

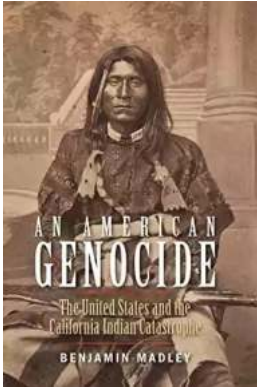
The United States And The California Indian Catastrophe 1846-1873: The Lamar Indian School

In the mid-19th century, the United States embarked on a westward expansion that resulted in the systematic displacement and subjugation of Native American tribes across the continent. One of the most tragic chapters in this dark history unfolded in California, where the indigenous populations suffered immensely between 1846 and 1873. An integral part of this catastrophe was the establishment and operation of the Lamar Indian School, intended to assimilate Native American children into European-American culture.

The California Indian Catastrophe was a period marked by violence, forced relocations, and the destruction of indigenous communities. As American settlers began to arrive in California during the California Gold Rush of 1848, conflicts between the expanding Anglo-American society and Native American tribes escalated. The U.S. government, driven by a desire for land and resources, sought to remove Native Americans from their ancestral lands and assimilate them into Euro-American society.

One of the strategies employed in this process of assimilation was the creation of Indian boarding schools. The Lamar Indian School, founded in 1863 in present-day central California, was one such institution where California Native American children were forcibly placed as part of the government's assimilation policies.

An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe, 1846-1873 (The



Lamar Series in Western History)

by Jeremi Suri(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

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The Lamar Indian School was named after Charles P. Lamar, a prominent figure who advocated for the establishment of Indian boarding schools in California. The school aimed to transform Native American children into "civilized" individuals by eradicating their indigenous heritage and imposing Western culture and values upon them.

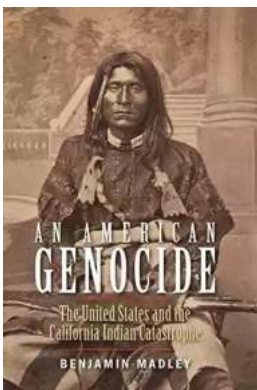
Children at the Lamar Indian School were stripped of their traditional clothing, hairstyles, and languages. Their tribal identities were forcibly erased as they were forbidden from engaging in any practices or traditions related to their Native American heritage. Instead, they were taught English, Christianity, and Euro-American customs.

The harsh treatment and conditions endured by Native American students at the Lamar Indian School were well-documented. Many children faced physical and emotional abuse at the hands of school officials, while others succumbed to diseases brought on by unsanitary living conditions. The overall mortality rate at the Lamar Indian School was alarmingly high.

The devastating consequences of the California Indian Catastrophe have had long-lasting effects on Native American communities in the state. Displacement, loss of cultural identity, and the intergenerational trauma resulting from the assimilation policies have left a profound impact on California's indigenous populations.

It is crucial to acknowledge and reckon with this dark chapter in American history, as the consequences of the California Indian Catastrophe still resonate today. Efforts are being made to preserve and revitalize Native American languages, traditions, and cultures that were nearly eradicated during this tragic period. Land acknowledgments, education, and reparations have also become integral components of the ongoing process of healing and reconciliation.

, the United States' westward expansion in the mid-19th century brought forth unimaginable suffering for Native American tribes, particularly in California. The establishment of the Lamar Indian School exemplifies the devastating impact of the government's assimilation policies on indigenous communities. Recognizing and understanding this historical catastrophe is essential for fostering a more inclusive and just society moving forward.



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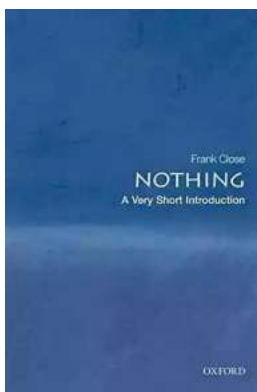
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Between 1846 and 1873, California’s Indian population plunged from perhaps 150,000 to 30,000. Benjamin Madley is the first historian to uncover the full extent of the slaughter, the involvement of state and federal officials, the taxpayer dollars that supported the violence, indigenous resistance, who did the killing, and why the killings ended. This deeply researched book is a comprehensive and chilling history of an American genocide.

Madley describes pre-contact California and precursors to the genocide before explaining how the Gold Rush stirred vigilante violence against California Indians. He narrates the rise of a state-sanctioned killing machine and the broad societal, judicial, and political support for genocide. Many participated: vigilantes, volunteer state militiamen, U.S. Army soldiers, U.S. congressmen, California governors, and others. The state and federal governments spent at least \$1,700,000 on campaigns against California Indians. Besides evaluating government officials’ culpability, Madley considers why the slaughter constituted genocide and how other possible genocides within and beyond the Americas might be investigated using the methods presented in this groundbreaking book.



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