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Review of Now That the Buffalo's Gone: A Study of Today's American Indians By Alvin M. Josephy, Jr

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Now That the Buffalo's Gone: A Study of Today's American Indians. By Alvin M. Josephy, Jr. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984. Illustrations, bibliography, index. 334 pp. \$9.95 paper.

Alvin Josephy's statement that this book is the "culmination of thirty years of association" with American Indians (p. xi) explains its purpose and reveals the difficulty of trying to evaluate it. It is a study of today's Indians, their concerns, needs, and problems. It is historical, journalistic, personal, and revealing.

Josephy, former editor of *American Heritage* magazine, is the author of several books on American Indians, including the highly regarded *Patriot Chiefs*. His writing style is smooth, graceful, persuasive and readable. He writes with refreshing sensitivity and his grasp of contemporary Indian issues is impressive.

The book has seven chapters: three are historical, three are contemporary, and one is a projection for the future. Each examines a major contemporary Indian concern. Issues explored include the Indians' will to endure, racial stereotypes, spirituality, land and water rights, hunting and fishing rights, and Indian self-determination. Each also ties past policies to present concerns. Indian peoples clearly

speak, voicing their feelings, frustrations, and dreams.

Josephy's thesis is that despite five centuries of conflict with Euro-Americans, Indians have survived. They have endured and have retained much of their "Indianness" in a white-dominated world. It is clear that Josephy sympathizes with Indians and that he wishes strongly to present the Indians' case to the American public.

This is a problem. There can be no doubt that American public consciousness needs to be raised several degrees, but the public needs a book that is not only stylistic and persuasive but also one that is factual, interpretive, and well documented. The book is rich in historical and contemporary information, statistics, and quotes; it has a short bibliography, but it has no footnotes. Josephy justified this, writing that "since the book has been written principally for the general public," lengthy footnotes would have served "to overpower and severely hinder the flow of the text" (p. xi). He did deposit his notes in the University of Oregon Library if anyone wishes to consult them.

Josephy's justification does not suffice. Footnotes do not necessarily hinder the flow of the text, are crucial for scholarly evaluation, and in most cases are simply ignored by the public at large. The book is solid and topical, but it loses credibility due to this serious omission. In sum, the book is better balanced than Peter Matthiessen's *Indian Country* but should be read and cited judiciously.

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