ioned the sticks into tools to deliver acupuncture-like piercings. They also treat-ed horse sprains and bruises with this wood (Hart 1981:17). Sticks of greasewood are used for making the man design upon which Sun Dancers dance and for hanging Sun Dance whistles. In addition, they serve as tampers for tobacco pipes and as the upright twirling sticks for making fires. Finally, the Cheyennes made arrow-shafts from grease-wood (Hart 1981:17).

**Cornaceae**
The Dogwood Family

The only woody species from this family located in the Black Hills, Redosier dog-wood, remains very important to tribal nations in the region.

**Cornus sericea** *(C. Stolonifera)*
[redosier dogwood]

Different varieties of dogwood were widely used by the tribal nations of the Plains as an ingredient in tobacco mixtures smoked on ceremonial occasions (Kindscher 1987:193). This includes the variety reported for the Black Hills.

Names:

*ma? kom e his* [red bark]
*C. sericea*
alternates: *a?oome-hesono ma?koome-hesono hoatomoaneonoz*

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:521)
*priobi* [no translation given]

Kiowa [Vestal and Schultes 1939:46]
*zaikh-’kon-a* [arrow wood]
alternates: *gwai-gee-ap-aip* [no translation given]
*sek’ an’ kan* [no translation provided]

Lakota (Buechel 1970: 123; Rogers 1980: 44)
*can?sa* [red wood]
but probably referred originally to *C. anomum*
*can?sa h?aka* [real or original wood]
*C. sericea* (considered the best for smoking)
Plains Apache (Jordan 1965: 63)
kahkas [arrow branch]
C. dromondii

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:108)
ninigahi [to mix for the pipe]
C. anomum
ninighai hte [the real or original]
C. sericea

Habitat: Commonly found over the entire Black Hills, dogwood favors moist locations along stream banks, lake shores, and springs (Larson and Johnson 1999: 504). It also appears at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001b:1).

Uses: Tribes throughout the area employed the stems and bark of this plant.

[food] The Hidatsas are the only tribal nation in the region of the Black Hills that are reported to have eaten the berries of this shrub on a regular basis (Nickel 1974:61).

[medicinal] The Cheyennes mix the berries of this plant with chokecherries and bear-berry to make a medicine called sepo that is used to treat a variety of ailments (White-man in Schwartz 1988: 53).

[art & manufacture] The Cheyennes wove the root stems in baskets, which they used for playing a popular seed game (Grinnell 1972:1:246), and the Crows employed it in making drumsticks, tipi stakes, tipi pins, and forks for sweatlodge racks (Hart 1992: 20). The Plains Apaches relied on dogwood for manufacturing their arrow shafts, and they also used it to make backrests and drum-sticks (Jordan 1965:63-64). The Kiowas, Cheyennes, and Comanches also manufactured their arrowshafts out of dogwood (Carlson and Jones 1939: 521; Vestal and Schultes 1939:46; Hart 1981:23).


**Cupressaceae**
**The Cypress Family**

Three species in this family are reported in the Black Hills, and all of them are associated with medicinal uses in European American and American Indian cultures.

*Juniperus communis*
[common juniper]

This is a common understory plant in pine and spruce forests throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:504), and it is present at higher elevations in Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001a:1). The Cheyennes named it heshkove-shestoto?e [thorny], and they called J. sibirica, another low growing species, wi’ iv tsis’ to to [ravine coniferous tree] (Grinnell 1972:2: 169; Hart 1981:4). European Americans often grind the berries of the common juniper to flavor meat (Larson and Johnson 1999). The common juniper is a popular folk remedy among European Americans for menstrual ailments, or to expel afterbirth, to treat ulcers, and to cure diarrhea (Kindscher 1992:133-34). Similar uses have also been reported for the Utes and
other tribal nations west of the Black Hills (Albers and Lowry 1995: 44). The Cheyennes made a tea from *J. sibirica* to treat coughs and sore throat (Grinnell 1972:2:169-70), but nothing is reported for *J. communis*.

### *Juniperus horizontalis* [creeping juniper]

This species of juniper is occasionally found in the lower elevation hillsides and open woods of the northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 506). The Cheyennes knew it as *evoennesheenose*-*shestote* [no translation given], and they treated coughs and tickling sensations in the throat with a medicine tea brewed from its boughs (Hart 1981: 4). The Hidatsas are the only other tribal nation for whom there is a report of a medicinal use of this juniper species (Nickel 1974:67).

### *Juniperus scopulorum* [Rocky Mountain juniper]

This and the related red cedar, *J. virginiana*, are considered sacred to tribes throughout the northern Plains. In the southeastern parts of the Black Hills, the two varieties of cedar hybridize (Larson and Johnson 1999: 506).

#### Names:

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:170; Hart 1981: 4)

*wi'-iv tis' to to’* [a tall tree]

*J. scopulorum*

alternate: *ve*eve*-shestote* [e]

**Comanche** [Carlson and Jones 1939:522]

*ekawai: pv* [no translation]

**Kiowa** [Vestal and Schultes 1939: 13]

*’ko-kee-ad-la; ahi’n* [peculiar]

*J. virginiana*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970: 192; Rogers 1980: 25)

*hante* (cedar)

*J. scopulorum*

*hantesa* (red cedar)

*J. virginiana*

#### Habitat:
The Rocky Mountain juniper is found over the entire Black Hills, mostly at lower elevations in transitional zones be-tween ponderosa pine and prairie or sagebrush steppe. Red cedar is confined to the southeastern regions of the Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999). Only the Rocky Moun-tain juniper is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001f: 1).

#### Uses:
The tribal nations of the northern Plains and neighboring regions had myriad uses for cedar, considering it especially beneficial for ceremonial purification and warding off evil influences. Indeed, Louis Kemnitzer (1970:66) notes that the Lakotas trade their own local cedar for varieties procured by tribal nations living in other parts of the United States and Canada, and they compare differences in their odorous qualities.

**[food]** The Utes, Comanches, and other Numic speaking tribes of the Intermountain West ate the berries of this tree (Carlson and Jones 1939:522; Albers and Lowry 1995: 65). The Lakotas did so as well but only on an occasional basis.

**[medicinal]** The Dakotas and the Lakotas made a tea from the leaves and berries that was administered for coughs, fevers, chest congestion, and pneumonia (Gilmore 1919: 63; Kemnitzer 1970:66; Standing Bear 1988:96, 102), and the Arikaras, Cheyennes, Crows, Kiowas, and Utes did so too (Vestal and Schultes 1939:13; Grinnell 1971:2:170; Hart 1981:5; 1992:37; Albers and Lowry 1995:65). The Lakotas also burnt the twigs in a smoke treatment for colds (Gilmore 1919:63; Kemnitzer 1970:66), and they brewed the
seeds in a tea for gastrointestinal disorders (Feraca 1998:78). According to John Moore (1974a:171), the Cheyennes used green cedar berries for diseases relating to the teeth and eyes and red cedar berries for blood-related illnesses. They made a va-porizer from the leaves for treating colds and fever (Hart 1981:5), and they burnt the twigs to treat hyperactivity (Grinnell 1972: 2:170; Hart 1981:5). In addition, the Chey-ennes made a tea from cedar to quicken delivery in childbirth (Grinnell 1972:2: 170). The Crows steeped it in a tea for removing the afterbirth, to check diarrhea, and to stop nosebleeds (Hart 1992:36). The Kiowas chewed the berries as a treatment for canker sores (Vestal and Schultes 1939:13), and the Plains Apaches made a tea for treating hemorrhages and the after pains associated with childbirth (Jordan 1965:118). The Hidatsas employed it as well, but the specific medical applications remain un-identified (Nickel 1974: 66). Long asso-ciated with herbal traditions in Europe, it is not surprising that the cedar was widely used by early European American settlers in their folk remedies (Hart 1992:36; Tilford 1997:84).

[veterinary] The Lakotas brewed the ber-ries and twigs in a tea to treat coughs in horses (Gilmore 1919:63).


[symbolic & ceremonial] Considered highly sacred, the twigs are burnt as a smu-dge for spiritual purification in many healing and religious ceremonies among all tribes in the northern Plains (Gilmore 1919:64; Carl-son and Schultes 1939: 522; Vestal and Schultes 1939:13; Walker 1980:93; Hart 1992:36; Kindscher 1992:132). The Lakotas placed cedar boughs on tipi poles to ward off lightning (Gilmore 1919:64; Standing Bear 1988:96-97), and they made a wacilya [incense] out of cedar whenever they peti-tioned the thunders who favored the smell of this smoke (Walker 1980:77). The Chey-ennes also burned cedar incense to ward off lightning and thunder (Hart 1981: 4). The Lakotas chewed a medicine made from the boughs to put on scalp locks (Walker 1980:93), and the Heyoka burned cedar in their ceremonial encounters with the thun-ders (Walker 1980:155). Today, Lakotas use cedar in their Yawipi ceremonies, in the meetings of the Native American Church, during Christian church services, and many keep it in their homes to attract luck and spiritual blessings (Kemnitzer 1970: 66-67). The Cheyennes also burned cedar incense to ward off lightning and thunder (Hart 1981:4), and they associated the tree’s green berries with the green colored hailstones that fall during summer storms (Moore, J. 1974a:171). For the Arikaras, Gilmore (1987:180) lists cedar as one of three sacred trees whose chief pur-pose was to drive out evil influences. Cedar figures predominately in Arikara origin stories; it is the great protector and a ritual was held annually to show gratitude to the grandmother cedar. In this ritual, pasque-flowers and baby moccasins were hung on a cedar tree to insure health and long life (Gilmore 1987:186-87). This was another very important plant for the Plains Apaches, who burnt it as an incense and fumigant in most of their ceremonies; it was believed to ward off the negative influences of any spirit or ghost who might intend to bring harm to people (Jordan 1965:113-117).
Elaeagnaceae  
The Oleaster Family

Two members of this family are reported in the Black Hills. The Russian olive, *Elaeagnus angustifolia*, was introduced from Europe as a shade tree. It is now considered a troublesome predator in the riparian environments of the West. No names or uses for this tree have been reported in the ethno-botanical literature. The other member of the family, the buffaloberry (*Shepherdia*), however, is very important to the tribal nations of the region.

Shepherdia spp.  
[buffaloberry or rabbitberry]

Two buffaloberry a.k.a. rabbitberry species are located in the Black Hills, *S. argentea* (Silver) and *S. canadensis* (Russet or Canadian). Local tribes probably gathered both species, even though many reports refer to the Russet variety. Silver buffaloberry is found throughout the western portions of South Dakota and neighboring states (John-son and Larson 1999:254).

Names:

Arapaho (Nickerson 1966:49)  
auch-ha-haybena  [no translation given]

Arikara (Gilmore 1987: 199)  
nata-ra-kapachis  [no translation provided]

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2-181; Hart 1981:25)  
mat’ si-ta-si’mins  [red hearted]  
alternate: ma? ke-meniotse  [red berries]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:333-334; Rogers 1980: 44)  
masin’capute  [rabbit lip tree]  
*S. argentea*

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:106)  
zhon-hoje-wazhide  [no translation provided]

Habitat: Both species of buffaloberry are common in the area. Silver buffaloberry is found on banks above streams and dry drainages in the foothills and grasslands, including locations at Wind Cave National Park, while the Russet variety is located in moist forest or open habitats at mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999:508-510; Pisarowicz 2001j:2).

Uses: Buffaloberries are valued mainly as a source of food, although other uses have been reported for them.


**[art & manufacture]** The Lakotas made a red dye from buffaloberries, and they used the thorns in making awls (Lyford 1940:38, 42).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** Branches for the Cheyennes’ Sun Dance altar were made from the young shoots of this plant (Hart 1981:25). Melvin Gilmore (1987:198-200) recorded a story of how a buffaloberry bush took pity on the Arikaras and showed them how to use its leaves. He also notes that this was one of the bushes where the Arikaras hung the bundles in which an infant’s placenta was wrapped (Gilmore 1930:75).

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**Ericaceae**

**The Heath Family**

All of the species from this family associated with the Black Hills have reported names and/or uses in the ethno-graphic and ethnobotanical literature on the region.

**Arctostaphylos uva-ursi**

**[bearberry or manzita]**

Also called “kinnikinick” or “larb,” bear-berry is not found in open grassland and prairie locations or in many of the river and stream valleys that the tribes of the region typically traveled and inhabited. Consequently, the Black Hills and other higher elevation, wooded locations would have been the only places where Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribal nations would have been able to secure this very important ceremonial plant.

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:183; Hart 1981:25)

no’an-i un ots [to mix]

alternates: no’an-eonotse [mixture leaf]

maʔke-menotse [red berry]

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:520; Rogers 1980:44)

wahkpe canli [tobacco leaf]

**Habitat:** Bearberry is a common under-story at all elevations in ponderosa pine for-ests that grow on granite and limestone soils (Larson and Johnson 1999:510), and it grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisaro-wicz 2001i:2).

**Uses:** Local tribes value bearberry primarily for its medicinal and ceremonial applications.

**[food]** The berries were sometimes consumed as an emergency food since they remain on the bush throughout the winter months. Although tribal nations in western Montana used them as a condiment and boiled them in broth, they do not appear to have had culinary uses for Native peoples who lived in the region of the Black Hills (Hart 1992:41).

**[medicinal]** The Cheyennes made a tea from the stems, leaves, and berries for the treatment of back pain; the tea was also applied as a compress with wetted leaves. The Cheyennes also used the plant as a smudge to treat people who were acting “crazy” (Grinnell 1972:2:183; Hart 1981: 25). The Lakotas put bearberry leaves in a pipe smoke treatment for wounds, and they included it in smudge treatments too (Walker 1980:93; Standing Bear 1988:103). Fools Crow (Mails 1991:165) ground the stems and roots of this plant to treat kidney ailments and back pain. The Crows pul-verized the leaves and made a powder to treat canker sores of the mouth (Hart 1992: 41). European American herbalists rely on this plant in remedies for inflammations of the digestive and urinary tracks (Tilford 1997:86).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** This is one of the most important plants added to Cheyenne tobacco mixtures (Hart 1992:40-41). Bearberry leaves were also the foundation of Lakota tobacco mixtures (Buechel 1970:520; Black

**Vaccinium spp.**

[huckleberry and grouseberry]

*V. membranaceum* [thinleaf or mountain huckleberry] and *V. Scoparium* [grouse-berry or grouse whortleberry] are the two *Vaccinium* species found in the Black Hills. Both of these species typically occur at high elevations in the western United States, and consequently, they are more commonly used by tribal nations living in the Intermountain West than by those who occupied the central regions of the Plains.

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:183; Hart 1982:25)

*V. Scoparium*

alternate: *ma'ke-menotse* [red berry]

Lakota (Riggs 1968:125; Buechel 1970:168; Rogers 1980:44)

*ha'za* [huckleberry]

*winohnin taha'za* [women’s huckleberry]

*wakanksin taha'za* [blackbear’s berry]

*V. membranaceum*

*The last two names are Dakota.

**Habitat:** Mountain huckleberry is not common in the Black Hills, and it is re-stricted to the northern mountain slopes above 5,000 feet in the Lead-Deadwood area. Grouseberry is more widespread, but its also confined to the central and northern portions of the Black Hills where it is found in moist coniferous or mixed forest environments at low elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999: 512).

**Uses:** Of the tribal nations in the region, only the Cheyennes are reported to have used these berries for non-culinary purposes.

[food] Huckleberry is a very important fruit staple for tribes of the Rocky Mountains (Albers and Lowry 1995:34-35). While Plains tribes, including the Cheyennes and Lakotas, no doubt picked these berries opportunistically, they were not a major source of food. They are popular among European Americans who use them in jams, jellies, pies, syrups, and baked goods. Grouseberry is also edible, but its size is small and its yields are low (Larson and Johnson 1999: 512).

[medicinal] The Cheyennes gave children dried and pulverized grouseberries to increase their appetite, and the leaves and stems were mixed in water as a treatment for nausea and loss of appetite (Grinnell 1972: 2:184). European American herbalists apply the leaves in decoctions to reduce blood sugar in diabetes (Tilford 1997:80).


**Fabaceae**

The Legume Family

Two *Amorpha* species are located in the Black Hills, Leadplant and False indigo. Early explorers reported the leadplant, *A. canescens*, in great abundance amidst prairie grasses with good southern exposures. The bacterial nodules on its roots contribute to the cycling of nitrogen in native prairie ecosystems. After European American settlement, it was reduced by heavy grazing (Kindscher 1987:35-36). False Indigo, *A. fruitcosa*, which appears similar in many respects to the leadplant, is less common in the region.

**Names:**

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:521)

*seha'abiv* [no translation given]
Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 31)
khawdl-pa [no translation provided]
A. fruticosa

Lakota (Buechel 1970: 658; Rogers 1980:45)
zintkala tacan [bird’s perch]
A. canescens and A. fruticosa

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:93)
te-huntonhi [buffalo bellow plant]

Habitat: Leadplant is found in the eastern regions of the Black Hills in low to mid elevation prairies where it is closely associated with big and little bluestem grasses, while False indigo is infrequent and restricted to moist stream banks or open woodlands on the eastern and southern perimeters of the Black Hills (Larson and John-son 1999:514). Both plants grow at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:1, 2001j:1).

Uses: Each of these plants had multiple applications among the tribal nations who were reported to have used them.
[food] The Lakotas made a leaf tea from the leadplant for culinary uses (Gilmore 1919: 93).

[medicinal] The Omahas and probably the closely related Poncas dried leadplant leaves and blew them on cuts and open wounds. The twigs were cut and burned as “moxa” on the skin to treat neuralgia and rheumatism (Gilmore 1919: 93).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The Lakotas mixed the crushed leaves of the leadplant with buffalo fat for smoking (Gilmore 1919:93). Joseph Niccollet (in Bray and Bray 1976:117) reported in the late 1830s that this was one of the plants that Dakotas used to attract bison.

[art & manufacture] The Lakotas and other tribes fashioned their arrowshafts from the straight stalks of the leadplant (Buechel 1970:658), and the Kiowas made bedding material from the false indigo (Vestal and Schultes 1939:31).

Fagaceae
The Beech Family

The Bur oak, *Quercus macrocarpa*, is the only tree reported from this family in the Black Hills. It is typically found amidst stands of ponderosa pines and also on sandy loam prairies (Johnson and Larson 1999: 258).

Names:

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:26)
vo?ome-oo?meshe [no translation given]

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:524)
pasapeni [ no translation given]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:508; Rogers 1980:48)
u‘tahu can [acorn tree]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:76)
socilici’e [star brush]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:75)
tashka-hi [no translation given]

Habitat: Bur oak are common at low to mid elevations in the eastern Black Hills along streams and at the edge of meadows (Larson and Johnson 1999: 516). They grow at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001f: 1).

Uses: This tree had important uses as food and medicine for the tribal nations in the region.

[food] Oak acorns were an important food staple of the Lakotas, Comanches, Poncas, and Cheyennes (Gilmore 1919:75; Carlson and Jones 1939:524; Grinnell 1972:1:248). The bitterness of the nuts was extracted through a leaching process (Gilmore 1919: 75). The Lakotas ground the acorns into a meal for soups and mush (Hassrick 1964: 156,180; Brown 1992:12).

[medicinal] Lakotas boiled the bark in a decoction to treat lower intestinal ailments, particularly in children (Gilmore 1919:75).
The Plains Apaches used this and other oaks as a supporting frame for their brush arbors, meat drying racks, and cooking tripods, and oak char-coals were employed in making black pig-ment for painting designs on artifacts (Jord-an 1965:77). The Lakotas made a yellow dye from the decayed bark of the oak (Ly-ford 1940:42).

The Plains Apaches considered all oaks, including bur oak, a good fuel source because they burned well and produced ample coals (Jordan 1965:155). Oak was also used by the Lakotas to fuel their fires (Bordeaux 1929:155).

Grossulariaceae
The Grossularia Family

Ribes spp.
[currants and gooseberries]

The Ribes subfamily includes a great variety of woody plants which bear edible berries that are highly valued by the tribal nations in the region. Six different species of currant are located in the Black Hills, including R. americanum [black currant], R. aureum [golden or buffalo currant], R. cereum [western red or wax currant], R. hirtellum [hairy-stem gooseberry], R. lacustre [swamp or prickly currant], and R. oxyacanthoides [Canadian or northern gooseberry]. R. missouriensis [Missouri gooseberry] is not found in the area, although it is often con-fused with some of the species native to the area (Larson and Johnson 1999:516-517). All of these were mentioned in the journals and reports of early expeditions to the Hills (Newton and Jenny 1880: 316; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974: 61).

Names:

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2;175; Hart 1981:26-27) esko´vi ta si´-mins [thorny heart-shaped berry]
R. setosum*

alternate: hekov-e-hestahtse-menotse [thorny branch berry]
moo e´eta tsi´ [elk heart-shaped]
R. lacustre
mah´ki mins [little berry]
R. cereum
alternate: ma?ke-menotse [red berry]
e hyo´ta si´-mins [yellow heart berry]
R. aureum
alternate: heove-hestahtse-menotse [yellow branch berry]
soh´k o ta si´mins [slender heart-shaped berry]
R. americanum
alternate: heso?xo-hestahtse-menotse [slick branch berry]
Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:524)
uabeku: [no translation given]
Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:29)
awdl-kno-bawg [no translation provided]
R. odoratum

Lakota (Densmore 1918:438; Gilmore 1919:84; Buechel 1970:127,577.814; ; Rogers 1980: 58)
wica gnaska [male frog]
R. aureum
alternates: wica gnaska tonka [large male frog]
wica gnaskahu [male frog stem]
wazi´wica gnaska [pine gooseberry]
R. cereum
mini´wica gnaska [water gooseberry]
R. lacustre
capce´yazala [beaver takes it in its mouth]
R. americanum

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:84)
pezi [female gooseberry]
G. missouriensis
Pezi nuga [male gooseberry]
R. americanum

Habitat: Black currants are occasional along low elevation stream banks and moist ravines (Larson and Johnson 1999:518). Golden currants are common at low ele-vations mainly in foothills near wood bor-ders, fences and in open areas. Swamp cur-antar are infrequent and localized at mid to high elevations in the northern and central Black Hills (Ibid:522); and red currant are frequent in open pine forest and forest openings at all elevations, but most com-monly in the southern Black Hills (Ibid: 520). Hairystem gooseberry is found only occasionally in the Hills along streams and moist forest habitats at mid to high eleva-tions, whereas the Northern gooseberry is frequently
found at all elevations in meadows, canyons, rocky slopes, and open environments under dry and moist soil conditions (Ibid: 520, 522). Only the golden currant is reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001i:1).

**Uses:** All of the tribal nations in the region ate the berries from various species in the *Ribes* subfamily, and many used the bushes for other applications as well (Kindscher 1987:196-98).

**food** One of the numerous berries used as food by tribal nations in the northern Plains. Probably all currants were taken, especially in emergency situations, but the golden currant and black currant were the ones most actively sought after for food. The Lakotas ate many varieties of currants. They dried and packed gooseberries in parfleches and made a mush from them that was reputed to be very tasty (Bordeaux 1929: 132; Hassrick 1964: 179; Standing Bear 1978: 59, 1988: 11-12; Brown 1992:12). The Cheyennes also ate a variety of gooseberry and currant species fresh and in a dried form (Grinnell 1972:2:175; Hart 1981:26-27), and the Kiowas made jellies from them (Vestal and Schultes 1939:29). The Hidatsas ate them fresh and sometimes dried them in mixtures with juneberries (Nickel 1974:72). The Plains Apaches also gathered and ate many different *Ribes* species (Jordan 1965:49). Currants remain popular among European Americans and American Indians too for making jams and jellies, pies, and preserves (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70: 40, 402, 425, 583; Kindscher 1987:196-198).

**medicinal** Black currant roots were used by the Poncas to treat uterine disorders (Gilmore 1919:84). The Kiowas believed that snakes feared this plant and kept away from it, so they employed it as an antidote in their snakebite treatments (Vestal and Schultes 1939:29). The Arapahos took *A. cereum* as an emetic (Nickerson 1966:48). The Sho-shones made a poultice from the inner bark of *R. aureum*. Tribes outside the Black Hills region had many additional medicinal uses for *Ribes* species (Kindscher 1992:275-276).

**cosmetic & hygienic** The Hidatsas mixed the juice of *R. americanus* with clay in a paint that men used for personal adornment (Nickel 1974:72).

**art & manufacture** The Lakotas made arrowshafts from golden currant stems (Densmore 1918:438; Buechel 1970: 577, 589; Standing Bear 1978:20) and so did the Cheyennes (Curtis 1907-30:6:56; Grinnell 1972:1:179).

**Oleaceae**

The Olive Family

*Fraxinus pennsylavanica* [green ash] is the only species from this family reported in the Black Hills. It is an important tree, symbolically and ceremonially, for the tribal nations of the region.

**Names:**

Lakota (Buechel 1970:446; Rogers 1980:52)  
*pse ’htin can* [ash tree, colloquially a pipe]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:155)  
*cildilg čo.ce.* [wood splits easy]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:108)  
*tashnanga-hi* [no translation given]

**Habitat:** This is a common tree at low elevations throughout the Black Hills, where it is typically located along streams (Larson and Johnson 1999:524). It is also abundant outside the Black Hills along woody flood-plains and stream banks (Johnson and Lar-son 1999: 260). It grows at Wind Cave Na-tional Park.

**Uses:** This tree was not only important as a source of wood for manufacturing a wide variety of different items, but it was also significant in the ceremonial observances of local tribes.
The ash tree is associated with many sacred properties. The Cheyennes made whistles for their contrary dances from ash wood, and they employed it in the construction of their Sun Dance lodges (Grinnell 1972:2:81; Hart 1992:20). The Lakotas made a wand for the otiyotipi to use when they selected people to sit with them (Walker 1982:22), for wooden plates used in the Pte San lowampi (Fletcher 1883c: 266), and also for whistles played in the grassdance (Densmore 1918: 471). Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:321) pointed out that when Lakota men were chosen to be akitca, they were told: “You will resemble the ash. You have noticed it cannot be broken. It is up to you to look after the people and take care of the laws.”

As reported by James Walker (1982:31), a Lakota tradition tells that:

once upon a time the people tried all the wood of every kind of a tree and they found that the wood of the ash was the most durable and strongest. So they made the ash the emblem of the marshals and the marshals made all their wooden utensils and implements of ash.

For the Lakotas and most other tribes in the northern Plains, ash was the primary wood for making pipe stems (Gilmore 1919:108; 1987: 06; Buechel 1970:446; Standing Bear 1988:99), and it was favored as well for making bows (Hassrick 1964:198; Standing Bear 1988:20). Also, the young stems of the green ash furnished the material for arrowshafts (Gilmore 1919:108). The Lakotas and Cheyennes relied on ash wood to fashion a variety of other items, including tipi pins and pegs, drums, and meat drying racks (Curtis 1907-30:6:156; Gilmore 1919:108; Hart 1981:20). The Lakotas also used burnt ash wood to produce a black coloration in their paints (Bordeaux 1929:182). The Hida-tsas made wedges, corn mortars, and travois hoops from this tree (Nickel 1974:64).

Names:

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:6)
hoox[e] [no translation given]
P. contorta
Shestoto’ee [no translation provided]
P. ponderosa
Lakota (Buechel 1970:575; Rogers 1980:25)
wazi [generic] and specific to P. contorta
wazi’haka [real pine]
Picea glauca
wazi’can [pine wood]
P. ponderosa
Ponca (Fletcher and La Flesche 1972: 107)
Ma’ci [real pine]
Picea glauca

Habitat: The Black Hills spruce is typi-cally found on the cool and moist, north fac-ing slopes at mid to high elevations over an area that extends from Custer to Spearfish (Larson and Johnson 1999:524). The lodge-pole pine occurs as an isolated stand in a small area of Lawrence county, and limber pine is also restricted to a small area of the Black Hills south of Harney’s Peak (Ibid: 526). Ponderosa pine is the dominant tree, growing over the entire Black Hills from the foothills to the highest mountains (Ibid: 528). Only the ponderosa is reported at Wind Cave National Park.

Pinaceae
The Pine Family

Uses: The various species of pine were used for multiple purposes by tribes in the region.

[food] Lakotas used the resin from the bark of Black Hills spruce and the ponderosa pine as a chewing gum (Buechel 1970:574,799; Saka Sni Win n.d.: 15), and the Cheyennes did the same with the ponderosa pine (Hart 1981:6). The Cheyennes also ate the seeds from this pine (Hart 1992:57). Larson and Johnson (1999:524,528) report other food uses of the Black Hills spruce and also the Ponderosa pine, but they do not give their tribal attributions: these include using the inner bark for flour or eating it fresh in the spring, boiling the young shoots or cones for emergency food, and brewing the ponderosa pine needles in a tea.

[medicinal] Cheyennes used ponderosa re-sin in an ointment to treat sores and scabby skin (Hart 1981:6).

[cosmetic & hygienic] Cheyenne men attached ponderosa gum to locks of hair in certain older hairstyles (Grinnell 1972:1:54).

[art & manufacture] Larson and Johnson (1999:524,526) note that early explorers and ethnographers reported Indians visiting the Hills to collect spruce wood for tipi poles, and of course the lodgepole pines, which were the classic pine for this use (Hart 1981:6; Brown 1992:12). Standing Bear (1975:16-17), however, describes in great detail how the Lakota gathered and processed ponderosa for tipi poles in the vicinity of the Buffalo Gap, and Black Elk (in DeMallie 1984:157) described this process in the Black Hills above Rapid Creek. The Cheyennes and Lakotas used ponderosa pine gum in making their war and Sun Dance whistles (Grinnell 1972:1:204; Hart 1981:6; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:53; Standing Bear 1988:172). The Lakotas gathered a resin from the ponderosa pine that they boiled to produce yellow dyes (Buechel 1970:134), while the Cheyennes are reported to have used the roots in making a blue dye (Hart 1981:6). The Black Hills spruce was probably the pine species, only found in the Black Hills, whose roots went into the making of a yellow dye (Lyford 1940:42).

[fuel] The wood from various species of pines undoubtedly fueled the fires of local tribes, but it was probably not considered very desirable because it burns rapidly and sends off sparks. The Lakotas, however, used pine pitch shavings as a fire starter (Bordeaux 1929:155).

[symbolic & ceremonial] Even though the specific species is not identified, Francis Densmore (1918:79) mentions that pine was the tree for making the poles where spirit bundles hung. Pine trees are widely associated in Lakota storytelling traditions with Waziya, Old Man Winter, and his grandson, Waziyata, The North Wind (Afraid of the Bear in Walker 1980:200-201; Blue Thunder in Walker 1980:208; Bad Wound in Walker 1980:210; Walker 1983:125,136,194,201,208). In fact, these two names are often translated as “Towards the Pine.” The Cheyennes used ponderosa pine resin in their love medicines (Hart 1981:6).

Ranunculaceae
The Buttercup Family

Clematis ligusticifolia [western virgin’s bower or white clematis] is the only woody Ranunculaceae species reported in the Black Hills, where it is located in woods and thickets along low to mid elevation stream banks in dry and sandy soil (Larson and Johnson 1999:528). The Lakotas called it cuniyuwi o’wicako’ [flowers crowd on vine] or alternatively cani’yuriw si’kaska’ na’ha’ka [white blooming flower vine] (Buechel 1970:119,134,415; Rogers 1980:55), and they prepared a tea from its roots as a headache remedy and also a medicinal wash (Buechel 1970:119). Arapahos and Shoshones used the stems for string and made a shampoo from the roots (Nickerson 1966:46). Modern European American herbalists also use it to treat headaches (Tilford 1997:191).
**Rhamnaceae**  
The Buckthorn Family  

Closely related to the popular New Jersey tea, *Ceanothus Americanus*, of American Indians and European American settlers along the East Coast (Kundscher 1987:78), the Inland Ceanothus [Ceanothus herb-aceous], also known as “redroot,” went into a culinary tea and a medicinal tonic in the West (Tilford 1997:126). The dry leaves of another variety, *Ceanothus fendleri*, were used for the same purposes. The Inland Ceanothus is common to the rocky soils and open ponderosa forests of the northern Black Hills. The Fendler Ceanothus is found primarily in the western Black Hills and their high limestone and sandstone reaches (Larson & Johnston 1999:530), but it is also present at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001k:1). The Poncas knew *C. americanus* as *tabe-hi* [no translation given] (Gilmore 1919:10) and used its knarled roots to start fires on their buffalo hunts when timber was scarce. The *C. fendleri* species was called *unpan’ tawote* [female elk food] by the Lakotas who prepared a nourishing tea from its leaves (Buechel 1970:507; Rogers 1980:56).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2.176; Hart 1981:34)  
*he-tan-i-mins* [male berry]  
alternate: *hetane-menotse*

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:589; Rogers 1980:56)  
*wi’panzukan* [refers to a thing to crack bones]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:87)  
*zhon-huda* [gray wood]

**Habitat:** Saskatoon serviceberry is abundant in the Black Hills and located across a wide range of habitats with well-drained soil, while the low serviceberry is commonly found in wooded habitats. Both bear fruit from late June to early August (Larson and Johnson 1999:532-534). The Saskatoon variety is reported at Wind Cave National Park.

**Uses:** Serviceberries were valuable as a source of food, but they also had other uses for tribes in the region.

**[food]** Serviceberries rank as one of the most important and prized foods for the tribal nations of the northern Plains, who typically pounded the berries into bison meat and dried them in pemmican cakes (Bordeaux 1929:132; Gilmore 1987:35; Hart 1992:8). Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas gathered the fruit in abundant quantities to dry and store for winter use and for ceremonial meals (Nickerson 1966:48; Hassrick 1964:179; Grinnell 1972:2.176; Brown 1992:12). The Hidatsas commonly mixed serviceberries with breadroot, bone grease, and broth (Nickel 1974:58). The Cheyennes made a tea from the leaves to serve as a beverage (Grinnell 1972:2.176; Hart 1981:34). Today, Lakotas

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**Rosaceae**  
The Rose Family  

Many of the most prized fruits for Plains Indians come from the Rose family, and most of the twelve woody species reported in the Black Hills have names and/or uses among the tribal nations of the region.

**Amelanchiera spp.**  
[serviceberry]

A. *alnifolia* [Saskatoon serviceberry], also known as Juneberry, grows under a wide range of conditions in the northern Plains and the Black Hills. This was another fruit-bearing bush that was described as abundant in the Black Hills in the 1870s (Newton and Jenny 1880: 316; Donaldson in Krause and Olson 1974: 61). Along with *A. humilis* [low serviceberry], it remains an important and popular source of food for American Indians and European Americans alike (Larson and Johnson 1999:532-534).

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preserve the fruit either through canning, drying, or freezing and use it to make pemmican and puddings especially for use at ceremonial feasts (Albers 1966-1976).

Serviceberries were also an important trade item between tribes and with European Americans. The Arikaras exchanged two measures of shelled corn for one measure of dried serviceberries in their trade with neighboring tribes (Gilmore 1919:91).

European American explorers, trappers, and traders commonly relied upon Juneberries for food in their travels. Along with early settlers, they not only picked the berries but also acquired them through trade with local tribes. The berries remain a popular fruit among European Americans who prepare them in jams, jellies, and pies for home use and commercial sale (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 402,425,583; Fall River County Historical Society 1976: 119,243; Sundstrom J. 1977:227,339; Kindischer 1987:31-32).

**[medicinal]** The Cheyennes were also reported to brew the leaves in tea for medicinal purposes (Grinnell 1972:2:176), and they mixed the leaves with medicines to make them more palatable to children (Hart 1981:34).

**[art & manufacture]** The Lakotas used the wood stems to make arrowshafts and hoops or tahuka cangleska (Densmore 1918: 438; Gilmore 1919:87; Hassrick 1964:196; Buechel 1970:474, 589). The Hidatsas made fish traps from the stems (Nickel 1974:58). The Lakotas also prepared a red dye from the berries of this bush (Lyford 1940:42).

**Cerocarpus montanus**

[alderleaf mountain mahogany]

This shrub is restricted to chaparral-like stands that are located in the southern rea-ches of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:534) and at Wind Cave National Park. Larson and Johnson (1999: 534) claim that the seasoned wood of the mahogany is very hard and functions as a desirable firewood, but there are no reports on its names and uses for the tribal nations who occupied the region.

**Crataegus chrysocarpa**

[northern hawthorn]

Local tribes used various species of haw-thorn, but only the northern hawthorn is reported in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:536).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:176)

*tasi mins* [bear heart-shaped berry]  
*C. Douglassi*

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939:521)

*tidiamewo:* [no translation given]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:334,482,705; Rogers 1980:56)

taspan [generic word for fruit]

taspan 'hu' [fruit stock]  
*C. sheridana*

mato taspan [bear fruit]  
*C. chrysocarpa*

taspan 'sloslola' [soft fruit]  
*C. uniflora*

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:31)

*bakacilta.hi* [tree you make arrows for]  

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:87)

taspan [no translation given]

**Habitat:** This tree is common but restrict-ed primarily to low elevation areas in the northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:536). It grows, however, at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2).

**Uses:** The berries of the hawthorn were taken for food and medicine.

food] Gilmore (1919:87) reports that the fruit was used mostly as an emergency food among the Lakotas and Poncas. Nickel (1974:61-62) indicates that the Hidatsas ate the fruit fresh but infrequently. The Plains Apaches ate them
but in moderation (Jordan 1965:31), and the Comanches consumed them too (Carlson and Jones 1939: 521). The Cheyennes collected, dried, and stored the fruit of *C. douglasii* in large quantities for winter use (Grinnell 1972:2: 176).

**[medicinal]** The berries were mixed with medicines by the Lakotas to make them more palatable (Buechel 1970:482), but they are also reported to have unidentified medicinal properties in their own right (Ibid:334). Along with the berries, the flowering branches of this tree have long been used in Chinese and European Ameri-can folk medicine to treat heart ailments (Tilford 1997:70).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Arikaras hung the bundles in which they kept their infants’ placentas on the branches of haw-thorn trees (Gilmore 1930:75).

**Physocarpus spp.**

**[ninebark]**

Neither of the two ninebark species, *Physocarpus monogynus* [mountain nine-bark] or *P. opulifolius* [common ninebark], reported in the Black Hills, are associated with names or uses in the ethnobotanical literature on the region. The mountain ninebark is abundant but largely restricted to the rocky and wooded areas of the central Black Hills, whereas the common ninebark is frequent in forested areas on the eastern side of the Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:536-538).

**Potentilla fruticosa**

**[shrubby cinquefoil]**

Shrubby cinquefoil is most common at mid to high elevations in the central, northern, and western Black Hills (Larson and John-son 1999: 538). The Cheyennes know it as *o nuhk’ ise’e yo* [contrary medicine] or alternatively as *van0’e-moxese-hohp* [sage mint soup]. They made a beverage tea from the leaves and used it as a medicinal pro-tection from enemies. Cheyenne contraries also used the plant to protect their hands from burning when they plunged them into kettles of boiling soup (Grinnell 1972:2:176; Hart 1981:35). European Americans relied on this cinquefoil for various medicinal remedies too (Kindscher 1992:272).

**Prunus Americana**

**[wild plum]**

The wild plum is widely distributed in the region’s native grasslands where it grows along drainage ways and in sheltered areas (Larson and Johnson 1999: 260).

**Names:**

- **Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:177; Hart 1981:35)
  - mak u mins’ [great berry]
  - alternate: ma’xe-menotse [big berry]
- **Comanche** (Carlson and Jones 1939:523)
  - yuseke [early plum]
  - parawaseke [late summer plum]
  - kusiseke [fall plum]
- **Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:29)
  - pank-ai-da-lo [sour or thick-rind plum]
- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970:284; Rogers 1980:56)
  - kan’ta -hu [plum tree]
  - kansu’ [plum stones]
- **Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:41)
  - ye.coh [big fruit]
- **Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:87)
  - kande’ hi [plum tree]

**Habitat:** The wild plum is commonly found at lower elevations in woodlands, val-leys, and drainages over the entire Black Hills (1999:540), and it also grows at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h: 2).

**Uses:** Wild plum trees provide not only food but also materials for making many different objects for ceremonial and every-day use.

- **[food]** This was an important fruit for tribal nations throughout the region. The fruit was eaten fresh, cooked as a sauce, or dried for

[medicinal] The Omahas (and Poncas) used the roots to treat abrasions (Gilmore 1919:87), while the Cheyennes mixed the crushed fruits with salt to treat mouth irritations (Hart 1981:35).


[symbolic & ceremonial] Among the Lakotas, the stems were made into prayer wands, called waunyanapi, which were used for the benefit of the sick (Gilmore 1919: 87). The sprouts of the tree were utilized in making spirit banners for vision questing (Sword in Walker 1980:85), and the withes to make invitation wands for the Hunka ceremony (Walker 1982:65). The Cheyennes used the tree’s branches in their Sun Dance altar (Hart 1981:5). The Arikaras hung the bundles in which they kept their infants’ placentas on the branches of wild plum trees (Gilmore 1930:75).

**Prunus pumila**  
[sandcherry]

Except when flowering, the sandcherry is an unobtrusive plant in the areas in which it grows (Larson and Johnson 1999: 542). It was not as plentiful as its relatives, the wild plum and the chokecherry, but it was a valued source of fruit.

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:177)  
muh’-ko-ta-mins  [smell from a distance]  
alternate: moxhe’esta-menotse

Lakota (Buechel 1970:97; Rogers 1980:56)  
aun ’yeyapi  [to put on stem]

Poncas (Gilmore 1919:88)  
nonpa tanga  [big cherry]

**Habitat:** The sandcherry is sometimes located in the low foothills of the southern and central Black Hills in sandy or rocky prairie and woodland habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999:540). It is also present at Wind Cave National Park.

**Uses:** The sandcherry was used primarily as a source of food by tribal nations in the region.

[food] The Lakotas and Poncas dried the fruits for later use and also made them into a sauce when fresh (Gilmore 1913b:364, 1919:88). The Lakotas and Cheyennes had a belief (hence, their name for the plant) that if a person approached sandcherries from the windward side they would be bitter, but coming from the opposite direction, they would be sweeter (Gilmore 1919:88; Buechel 1970:97; Grinnell 1972:2:177; Eastman in Graeber 1978:88,101; Standing Bear 1988:12).
**Prunus pennsylvanica**  
[pin cherry]

Also known as bird cherry, this small tree is found only occasionally in the moist wooded habitats of the low to mid elevation central and northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:542). The Lakotas called it canpa’ kakan [knock off cherry from tree], but there are no reports of its use (Buechel 1970:122; Rogers 1980:57).

**Prunus virginiana**  
[chokecherry]

Without question, the chokecherry was the most highly prized fruit eaten by the historic tribal nations of the northern Plains. It is widely distributed in the region and frequently grows in river valleys where it is a typical understory in wooded habitats (John-son and Larson 1999:262).

**Names:**

Cheyenne (Hart 1981:35)  
menoise [berry]

Crow (Kindscher 1987:177)  
malupwa [no translation]

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:30)  
o-hpan-ai-gaw [no translation]

Lakota (Buechel 1970:122)  
canpa’-hu [bitterwood stem]

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965:45)  
zé. [fruit or food]

Ponca (1919:88)  
nompa-zinga [little cherry]

**Habitat:** The chokecherry is very common in the Black Hills where it is found at all elevations along stream banks, in open woods, and rocky hillside habitats (Larson and Johnson 1999: 542). It is also present at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h:2).

**Uses:** The chokecherry was significant not only nutritionally and medicinally, but it also carried important symbolic messages that marked cultural identities and social relationships (Kindscher 1987:178), and as Melvin Gilmore (1919:88) writes, it was widely mentioned in tribal stories, songs, and myths.

**[food]** Chokecherries were highly esteemed by all tribes in the region, and they made special trips to find the locations where this fruit was abundant (Gilmore 1919:88). Indeed, Jeff Hart (1992: 42) writes that it is probably the most important berry plant for the Cheyennes and their neighbors. Choke-cherries are eaten fresh and dried for later use. Historically, these cherries were ground with special mortars and pestles and made into small cakes dried in the sun. They were a principal ingredient in pemmican, a dried mixture of meat, fat, and fruit, which the Lakotas call wasna (Gilmore 1913b:364-365; 1919: 88; Bordeaux 1929: 132; Grin-nell 1972:2: 178; Nickel 1974:71; Standing Bear 1975:22, 1978:6, 59, 1988: 111; Brown 1992: 12). Many of the corn-producing tribes in the region combined chokecherries with ground corn meal, a practice also followed by the nonhorticultural groups (Gilmore 1926b: 14; Nickel 1974: 71). The tribal nations of the northern Plains mixed them in a variety of different soups and stews, and today, they are made into a popular pudding among the Cheyennes and the Lakotas, who call it chanpa’ijapi or wo-ijapi (Albers 1966-1976; Lewis, L. 1980: 252; Hart 1981:36, 1992: 42). Historically, chokecherries were an important part of the trade between the Dakotas and Arikaras (Gilmore 1987:90-91). Today, the Lakotas continue to gather and process chokecherries but with the use of meat grinders and food processors. Many American Indians also can and freeze chokecherries and prepare them as jams, jellies, and syrups (Albers 1966-1976; Nurge 1970:67, 82; Lewis, T. 1990: 155). Needless to say, this fruit also became a favorite for European American settlers in the region, and they now use it regularly in making butters, jams, jellies, syrups, and pies (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70: 40, 402, 425, 583; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:227, 365, 379).

The Lakotas and Cheyennes, used the twigs of the choke-cherry tree to make arrowshafts (Curtis 1907-30:6:156; Hassrick 1964: 196; Buechel 1970:108; Hart 1981:35; Standing Bear 1988:18). Chokecherry wood was used by the Lakotas to make bows when ash was not available (Standing Bear 1988:20). The Lakotas also made sticks from the branches for poking coals (Buechel 1970:123). The Crows used the wood for tipi stakes and pins, and they mixed the sap with the neck portions of certain animals to produce glue and with clays to make permanent paints for decorating parfleches and shields (Hart 1992:43). Melvin Gilmore (1919:88) reports that Ponca trappers boiled the bark of choke-cherry in a solution to clean their traps and to remove the scents of former captives.

Crow war parties made their camp-fires with chokecherry wood because they claimed it made no smoke (Hart 1992:43).

Chokecherry stems were (and still are) placed in a bundle and put in the fork of the sacred cottonwood pole at Sun Dances (Densmore 1918:118; Sword in Deloria 1929; Walker 1980: 178-79; Lewis, T. 1990:53). The Lakotas give Sun dancers a tea prepared from the bark. Cankpe ijapi, a boiled pudding thickened with flour, is a popular dish the Lakotas serve at feasts and powwows (Al-bergs 1966-1976; Kemnitzer 1970:3). A staff made of cherry wood was used in the puberty ceremony for young women (Fletcher 1883c:266-267; Walker 1980:244). Chokecherry branches were part of many Cheyenne ceremonies as well: they went into the making of the Sun Dance altar, and there was one branch for each of the 145 songs sung in the Sacred Arrow ceremony (Hart 1981:36).

There are four varieties of wild rose in the Black Hills, R. acicularis [prickly rose], R. arkansana [prairie rose], R. blanda [smooth rose], and R. woodsii [woods’ rose]. While the prairie rose is ubiquitous in the surrounding grasslands of the Black Hills, the other varieties favor woodland habitats (Johnson and Larson 1999:264).

Names: In most native nomenclatures, the term for wild rose is used generically, and the various species are not distinguished.

Arapaho (Nickerson 1966:48)
ya no

Cheyenne (Grinnell 1972:2:177; Hart 1981:31)
hih' nin [to pour out]
alternate: henene

Lakota (Buechel 1970:398,506; Rogers 1980: 57)
onjin' jinika [stands erect]
alternate unjinjininka can [stinky upright tree]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:85)
Wazhide
Habitat: Mostly common at low to mid elevations, both the prairie rose and prickly rose are found on prairie foothills and at woodland edges. The former is also located in dry open forests and roadsides while the later can be sighted in canyons and on rocky slopes or ledges (Larson and Johnson 1999: 545-546). The woods rose is also common and located in the same habitats as the other two but it is also found in stream valleys (Ibid:546). The smooth rose is rare in the region and found in environments similar to the prickly rose (Ibid.).

Uses: Rose hips are a good source of vita-mins A and C. Although they were readily available in the environments in which Plains Indians lived, they were used mostly for medicinal purposes (Kindscher 1987: 203; Hart 1992:62; Larson and Johnson 1999:544).

[food] Wild roses were widely used as an emergency food among American Indians, especially during the winter months (Gilmore 1919:85; Hassrick 1964: 156; Nickel 1974:73; Hart 1981:36, 1992:62; Wilson 1981:106-107; Kindscher 1987:200-204). According to Jeff Hart (1992:62), several tribal nations, including the Cheyennes, had cultural prohibitions against eating them on a regular basis. In historic and modern times, Oglalas boiled rose hips in puddings made for ceremonial events, and the Sican-gus used them as a condiment with other foods (Bordeaux 1929:131; Kemnitzer 1970: 73; Brown 1992:12). Although Ethel Nurge (1970:82) reports that at Rosebud they were eaten only by very poor families, Luther Standing Bear (1988:11) fondly recalls how women used to pound the fruits into balls that were considered a tasty delicacy. The Arapahos are reported to have made teas from the bark of R. woodsi (Nickerson 1966:48). European Americans preserve and dehydrate the buds to flavor food, they candy the petals, they eat them fresh in salads, and they steep them in teas (Kind-scher 1987:203).

[medicinal] Although roses were not an important food source, they were widely recognized for their medicinal properties. The Omahas (and Poncas) and the Cheyennes made a solution from rose hips to treat the eyes (Gilmore 1919:88; Hart 1981:36). The Cheyennes boiled the roots or inner bark for a tea to treat diarrhea and other intestinal disorders (Hart 1981:36), and the Arapahos produced a tea from the petals to heal mus-cle pain (Nickerson 1966:48). The Crows brewed the roots as a remedy to reduce swelling and to treat sore throats and mouth bleeding. The vapors from this remedy were also sniffed to treat nosebleeds (Hart 1992: 62). Wild roses are also popular in Euro-pean American folk remedies for a variety of different ailments (Kindscher 1992:192; Tilford 1997:162).

[cosmetic & hygienic] European Ameri-cans use the petals for potpourri air fresheners and rose water (Larson and John-son 1999: 544).

[art & manufacture] The Arapahos are reported to have used the roots to make an orange dye (Nickerson 1966:48).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The bark was peeled and dried for tobacco mixtures (Gilmore 1919:88). The Arikaras also hung their infants’ placenta bundles on rose bushes (Gilmore 1930:75). A song Melvin Gilmore (1919:86) published suggests that roses were placed on a Lakota woman’s dress at the time of her marriage. Gilmore (1987:200-203) also relates a story of un-reported tribal attribution about the prairie rose in which a demon wind blows other flowers away to decorate the robe of mother earth, and only the prairie rose is strong enough to withstand him.

Rubicus idaeus
[red raspberry]

This raspberry and the related R. occi-dentalis [black raspberry], which is found at the far eastern edge of the prairie zone, were not among the major sources of fruit for tribal
nations in the region. Still, their fruits were highly prized (Kindscher 1987:205-208).

Names:

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2: 177; Hart 1981:36)
*mohk‘ tahwiske e‘ mins* [black heart-shaped berry]
alternates: *ma‘x-eveshkei‘ehe-menotsie*
*mo‘shs-sveshkei‘ehe-menotsie*
*wis ke e‘mins* [heart-shaped berry]

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:475; Rogers 1980:57)
*takan’ hecalu* [stem like sinew]

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:49)
‘idaksah [no translation provided]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:84)
*agthamungi* [no translation given]
*R. occidentalis*

**Habitat:** Red raspberries are widely located from mid to high elevations in aspen and birch woodlands or streamside woods over the entire Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:548), and they are also reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisa-rowicz 2001j: 2).

**Uses:** Raspberry bushes were used primarily for their culinary and medicinal benefits.

[**food**] The Cheyennes ate black and red raspberries fresh when in season and dried them for winter use (Grinnell 1972:2:177). The Plains Apaches ate them fresh, and today, they make jam and jelly from them (Jordan 1965: 49). The Dakotas steeped the young leaves of black raspberries to make a drink similar to tea (Gilmore 1919:85). This was probably true for the Lakotas who ate the berries too (Buechel 1970:475), but they probably found the red rather than the black varieties in the locations where they lived. This species is popular among local Euro-pean Americans for making jams and jellies (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 402, 425, 583).

[**medicinal**] The Omahas (and probably Poncas) used raspberry roots in a treatment for childhood bowel problems (Gilmore 1919:84), and the Plains Apaches made a decoction from the roots for diarrhea and stomachaches (Jordan 1965:129). In Euro-pean American folk medicine, raspberry leaves were brewed in teas to treat female reproductive disorders (Tilford 1997: 122).

**Rubus Parviflorus**
[**thimbleberry**]

This fruit does not flower or set fruit as productively in the Black Hills as happens in other mountain regions of the west. It is common to the areas where it grows, but these are restricted to moist, shady locations from mid to high elevations in the northern Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:548). Although a major source of food for tribal nations of the greater Northwest, it was not as important for tribes in the Plains region. There is hardly anything about them in ethnobotanical sources from the region. No doubt, all tribes in the area took the fruit opportunistically when it was available.

**Rubus Pubescens**
[**creeping or dwarf red blackberry**]

The Creeping blackberry grows in the moist environments of the mid to high elevation central and northern Black Hills. The fruit is too sparse to be of any significance as a food (Larson and Johnson 1999:55). There are no reports on its names and/or uses in the ethnobotanical literature for the region.

**Sorbus scopulina**
[**mountain ash**]

Another species currently in decline, the mountain ash, is restricted to the northern Black Hills. While its fruits are cooked for jam and jellies by European Americans, no names or uses for it have been reported in ethnobotanical sources on the tribal nations of the region (Larson and Johnson 1999: 550).
**Spiraea butulifolia**
[wild spiraea]*

This species is also restricted to the northern Black Hills, where it is widespread from high to mid elevations on coniferous, birch, and aspen forestlands (Larson and Johnson 1999:552). Known to have analgesic properties, this shrub was used by tribes outside the area for medicinal purposes and also by European Americans as an anti-inflammatory (Tilford 1997:96; Larson and John-son 1999:552). There are no reports on it, however, for tribes who lived and traveled in the Hills.

**Salicaceae**
The Willow Family

The willow family contains many different trees that had significant benefits for the tribal nations of the region.

**Populus spp.**
[poplar]

In this family, two species of cottonwood, one poplar, and one aspen are reported in the Black Hills. *P. deltoides* [plains cotton-wood] is a major and much revered tree in the northern Plains that typically grows along floodplains and major drainages (Johnson and Larson 1999:264). *P. angusti-folia* [narrowleaf cottonwood] is more com-mon in regions to the west of the Black Hills, and as a result, the tribal nations who inhabited the northern and central Plains were less familiar with it. It is the variety reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001f:1). *P. balsamifera* [balsam poplar], also known as Balm-of-Gilead be-cause of its fragrant resin, is uncommon in the region (Larson and Johnson 1999:554), while *P. tremuloides* [quaking aspen] is common but restricted to high elevation lo-cations in the Black Hills and at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001f:1).

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2: 179; Hart 1981:36, 37)
*mohk wi hio mohk tut tus* [robe painters]

P. *deltoides*
alternate: *xamaa-hoohshtsse veeshkee?te* [no translation given]

P. *tremuloides*

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19)
ya-hee-hwai [no translation provided]

P. *deltoides*
alternate: *a’hi’n* [principal tree]

**Lakota** (Gilmore 1913b: 60; Buechel 1970:118, 127,515,519; Rogers 1980:57, 58)
cani’tazipa [bow tree]

P. *tremuloides*

canya’hu [wood to chew]

P. *deltoides*

*According to Reverend Eugene Buechel (1970: 127), the name derives from the fact that horses feed on the bark.

wachina’ca [refers to offspring]
saplings of P. *deltoides*

wa’ga can [wood to strip]

P. *sargentii*

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:75)
’ini.li [no translation provided]

P. *deltoides*

**Poncas** (Gilmore 1919:72)
moo zho [cotton tree]

P. *deltoides*

**Habitat:** *P. deltoides* is a characteristic tree of river floodplains in the northern Plains, and it is very common along riverbeds at lower elevations in the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:556). *P. angustifolia* is locally abundant in the canyons of the northern Black Hills; and even though *P. balsamifera* occupies many of the same locations, it is uncommon in the region (Ibid:554). *P. tremuloides* is common and found at mid to high elevations throughout the central and northern Black Hills (Ibid:556).
Uses: With the possible exception of the Plains Apaches, who hardly used it (Jordan 1965:75), the cottonwood was an important tree for most tribal nations who once lived in the Black Hills region.

[food] The Lakotas peeled the young sprouts and ate the inner bark, which was known to have a sweet taste (Gilmore 1919:72; Bordeaux 1929:131; Standing Bear 1988:94), and the Cheyennes and Hidatsas did so as well (Nickel 1974:70; Hart 1981:37). The Cheyennes also made a culinary tea from the bark (Hart 1981:37).

[medicinal] Tribal nations outside the area of the Black Hills used cottonwoods and aspens for medicinal remedies (Hart 1992:37), but, curiously, there are no reports of such use for local tribes. European Americans were also known to use the cottonwood for various medicinal purposes (Kindscher 1992:270-271). In one European American folk treatment, the buds from the lower branches of the balsam poplar are soaked in alcohol to dissolve the resin, which is used in an anti-inflammatory salve (Tilford 1997:114).


[art & manufacture] Among the Lakotas and Cheyennes, dyes for feathers, arrows, and robes were extracted from boiled cotton-wood buds. Musical instruments and child-ren’s toys were fashioned from the tree’s leaves (Gilmore 1919:73; Grinnell 1972:2:7, 19; Hart 1981:37, 1992:69; Standing Bear 1988:95). The large poles in the Kiowa’s summer arbors were made from the cotton-wood, and this tree also provided the poles for the tipis in which their ceremonies took place (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19). The Plains Apaches used cottonwood in the absence of cedar to make their tipi poles (Jordan 1965:75). The Hidatsas considered the cottonwood a general purpose wood, and they used its poles in the construction of their earth lodges, corrals, drying stages, tipis, hoe handles, and travois runners (Nic-kel 1974:70). The Arikaras used cottonwood saplings for making fish traps (Gilmore 1924:120-121). The Lakotas also made their saddles from cottonwood and lined them with buffalo hide, and they used the down from cottonwood pods to fill their buckskin pillows (Standing Bear 1978:21).

[fuel] The Kiowas favored cottonwood for their fuel (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19), and they used smoke-sticks from this tree for their peyote ceremonies. By contrast, the Plains Apaches burned it only when nothing else was available, believing that it burnt too fast and popped badly (Jordan 1965:156). The Poncas used it to roast clays used in ceremonial painting (Gilmore 1919:72). The Lakotas burned cottonwood for everyday fires, for the ceremonial fire of the Pte San Lowanpi (Walker 1980:244), for tanning hides, heating paints, and whenever they needed to make coals for other purposes (Standing Bear 1988:94,122). The Cheyennes typically made their hearth fire-sticks out of cottonwood, and their upright or twirling stick from greasewood (Grinnell 1971:54). Aspen also provided firewood for tribes in the northern Plains (Hart 1992:37).

[symbolic & ceremonial] The cottonwood was held sacred by several tribal nations in the region. The trunk of a young tree served as the center pole for Sun Dances and other ceremonies among the Omaha (Gilmore 1919:72), the Cheyennes (Grinnell 1972:2:229-232,259,287; Hart 1981:37), and the Lakotas (Standing Bear 1978:222; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:287; Walker 1982:97). According to Luther Standing Bear (1988:94), “for all ceremonial purposes the cotton-wood was favored” among the Lakotas. Its bark was used in the Lakota elk dance and in the rituals of the Owns White society (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:242-243, 340). It was also brewed into a tea served to the dancers at the
Sun Dance (Sword in Deloria 1929: 400. The cottonwood was also featured in Black Elk’s visionary experiences (in DeMallie 1984: 109, 130). The Lakotas made a stick from cottonwood on which to hang a buffalo hump as an offering in the Sun Dance (Densmore 1918: 118). The posts of the lodges in which the Lakota wanagi wicagluha [spirit keeping] cere-monies were performed were made from cottonwood (Densmore 1918: 81). Cottonwood was a symbol of fidelity among the Lakotas, and young girls burnt twigs of the cottonwood to ward off the scheming of Anog Ite [Double Faced Woman] who foments infidelity, scandals and strife (Gilmore 1919: 72; Walker 1982: 52). In earlier times, cottonwoods were favored for Lakota tree burials (Gilmore 1913b: 360). Today, Lakotas use cottonwood saplings to construct their sweatlodges, Inikagapi (Lewis, T. 1990: 47). The Kiowa’s origin story tells of the people emerging from a hollow cottonwood (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 19).

Salix spp. [willows]

In the Black Hills, there are more than twelve different salix species, all of which probably carried some function for the tribal nations of the region. Native names for willow species are largely generic, and with a few notable exceptions, are difficult to match with scientific botanical nomenclatures. Salix amygdaloides (peach willow) and Salix exigua (sandbar willow) are also widely distributed in moist areas of the surrounding grasslands (Johnson and Larson 1999: 266). S. humilis [prairie willow], which is an eastern prairie and woodlands species, is not reported for the Black Hills, although it is named by some of the tribes who lived in this region (Kindscher 1992: 194-198).

Names:

Cheyenne (Hart 1981: 37)
menoʔkeʔo [no translation given]
S. amygdaloides

Comanche (Carlson and Jones 1939: 524)
ohasehebu [no translation given]

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 19)
sen-a [no translation provided]
ati-p ee-ʔa’-gaw [no translation given]
sen-ya-daw no translation offered

Lakota (Buechel 1970: 32, 520; Rogers 1980: 58)
cohwan’jica [rich willow]
refers to a low thin willow, probably
S. humilis
cohwan’jica sasa [rich red willow]
S. humilis
cohwanjica’tanka [large willow]
awah’ popa’can [leaf burst wood]
probably S. amygdaloides
awah’ wizilya [incense leaf]
possibly S. exigua

Plains Apache (Jordan 1965: 78)
kasco.ce [drooping limbs]
S. exigua

Ponca (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1972: 107)
Thihspan [no translation given]

Habitat: S. amygdaloides [peachleaf willow] grows along lower elevation stream banks over the entire area. S. exigua [sand-bar willow] and S. lutea [yellow willow] are both common along streams and wet meadows at low to mid elevations throughout the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999: 564). S. bebbiana [bebb willow] is found at mid to high locations in wet or boggy meadows. S. petioloris [meadow willow], S. planifolia [planeleaf willow], S. pseudo-monticola [serviceberry willow], S. scout-leriana [scouler willow], S. discolor [pussy willow], and S. serissima [autumn willow] are found at mid to high elevations as well but restricted to the northern regions of the Hills. S. candida [hoary willow] is located only in the area around Castle Creek (Ibid: 560-570). Various species of willow also grow at Wind Cave National Park (2002c: 1).

Uses: There are numerous generic references to willow in ethnographic and ethno-botanical sources, but particular species identifications are often absent.
**[food]** The Hidatsas chewed the roots and bark of the sandbar willow as a confection in the spring and early summer (Nickel 1974:73), while the Lakotas cooked the buds with fat (Bordeaux 1929:131).

**[medicinal]** The bark of all willows and some poplars contains “salicin,” a derivative found in present day aspirin; American Indians and European Americans alike recognized the healing effects of this com-pound (Kindscher 1992:197). The Chey-ennes made a tea for diarrhea and other ailments from the peach leaf willow, *S. amygdaloides*, and they used strips of willow bark as tourniquets (Hart 1981:38, 1992:66). The Kiowas chewed willow bark to relieve toothaches, while the Crows cleaned their teeth with it (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19; Hart 1992:67). The Crows also chewed the bark to relieve headaches and induce vomiting (Hart 1992:66), while the Kiowas made a tea from willow leaves to cure pneumonia and treat rheumatism (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19). The ashes from burning willow stems were used by the Comanches in an eye treatment (Carlson and Jones 1939:524,533). European Americans used them for many of the same purposes as well (Hart 1992:66; Kindscher 1992:197; Tilford 1997:164).

**[art & manufacture]** Tribes throughout the northern Plains and neighboring regions used willow for multiple manufacturing purposes (Kindscher 1992:192). The Chey-ennes, for example, drew on willow to make backrests, mats, hoops for catching horses, baby carriages attached to travois, fish weirs, animal traps, handdrums, hide scrap-ers, stirrups, tipi pegs and pins, and meat drying racks (Grinnell 1972:1:105, 113, 202, 208, 215, 243, 293, 298, 310-11, 2:168; Hart 1981:37-38). Cheyennes, Lakotas, Plains Apaches, and Poncas used willow poles for the frames of their sweat lodges (Gilmore 1919:73-74; Grinnell 1972:2:210; Jordan 1965:79, 81; Standing Bear 1988:80; Lewis, T. 1990:47). The Kiowas and Plains Apa-ches constructed their arbors from willow, and they wore willow stems on their head as sunshades (Vestal and Schultes 1939:19; Jordan 1965:81-82). The Hidatsas used *S. discolor* as an intermediate roofing material on their earth lodges, and *S. interior* was woven into mats (Nickel 1974:73). Arikaras also laid willow poles on the timbers of their earth lodge roofs before adding a thatch of dry grass and a covering of earth (Gilmore 1987:55). Plains Apaches employed willow bark as lashing material for a wide variety of purposes, and they used the stems for back rests and for the framework of the canopy that shaded an infant’s cradleboard (Jordan 1965:81-83). The Lakotas also made whis-tles out of willow (Standing Bear 1988:171-172).

**[fuel]** The Cheyennes preferred to use dried willow wood in firing their pottery (Grinnell 1972:1:240-241).

**[symbolic & ceremonial]** The Cheyennes used willow stems in making hoops for their antelope hunting ceremonies, willow wood to make drums, and willow charcoal to paint their faces when going into battle. They also employed willow products for a variety of ritual purposes in the Sun Dance and in the *Massauum* ceremony (Grinnell 1972:1:284, 2:20, 229-32,3 28-29; Hart 1981:37-38). Willow stems were wrapped around the arms, waists, and legs of Cheyenne Sun Dancers because they were believed to help ward off thirst (Grinnell 1972:2:265, 268, 277). The shavings from the sprouts of red willows were mixed in Cheyenne tobacco mixtures, and they were considered a male plant (Moore, J. 1974a:173).

A similar idea existed among the Utes who used willow branches for various purposes in their Sun Dance. The Utes considered willow a channel of power, a repository of the life force, and thus it played a critical role in their Sun Dance, where it was placed in the crotch of the Sun Dance tree to represent “a nest of water” (Jorgenson 1972:181-184, 267-268).

The Poncas used willow twigs in their funerary practices (Gilmore 1919:74). The willow was connected to water and its purifying and healing qualities. Willow twigs were also
used in certain funerary rites of the Ari-kara (Gilmore 1987:180-181).


**Ulmaceae**

**The Elm Family**

Three species in the elm family are reported in the Black Hills. Except for the Siberian elm, which was introduced to North America from Asia, *Celtis occidentalis* [Hack-berry] and *Ulmus americana* [American elm] are named and described in ethno-botanical sources on the region.

**Celtis occidentalis**

[hackberry]

This tree is most common in the central and southern Plains, but its distribution does reach the southern edge of the Black Hills.

**Names:**

- **Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:22)
  - ya-ai-gaw [hackberry fruit]
  - ya-aip-hap [hackberry tree]

- **Lakota** (Gilmore 1913b:362; Buechel 1970:609-610)
  - yamanumanugapi can [crunching tree]
  - *so called because animals crunch its berries.

- **Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965: 63)
  - cedičice [hard seed]

**Ulmus americana**

[American elm]

This is another major tree in the region. It is typically located along moist stream banks and valley floors, but it can also grow in open grasslands and along rocky hillsides (Johnson and Larson 1999: 266).

**Names:**

- **Cheyenne** (Hart 1981:39)
  - homeno?e

- **Lakota** (Buechel 1970: 450; Rogers 1980: 61)
  - p' e [elm]
  - alternate:p’ecan p’eikceka

- **Ponca** (Gilmore 1919: 75)
  - ezhon żhown [elm tree]
**Habitat:** Found in the foothill valleys and along waterways at low elevations, elms are usually mixed with bur oak, green ash, or plains cottonwood, especially on the south-ern, eastern, and northern sides of the Black Hills (Larson and Johnson 1999:570). This species is also reported at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001f: 1).

**Uses:** The elm had multiple uses among tribes in the region.

[food] The Cheyennes made a tea from the bark and drank it like coffee (Hart 1981:39).

[medicinal] Cheyennes also gave it to children to insure their stability, and pregnant women drank it in hopes it would impart its effects on their offspring (Hart 1981:39).

[art & manufacture] The Lakotas and other Siouan speaking tribes relied on the elm for making small mortars and pestles used in grinding medicines and perfumes (Gilmore 1919:75). The Lakotas also made their stirups and saddles out of elm wood, and they made drum bands from the wood as well (Standing Bear 1978: 21, 1988:95,98). In a vision, the Lakota Red Thunder is credited with learning to make bowstrings from elm bark (Black Elk in DeMallie 1984:310). The structural timbers of Man-dan, Hidatsa, and Arikara earth lodges were fastened with the fibers of elm or basswood (Gilmore 1987:55). The Hidatsas also employed the inner bark for the binding sect-ions of their willow fences (Nickel 1974: 75). European Americans rely on elm wood for making tools, furniture, flooring, barrels, and boxes (Larson and Johnson 1999:571).

[fuel] Elm was a favorite source of fuel among the Lakotas and Poncas (Gilmore 1919:75), and the Plains Apaches considered it good firewood as well (Jordan 1965:156). Rotten elm roots were used with yucca as fire-starters (Mallery 1886:291).

[symbolic & ceremonial] For the Cheyennes, the tree has important ties to their sacred mountain, Bear Butte, at the northern edge of the Black Hills (Hart 1981: 39).

### Vitaceae

**The Grape Family**

The two species in this family reported in the Black Hills, *Partheocissus vitacea* [Woodbine] and *Vitis riparia* [River grape] are associated with names and uses in the ethnographic and ethnobotanical literature.

**Partheocissus vitacea**

[woodbine]

Also known as false grape, woodbine is closely related to *P. quinquefolia* [Virginia creeper], which was introduced into the Black Hills by European Americans as an ornamental vine (Larson and Johnson 1999: 572).

**Names:**

Kiowa (Vestal and Schultes 1939:42)

*sa-tai-al-go* [paint berries]

Lakota (Buechel 1970: 119; Rogers 1980:61)

*cam’ yawi* *iyeececa* [like a curly wood]

Ponca (Gilmore 1919:102)

*ingilha hazi itai* [ghost grapes]

**Habitat:** In the Black Hills, woodbine is common at low elevations where it climbs along tree trunks, over brush, and rock led-ges following local stream banks (Larson and Johnson 1999:572). It grows in ravine and woodland environments at Wind Cave National Park (Pisarowicz 2001h: 1, 2001i: 2).

**Uses:** A variety of different tribal uses have been reported for this plant.

[medicinal] The Lakotas made a tea from the roots for headaches and also as a medicinal wash (Buechel 1970:119).

[cosmetic & hygienic] Kiowa women painted their skin with a dye made from its berries (Vestal and Schultes 1939: 42).

The feathers worn by the Kiowas in war dances were dyed in a solution made from the berries (Vestal and Schultes 1939:42).

This plant symbolized warbonnets in the Cheyenne Sun Dance (Grinnell 1972:2:229-232). Although the Hidatsas considered this plant sacred, they apparently did not use it (Nickel 1974:68).

**Vitus riparia**

**[river grape]**

This is one of several species of grapes located in the plains. Along with *V. vulpina*, it is a popular source of food for the region’s American Indian and European American populations.

**Names:**

**Cheyenne** (Grinnell 1972:2:180; Hart 1981:41)

*hoh pah tsi na’ mins* [sticky berries]

alternate: *hopahao*ehe-meno

**Kiowa** (Vestal and Schultes 1939:42)

‘kodl-ta-pai’ [wild grapes]

**Lakota** (Buechel 1970:135; Rogers 1980: 61).

*cuunwi’yapehe* [tree twiner]

*V. vulpina*

Alternate: *cuun yape*

**Plains Apache** (Jordan 1965:53)

*’idalcal bikoslide.si* [long necked grapes]

**Ponca** (Gilmore 1919:102)

*hazi* [no translation given]

**Habitat:** Wild grapes are distributed widely in the Hills along streams from low to mid elevations (Larson and Johnson 1999: 574), but they are not reported at Wind Cave National Park.

**Uses:** Wild grapes were procured mostly for their food value, but they also had other uses.

The Comanches, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Lakotas, and Poncas all used the fruit of the wild grape as food, fresh or dried for winter use, and they commonly mixed dried grapes in their pemmican (Gilmore 1919:102; Bordeaux 1929:131; Carlson and Jones 1939:523; Vestal and Schultes 1939: 42; Hassrick 1964:190; Jordan 1965: 52-54; Buechel 1970:135; Standing Bear 1978:59). The Kiowas also used the fruit to make jams and jellies (Vestal and Schultes 1939:42). The Cheyennes and Hidatsas, by contrast, only consumed wild grapes when they were fresh (Grinnell 1972:2:180; Nickel 1974:75; Hart 1981:41). Today, Lakota people still gather wild grapes and preserve them. They also remain a popular ingredient in *wojape*, a pudding served at ceremonial feasts (Kemnitzer 1970: 73; Nurge 1970:82; Lewis, L. 1990:252). European Americans gather wild grapes to make juice, wine, and jelly (Larsson and Johnson 1999:574).

**[cosmetic & hygienic]** The Hidatsas made a body paint by combining the juice of grapes with clay (Nickel 1974:75).

**[art & manufacture]** Plains Apaches made stirrups of grape wood and handles for hide fleshing tools (Jordan 1965:88-89). The Lakotas mixed the leaves with the fruit to make a red dye (Standing Bear 1988:100); the grapes by themselves produced a black dye (Lyford 1940:43; Hassrick 1964:191).
APPENDIX C

THE MINERALS AND SOILS
OF THE BLACK HILLS
AND WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK:
Their Cultural Uses & Meanings

Of all the natural resources named and used by the tribal nations of the plains, information on minerals, rocks, clays, and soils is the weakest and least developed. There is good data on this subject for the prehistoric period, but to what degree this applies to the historic era is uncertain.

ROCKS AND MINERALS

There is a striking difference in the literatures on the Cheyennes and Lakotas when it comes to describing the uses of rocks and minerals. While there is comprehensive information on Lakota beliefs surrounding stone generically, especially its religious use and associations, there are few details about the names and identities of the specific varieties involved. Also, information on the utilitarian functions of stone is not well developed. There is much better data on the Cheyennes’ practical uses for stones, although there is hardly any information on their symbolic and religious meaning.

By the time ethnographers began to consult with Lakotas and Cheyennes about their cultures at the end of the nineteenth century, materials and items of European origin replaced many traditional uses for stone. This change is reflected in what White Hawk, a Lakota, told Francis Densmore (1918:437-438) about arrow points. He recalled three different kinds of arrow points for hunting bison, the flint arrow points his grandfather flaked, the bone ones his father fashioned, and those he made from steel. What is interesting about his commentary is it shows how, within three generations, the materials and knowledge for producing certain tools had changed. Probably as a result of these changes, our understanding of native nomenclatures for specific stones and minerals, their uses and meanings is much more limited than it is for faunal and floral resources.

FLINT AND QUARTZ

At the turn of the nineteenth century, when flint was still in use, there were many locations in the greater plains region to acquire various knappable rocks, and some of the best sites were located in or near the Black Hills. Two of these sites are in close proximity to Wind Cave National Park. One is Battle Mountain, about five miles southeast of the park, where a large outcropping of variegated colored quartzite is found atop the mountain in association with numerous flaked pieces, which local whites have mis-takenly interpreted as the remains of a battle site. While battles certainly took place near this location, as reported in tribal oral histories and winter counts, the debris of worked stone found atop this mountain does not reveal a
battleground but a quarrying site. Another is Flint Hill, about six miles south of Minnekahta and approximately fifteen miles southwest of the park, which also contains rich outcroppings of quartzite material. Tipi rings abound near both of these locations, and the stone material quarried at both was well represented in archeological sites submerged by the Angostura Reservoir on the Cheyenne River. Other stone, including agate, chalcedony, and chert, suitable for making projectile points, is also found in the general area (Wedel 1961:272; Sundstrom, L. 1990:59-60; Wedel and Fri-son 2001:44-45,49). Evidence for the prehistoric quarrying of chalcedony is found at a number of documented sites in Wind Cave National Park or on its borders (CU0869, CU0870, CU0871, CU0872, CU0873, CU0875, CU0876, CU1194, CU1235, CU1236, CU1285).

In the Lakota language, the flint and quartzite used in knapping is called wahin or wani (Buechel 1970:517,541). The Cheyennes had at least two names for flint: mopatonesz was the flint used to start fires, and moxoz designated the quartz from which arrowpoints were fashioned. Flint was the preferred material for arrowheads before Europeans introduced trade metals (Buechel 1970:517,541; Grinnell 1972:1:184). The Cheyennes once armed their elk horn scrapers with a piece of flint (Grinnell 1972: 1:213), and they made other scrapers from this mineral too (Grinnell 1972:1:214). As mentioned elsewhere, the Lakotas attributed prehistoric arrow points to the work of spiders (Smith, D. 1949:307; DeMallie 1984:311n6; Brown 1992:47), and the Cheyennes believed they were “shot” by the Thunders (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:54). Flint was probably the stone that Itokaga gave Wohpe because it was described as a stone that could be rubbed to make fire (Sword in Walker 1983: 68). Peter Bordeaux (1929:155) reports that “a pair of flint rocks were held against a small pile of decayed powdered wood and struck together with a glance, chipping off sparks which would, when coming in contact with the decayed wood, start a flame.”

Quartzite probably had religious functions in earlier times too because one member of the Black Hills Expedition, Samuel Burrows (in Krause and Olson 1974:208) reported that atop Iyan Karu Mountain “small pieces of white quartz were found. As they had no geological business to be there, they were no doubt left there by the Indians, who are fond of making offerings to their gods from these lofty altars.” There is little recorded about the use of quartz for religious purposes among the Lakotas or the Cheyennes in more recent periods, although the missionary John Williamson (1970:162) re-cords the Dakota name Inyan ocaze for this mineral. For crystal, he uses the words, kohdi or zanzan (Williamson 1970:42). Kohdi or Kogli in Lakota is also the word for flint corn, a name that describes its transparent quality (Riggs 1968:294; Buechel 1970:314,825). Zanzan is the Dakota word for glass (Riggs 1968:651) or janjan as it is written in Buechel's Lakota dictionary (1970:267). In a story told by Wawoslata in 1915, Inyan janjan was mentioned as one of the stones used in a Yuwipi ceremony that took place at the Race Track in prereservation times (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:264-265 [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:452-453]). George Bushotter (in Dorsey 1889:153-154), a Lakota scholar, wrote there were two sorts of “mysterious stones,” one that was white and looked like ice or glass and another resembling “ordinary stones.” Rufus Pilcher (1964) reported that crystalline stones from Wind Cave were desired by the Lakotas for healing. Knowing the importance of such stones in the practice of Yuwipi, including the round crystalline ones ants bring to the surface of the earth, it is very likely that any of a variety of translucent quartzite stones hold importance today as well. It should also be mentioned that quartzite stones from the Black Hills were kept in the Plains Apaches’ most sacred religious bundles (McAllister 1965).
GYPSUM [Selenite]

Gypsum [Selenite] is found throughout the Black Hills, and it is especially characteristic of the formations straddling the Red Valley including those found at Wind Cave National Park. It is an important mineral for the Cheyennes and Lakotas, who commonly refer to it as “mica.” William Ludlow, Chief Engineer of the Custer Expedition, reported a site on the northwestern side of the Black Hills where there were enormous quantities of gypsum that were quarried by local tribes who left offerings there (McLaird and Tur-chen 1974:293). According to John Moore (1974a:197, 1981:14), the Northern Cheyennes continue to quarry their gypsum in the Black Hills and in a shale formation at Bear Butte. Cheyennes in Oklahoma, however, apparently now secure their supplies from beds in the Southern Plains (Moore 1996a: 67).

The Cheyennes had many practical and spiritual uses for gypsum, which was called haoseton [also means “hail"] (Moore 1974a: 174) or Ova-e (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988: 54). Burnt gypsum was used to whiten the backs of their bows (Grinnell 1972:1:175) and as a glue to attach tiny red feathers to the tips of eagle feathers (Grinnell 1972: 1:222). Women rubbed white gypsum on their hands to prevent robes from being soiled when they were decorating them with quills (Grinnell 1972:1:164). Powdered gypsum marked the ground where the altar was built at the Massaum [Animal Dance] and the Oxheheom [Sun Dance] (Grinnell 1972: 2:292, Schlesier 1987:93). It was also mixed with fat and painted on the small altar sticks that represent the Cheyenne people during the Sun Dance (Whiteman in Sch-wartz 1988:54). In their Sacred Arrow cere-mon-iy, it is ground into a fine powder and melted into a mold to represent the moon. This object is attached to a sacrificial bush outside the arrow tepee, which the Chey-ennes call vozem or frost (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:4). The Cheyennes believe the gypsum found in the Red Valley is the remains of froth spilled from Slow Walking Buffalo’s mouth when she raced around the Hills in the Great Race (Marquis and Lim-baugh 1973:30-31). Also, the Cheyennes' hero, Stone Boy, was conceived after his mother swallowed a fragment of gypsum or what Grinnell (1926:179) translated as a “Sun Arrow.”

The Lakotas also appear to have associated gypsum with frost and ice. No name has been uncovered for it in linguistic sources. However, in James Walker’s creation cycle (1983:220-221, 222-223, 227-228), icage, “white fruits,” were said to grow under the earth, suggesting the crystalline formations in caves. Taku Skanskan made entrails from these fruits and molded a masculine father and feminine mother figure from them, the first Pte Oyate, and gave them the fruits as their source of eternal nourishment (Walker 1983:225-226, 249). Like the Cheyennes, the Lakotas sprinkled powdered gypsum on the ground around the Winwanyan wacipi [Sun Dance] altar (Densmore 1918:122).

Icage means “to make something with” (Riggs 1968:171; Buechel 1970:199). The related word, icago, refers to a mark or line that is drawn or sketched on something (Buechel 1970:199); gypsum powder is certainly used in this way. Also related is the word icaga, which means to grow, and it is associated with the maturation of plants, animals, and other living things (Buechel 1970:199), while kaga means to transform something through making or imitation (Buechel 1970:271). Another term, wak-icaga, refers to a sacred ceremony, and the generative effects it creates (Buechel 1970: 835). Icage and icaga might be connected to the word caga [ice, to freeze] as well (Riggs 1968:84; Buechel 1970:113). In so far as ice is the outcome of a transformative process that occurs when cold air interacts with water, it has the capacity to expand or grow. Gypsum expands and contracts in response to temperature change. It also has a glass or ice-like appearance.
SLATE

Slate also exists in the Black Hills and its surrounding areas. In Lakota, slate is called *inyan sapa* [black stone] (Buechel 1970: 228). Historically black slate was used by the Cheyennes in making axe heads and scrapers (Grinnell 1972:1:186, 214). The same was probably the case for the Lakotas. No ceremonial uses for this stone have been identified in the ethnographic literature, although Wawoslata mentions *inyan sapa* in the story about a *Yuwipi* being performed at the Race Track (in Stars, Iron Shell, and Buechel 1978:264-265; [also in Buechel and Manhart 1998:452-453]).

LIMESTONE

No names have been uncovered for lime-stone in either the Lakota or Cheyenne language. In Dakota, the limestone cliffs along the Mississippi River near St. Paul are called *imniza ska dan* [little white rocks]. Since white clay is called *maka san*, light colored limestone might also be called *inyan san*. This is the rock from which Wind Cave and other caves were formed in the Black Hills. The Lakotas used ground white limestone in making their paints (Bordeaux 1929:182), and they powdered and applied it to skins when these were being tanned (Bordeaux 1929:183). It is also one of the rocks used in sweatlodges.

SANDSTONE

Sandstones make up the Hogback forma-tions that surround the Black Hills on the outer edge of the Red Valley. The Lakotas and Cheyennes used various grades of sand-stones to make mauls, hammers, axe heads, grinding stones, and knives (Grinnell 1972: 1:211). Finely grained sandstones used in the making of knives were called *miogle* or *miyogli* in Lakota (Buechel 1970:336). The Lakotas and Cheyennes relied on these sandstones for finishing off arrowshafts (Grinnell 1972:1:179). According to Francis Densmore (1918:438), these stones were found in the Black Hills. The Lakotas called the rougher varieties that were employed in the manufacture of axeheads and hammers *izu'za* or *inyan iguga* (Buechel 1970:266, 744) or *wiyakainyan* [thunder stone] in Dakota (Williamson 1970:190). There were also ceremonial uses for sandstones. Tho-mas Odell (1942:23-24) describes a forma-tion near Bear Butte as follows:

Many small concretions of brownish color, divisible into two parts, each of which forms a cup-like receptacle, abound in the vicinity of Bear Butte. The Dakotas, it is said, gathered and polished these stones, on which they engraved pictures of Bear butte, together with those of the sun and moon. It is reported that some of these stone idols are still in existence.

GRANITE

The central core of the Black Hills is made of granite, but no specific information on the meaning and use of granite was found in the ethnographic literature on the Lakotas or the Cheyennes. The Dakota, however, named this stone *inyanhcake* (Williamson 1970:77). This might be related to the word *hcaka*, which means “real” or “true” (Buechel 1970:192). If so, it might well imply the idea of an original stone.

HEMATITE

Another mineral located in the Hills is hematite. According to John Moore(1981: 14), the Cheyennes collected red hematite from locations in the Hills to use as a pig-ment in their ceremonial paints.

COAL

The Cheyennes also quarried coal in the Black Hills to use in the production of their black ceremonial paints (Moore 1981:14). Coal is called *cahli* in Lakota (Buechel 1970:114) and *ho?kóse* in Cheyenne (Northern Cheyenne Culture and Research Center 1976:22).
Soils and clays are identified with a spiritualized feminine generative principle in Cheyenne and Lakota cosmologies. The Cheyenne call the earth *Escehewan* [The Earth or Our Mother] (Powell 1969:2:437; Schlesier 1987:5,8,82; Moore 1996a:208, 211). and the Lakotas call her *Maka* or *Maka Uçi* [Grandmother Earth] (Buechel 1970:328; Sword in Walker 1980:102; St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:74, 97, 110; Bucko 1999:208). Pulverized earth is pre-sent at all major Lakota and Cheyenne cere-monies (Densmore 1918:218, 222; Kem-nitzer 1970:54; Schlesier 1987:6). Earthen clays and shales were important too, and they were used in making paints for cere-monial and practical purposes. These ma-terials were ground into powders and then mixed with water or animal fats (Walker 1982:100). Many different locations have been reported for these clays, including sites in the Black Hills.

**WHITE CLAY/Earth**

White clay, *maka san* in Lakota (Buechel 1970:329), was used to paint horses because it purportedly produced a “genuine color” (Densmore 1918:353). The Cheyennes used white clay to draw the patterns for quilling a robe, they applied it to the skins and heads of birds worn as talismans in war, they rubbed it on men’s bodies when war shields were painted and on women when they tanned a white buffalo robe. They used it to whiten the feather plumes and buffalo robes worn in the Sun Dance, and they applied it to the pins that surrounded the Sun Dance altar (Grinnell 1972:1:163, 192, 2:202, 242, 262). According to Francis Densmore (1918: 116), the white earth used by the Lakotas for paints came from local sources, but she does not specify the locations where it was gathered. The Lakotas also relied on streak-ed clay to make toy horses for children that were called *maka’tanasula*. Again the site where it was collected is not identified (Buechel 1970:330). Chalk is *vötanotse* and white clay *vóetséna?e* in the Cheyenne language (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976: 89).

**BLUE CLAY/Earth**

Blue earth, *maka’to* in Lakota (Buechel 1970:330), is found in southern Minnesota and also at a location between the Black Hills and the Powder River (Densmore 1918:116). Helen Blish (1934:186) wrote that the blue paint applied to the joints of the Sacred Bow Society dancers came from a site near Lusk, Wyoming. John Moore (1974a:259; 1981:14) claims that the Chey-ennes procured their blue clay in the Black Hills, but he does not identify any location other than Bear Butte. This clay was com-bined with charcoal and used as a black paint in the Massaum (Grinnell 1972:2:301-308-309). Among Lakotas, it was used as a paint in the Sun Dance (Sword in Deloria 1929: 402). The color blue stands for the cloudless sky, and it signifies success (Densmore 1918:77,124). It also represents the quarter moon (Densmore 1918:77). Among Cheyennes, it signifies the sky and serenity (Petter 1915:97; Grinnell 1972:1: 168).

**RED CLAY/Earth**

Lakotas used red earth, *maka’wase* and ver-million, *tani span* or *wase aceptipi* for painting (Buechel 1970:330,480,549). Quite likely, some of the clay found in the Red Valley or the Race Track was once used for this purpose. The red colors of the soils in the valley are believed to be the remains of the blood spilled by the animals as they careened around the valley in the Great Race (LaPointe 1976:19; Walking Bull 1980:8; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:51). Red earth is called *neoma* in Cheyenne (Whiteman in Schwartz 1988:51). Some Lakotas also used a yellow earth, *maka’zi*, which was found near Standing Rock, to produce red paints. Francis Densmore (1918:116) described how it was made in some detail. As she wrote:
A yellow ocherous substance which after being reduced to a fine powder is used by the Indians in making a yellow paint. This substance when treated by means of heat yields the vermillion used on all ceremonial articles as well as in painting the bodies of the Indian. The baking of this ocherous substance -- a process which requires skill is done by women. First, the substance mixed with water is formed into a ball. A hole is dug in the ground in which a fire of oak bark is made. When the ground is baked, the coals are removed, the ball is placed in the hole, and a fire is built of the substance usually prepared at the time. The action of the heat changes the color of the substance to red. When the ball is cold, it is pounded to powder. In the old days this red powder was mixed with buffalo fat in making the paint, but at the present time it is mixed with water.

The Cheyennes relied mostly on red hematite for their paint, which they also secured somewhere in the Black Hills (Moore 1981:14). They also called red clay or earth ma?o-ma?otse, and they believed that it was the substance out of which humans were made (Northern Cheyenne Language and Culture Center 1976:35). Among the Cheyennes and Lakotas red paint signified blood. The Lakotas' Sun Dance altar was surrounded by lines traced in the earth; these were filled with tobacco, then covered with red paint powder and topped with gypsum dust (Densmore 1918:122). This is curiously suggestive of the Race Track with its red soil, the vestige of the blood spilled by the animals in their primal race, and with its ribbon-like striations of gypsum that cut through the sedimentary formations bordering the valley. Red also signifies a full moon or the clouds at sunset, which forecast good weather, while yellow represents the mor-ning clouds at sunrise or forked lightning (Densmore 1918:77, 124-125). Red has similar meanings for the Cheyennes who link it to life, blood, food, and warmth; yellow signifies the sun, beauty and ripeness (Petter 1915:97; Grinnell 1972:1:168; Powell 1969: 2:33, 417, 422, 425). In both tribes, red paint was rubbed on dancers and applied to sacred paraphernalia in most major ceremonies (Densmore 1918:124-125, 127, 139, 167, 205, 208, 330; Grinnell 1972:2:122-123, 300-304, 328-329, 345-346; Walker 1980: 183-191, 234-235).

Much more detailed information on the symbolic meanings and applications of various colors for decorative or ceremonial purposes can be found in most of the standard ethnographic sources on the Lakotas and Cheyennes (Densmore 1918; Wissler 1910; Lyford 1940; Hassrick 1964; Walker 1980, 1983) and the Cheyennes (Powell 1969; Grinnell 1972; Moore 1996a).
APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE AND TRIBAL CONTACTS FOR WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK

The American Studies Department at the University of Minnesota has received a contract from the National Park Service to do an ethnographic study of traditional American Indian cultural affiliations to Wind Cave National Park in the Black Hills of South Dakota. All of the research, entailing an exhaustive survey of ethnohistorical and ethnographic sources, primary as well as secondary, has been completed. Having identified the tribal nations with a documented cultural and historical interest in the park, we are now contacting staff in tribal culture resource offices to determine whether these interests remain current. If they are current, we are making a preliminary inquiry of what kinds of sites within the park require protection under the guidelines of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, the National Historic Sites Preservation Act and/or the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act; 2) what kinds of access do tribal members want to the park and its resources to conduct traditional activities; and 3) under what conditions would the tribe wish to engage in further consultation with the park service on these matters?

The research and report that will be submitted to the park service by the American Indian Studies Department is an advisory document and preliminary to further and direct consultations between the park service and concerned tribes. The principal investigator of the research is Dr. Patricia C. Albers, Professor and Chair of the American Indian Studies Department. Elizabeth Brown, Vanessa Kittelson, and Yvonne Kelly are the department staff working on the project and making the preliminary contacts with tribes.

The following are questions that we will be asking of all tribal cultural preservation officers.

Part One

1) Does your tribe have any cultural interests in Wind Cave National Park?

2) If answer is no, to your knowledge, do any members of the tribe have any interests in the park?

3) If answer is yes, please continue?

Part Two

1) Can you tell me what areas of the park are important to the tribe?

Are there any special sites in these areas that need protection from the perspective of the tribe?
How would the tribe like to see the sites protected?
Are there any resources in the park, in terms of plants, soils, or minerals that are important in traditional cultural practice?

Can you tell me what some of these are, and where they’re located in the park, and do they need special protection?

2) Do tribal members need to have access to the park to conduct religious ceremonies?

If so, which kinds of ceremonies are likely to be conducted on park lands?

Where in the park would these ceremonies be conducted, and what consideration does the park need to make to accommodate this activity?

Are there any resources, like plants, soils, and minerals that tribal members might need to collect in the park?

If so what are these and where does the collection typically take place, and what Consideration does the park need to make to accommodate this activity?

3) Should the park service include tribal perspectives on the park in their interpretive programming?

If answer is no, why?

If answer is yes, what kinds of cultural material would be appropriate for the park to include in its programming?

Would it be permissible for the park service to tell about any of the traditional stories associated with park lands -- for example, the Race Track story? Any others? For Sioux tribes, what about the Buffalo Woman or the Tokahe story?

4) Would the tribe be interested in entering into further consultation with the Park Service on any of these matters?

Are there any other culturally knowledgeable people from the tribe, other than you, who might be interested in participating or should be included in these consultations?

Would it be better for these consultations to be private, person-to-person or as part of a group?

Would you be interested in attending a meeting with other tribal cultural resource people from the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe tribes to discuss tribal cultural interests in the park?

Thanks for your time. Would your office like to receive a copy of the report once its completed and approved by the Park Service?
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribal Nation</th>
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<th>Cultural Contact Person</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apache Tribe of Oklahoma</td>
<td>P.O. Box 1220 Anadarko, OK 73005</td>
<td>Bobby Jay</td>
<td>P:405-247-3949 F:405-247-3153</td>
<td>Yes Historic</td>
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<td>Assiniboine and Sioux Tribe of Fort Peck</td>
<td>Tribal Executive Board P.O. Box 1027 Poplar, MT. 59255</td>
<td>Curley Youpee</td>
<td>P:406-768-5155 F:406-768-3405</td>
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<td>Cheyenne-Arapahoe Tribe of Oklahoma</td>
<td>P.O. Box 137 Concho, OK 73502</td>
<td>Gordon Yellowman</td>
<td>P:405-262-0345 F:405-422-1184</td>
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<td>P.O. Box 590 Eagle Butte, SD 57625</td>
<td>Jamie Ducheneaux</td>
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<td>Comanche Tribe of Oklahoma</td>
<td>P.O. Box 908 Lawton, OK 73502</td>
<td>Jimmy Atterberry</td>
<td>P:580-529-2139 F:580-492-3796</td>
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<td>Crow Creek Sioux Tribe</td>
<td>P.O. Box 50 Fort Thompson, SD 57339</td>
<td>Wanda Wells</td>
<td>P: 605-245-2221 F: 605-245-2470</td>
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<td>Chairman P.O. Box 400 Crow Agency, MT 59022</td>
<td>George Reed, Jr.</td>
<td>P: 406-638-3774 F: 406-638-2380</td>
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<td>Flandreau Santee Tribe</td>
<td>P.O. Box 283 Flandreau, SD 57028</td>
<td>Ray Red Wing</td>
<td>P: 605-997-3891 F: 605-997-3878</td>
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<td>Fort Sill Apache Tribe</td>
<td>Route 2, Box 121 Apache, OK 73006</td>
<td>Charles Tippeconie</td>
<td>P: 580-588-2298 F: 580-588-3313</td>
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<td>Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma</td>
<td>Business Committee P.O. Box 369 Carnegie, OK 73015</td>
<td>Earnest Toppah</td>
<td>P: 580-654-2300 F: 580-588-3313</td>
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<td>Lower Brule Sioux</td>
<td>Tribal Council P.O. Box 187, Lower Brule, SD 57548</td>
<td>Roseanne Larush</td>
<td>P: 605-473-5561 F: 605-473-5606</td>
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<td>Tribal Council P.O. Box 128</td>
<td>Gilbert Brady</td>
<td>P:406-477-6035 F:406-477-6210</td>
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<td>Tribal Council P.O. Box 570</td>
<td>John Steele and Johnson</td>
<td>P: 605-867-5821 F: 605-867-5659</td>
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<td>Kyle, SD 57752</td>
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<td>Ponca Tribe of Nebraska</td>
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<td>P: 580-762-8104 F: 580-762-2743</td>
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<td>Rosebud Sioux Tribe</td>
<td>Tribal Council Box 430</td>
<td>Terry Gray</td>
<td>P: 605-856-4901 F: 605-747-5027</td>
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<td>Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe</td>
<td>P.O. Box 359 Sioux Community</td>
<td>Lorraine Greybear</td>
<td>P: 701-766-1376 F: 701-766-4126</td>
<td>No Interest</td>
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<td>Standing Rock Sioux Tribe</td>
<td>P.O. Box D Fort Yates, ND</td>
<td>George Iron Shield</td>
<td>P: 701-854-2120 F: 701-854-7299</td>
<td>Yes Cultural</td>
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<td>Three Affiliated Tribes of Fort Berthold</td>
<td>Business Council HC2 Box 3 New Town, ND 58763</td>
<td>Marilyn Hudson</td>
<td>P: 701-627-4781 F: 701-627-3805</td>
<td>Yes Historic</td>
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<td>Yankton Sioux Tribe</td>
<td>Tribal Business and Claims</td>
<td>Francis Bernie</td>
<td>P: 605-384-3804 F: 605-384-5687</td>
<td>No Interest. Defer to Oglala</td>
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<td>Committee P.O. Box 248 Marty, SD 57361</td>
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