



# Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life

*James Daschuk*

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## **Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life** James Daschuk

In arresting, but harrowing, prose, James Daschuk examines the roles that Old World diseases, climate, and, most disturbingly, Canadian politics--the politics of ethnocide--played in the deaths and subjugation of thousands of aboriginal people in the realization of Sir John A. Macdonald's "National Dream."

It was a dream that came at great expense: the present disparity in health and economic well-being between First Nations and non-Native populations, and the lingering racism and misunderstanding that permeates the national consciousness to this day.

"Clearing the Plains is a tour de force that dismantles and destroys the view that Canada has a special claim to humanity in its treatment of indigenous peoples. Daschuk shows how infectious disease and state-supported starvation combined to create a creeping, relentless catastrophe that persists to the present day. The prose is gripping, the analysis is incisive, and the narrative is so chilling that it leaves its reader stunned and disturbed. For days after reading it, I was unable to shake a profound sense of sorrow. This is fearless, evidence-driven history at its finest." Elizabeth A. Fenn, author of *Pox Americana*

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