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## Review of *Going Indian* By James Hamill

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*Going Indian.* By James Hamill. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006. xiii + 216 pp. Maps, illustrations, appendix, bibliography, index. \$40.00 cloth, \$20.00 paper.

Since the publication of Hazel Hertzberg's *The Search for an American Indian Identity: Modern Pan-Indian Movements* (1971), scholars have struggled to understand the development of an ethnic Indian identity among the nation's Indian population. Anthropologist James Hamill's work comes as close as any to explaining how an ethnic Indian identity can supplant a tribal one. In exploring the dynamics of creating culture and identity, Hamill focuses his investigation on the state of Oklahoma, which holds over seventy distinct Indian groups. The shaping forces for identity, Hamill explains, are not broad culturally based principles, but rather shared historical experiences. As Hamill argues, "Where the reservation serves as a model and conceptual anchor for other Native American people, this is not true for Indian people in Oklahoma. Not only were most of the tribes in the state today removed by force to Indian territory, but the reservations they

instituted there were obliterated by the process, especially that of allotment, that turned Indian Territory into Oklahoma." Oklahoma Indians are thus in a unique position to create consciously an ethnically Indian identity through cultural traditions and shared historical experience.

Relying on the interviews collected in the Indian-Pioneer Papers, the Doris Duke Oral History Collection, and those he conducted, Hamill outlines how the process of assimilation—through removal, allotment, and education—serves as the shared historical experience for Oklahoma Indians. Although controversial, the concept of blood quantum helps explain the unity of Indians in Oklahoma as much as it explains divisions in other parts of the nation. However, the lack of reservations in Oklahoma, more than Hamill's explored cultural features, may go a long way to explaining the creation of an ethnic Indian identity. One may argue that the lack of defined and separate geographic space for Indians is instrumental in the creation of an Indian identity in Oklahoma.

Although Hamill has produced a highly original book that will be of interest to both scholar and general reader, there are gaps in his research. Much has been written on the development of Indian identity in Oklahoma that Hamill should have consulted. An examination of Clyde Ellis's *A Dancing People* (2003) would have informed the chapter on powwows; David La Vere's *Contrary Neighbors* (2000) would have shed light on the relationship between "western" and "eastern" tribes. These are just two of the numerous historical works on Oklahoma's unique Indian identity that would help supplement what is otherwise an excellent anthropological study.

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