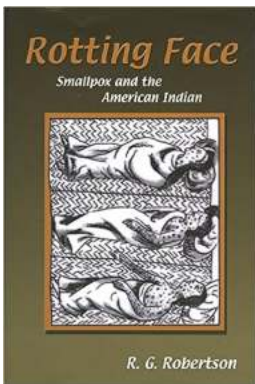


# **The Devastating Effects of Rotting Face Smallpox on the American Indian: A Tragic Chapter in History**

The history of the American Indian is marred by numerous tragedies and injustices, one of which is the devastating impact of rotting face smallpox. This deadly disease, brought to the indigenous populations by European settlers, caused unimaginable suffering and irreparable damage to the native communities across North America. In this article, we will delve deep into the history, significance, and aftermath of rotting face smallpox on the American Indian.

## **The of Smallpox to the American Indian**

In the 15th century, European explorers and settlers began their interactions with native tribes in the Americas. Unfortunately, these encounters brought much more than cultural exchanges. European colonizers unwittingly brought with them smallpox, a highly contagious and deadly disease that had devastating effects on the American Indian.



## Rotting Face: Smallpox and the American Indian

by R. G. Robertson (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 4164 KB

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 240 pages

Lending : Enabled



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## The Tragic Effects of Rotting Face Smallpox

Rotting face smallpox, also known as hemorrhagic smallpox, was a severe strain of the disease that had an even more destructive impact on the American Indian. Unlike the conventional smallpox, rotting face smallpox caused rapid deterioration of the skin, resulting in disfiguration and excruciating pain for the affected individuals.

Native tribes, who had no prior exposure to this deadly disease, had no natural immunity to protect them. As a result, the virus mercilessly spread through entire communities with alarming speed, wiping out significant portions of the population.

## **The Native American Experience**

For the American Indian, rotting face smallpox was not only a medical catastrophe but also a cultural tragedy. Native communities were devastated, losing their elders, warriors, and young children. The loss of knowledge, traditions, and spiritual practices was immeasurable.

Furthermore, rotting face smallpox fueled further conflict between European settlers and native tribes. Many colonizers saw the disease as a divine intervention, maliciously leveraging it as a biological weapon against their indigenous foes.

## **The Aftermath and Long-Term Consequences**

After the initial devastating outbreaks, the American Indian population plunged to unprecedented lows. Whole tribes were completely wiped out, while others struggled to survive and maintain their cultural identities.

The long-term consequences of rotting face smallpox shaped the trajectory of American Indian history. The loss of population and decimation of tribes resulted

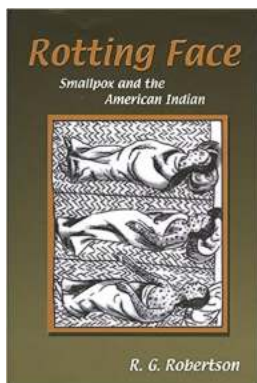
in the displacement of entire communities, stripping them of their ancestral lands and forcing them into reservations.

## Remembering and Honoring the Victims

It is crucial to remember and honor the countless victims of rotting face smallpox and the immense toll it took on the native populations. The tragic chapter in history serves as a reminder of the importance of empathy, education, and the ongoing struggle for justice and equality for the American Indian.

### In

Rotting face smallpox was a horrific disease that forever altered the course of the American Indian. Its by European colonizers and the subsequent devastation it caused is an integral part of the Native American narrative. By recognizing this dark chapter in history, we can work towards healing, understanding, and ensuring that such tragedies are never repeated.



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An Event That Forever Changed the Face of the West

On April 17, 1837, the steamboat St. Peter's pulled away from a St. Louis dock and began its annual journey up the Missouri River. Its mission was to deliver supplies to fur trading posts on the upper Missouri.

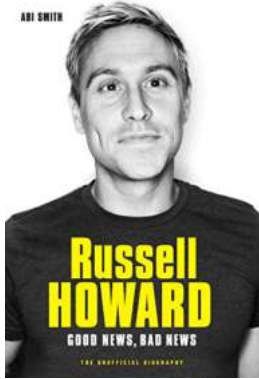
On that spring day, no one aboard the St. Peter's could have imagined the effect the voyage would have on Western history and the American Indian culture. The steamboat carried a shipment not listed on its manifest--a disease so horrible Indian parents sometimes killed their children to save them from terrible agony. Its scientific name was Variola major. Its common name was smallpox. Many natives knew it as Rotting Face.

R.G. Robertson details how the smallpox epidemic of 1837-1838 altered the political and social structure of Native American tribes. In less than a year the disease virtually destroyed the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arickara cultures. It claimed entire villages of Blackfeet, stripping that proud nation of its power and wealth, leaving it too weak to stop invasions by other tribes and white settlers.

Before it ran out of human fuel, Rotting Face claimed an estimated 20,000 natives, doing more damage to the Northern Plains tribes in one year than all the military expeditions ever sent against American Indians.

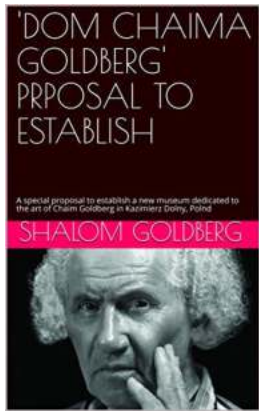
Robertson details the history of smallpox and the profound impact the disease had in Europe, Asia and the Americas, where it killed or maimed rich and poor, royalty and peasant.

Robertson's gripping and graphic account dispels some popular myths about the role of whites in the spread of this devastating disease.



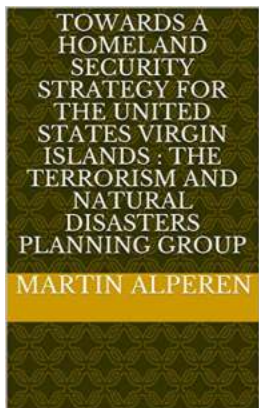
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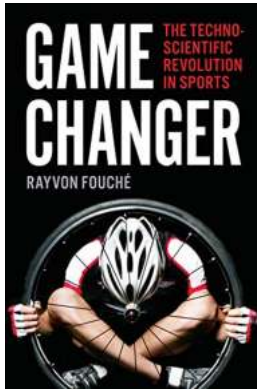
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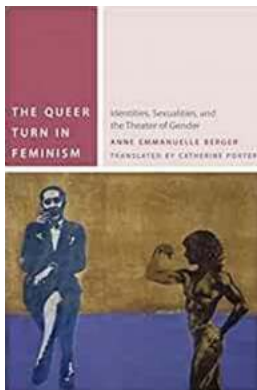
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