

Native Americans and Westward Expansion Pathfinder

Before 1492, the Native American population of North America above the Rio Grande River was approximately 12 million people who existed in a vibrant expansive culture. By 1900, barely 400 years later, the Native American population had dropped to 237,000. Now granted, disease killed in large numbers as it made its way across a virgin population in the New World, but disease alone does not explain the incredible loss of life. And disease cannot explain away what happened to huge groups of peoples as the United States self-fulfilled its Manifest Destiny. Westward Expansion led to the geographic United States we know today but it was at a tremendous cost to the Native American peoples.

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