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Custer died for your sins song

Table of Contents You may also like: Thriller and Mystery Staff Picks In response to questions posed in the class for which I read this:“Indians are alive” seems like such an obvious statement, but as Deloria evidences time and again, it was necessary to blatantly state this in his 1987 preface and would probably still hold true if he were to write this today. This statement, “Indians are alive” can be taken literally and figuratively. Indians, in fact, do exist. Though they’ve been on a rollercoaster ride of relocation, termination, legislation, and misrepresenta In response to questions posed in the class for which I read this:“Indians are alive” seems like such an obvious statement, but as Deloria evidences time and again, it was necessary to blatantly state this in his 1987 preface and would probably still hold true if he were to write this today. This statement, “Indians are alive” can be taken literally and figuratively. Indians, in fact, do exist. Though they’ve been on a rollercoaster ride of relocation, termination, legislation, and misrepresentation, they continue to rally and make the best of whatever their situations.By 1834, the tribes in the Eastern United States who had fought alongside the Americans as allies had been relocated further west (p. 42) Deloria states in the context of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 that Indians realized that to have a voice, they had to band their tribes together (p. 17). It’s within this same discussion that he mentions two active groups run by Indians: the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC). Actions from both groups, perhaps the NCAI more than the NIYC, have proved that even if not well, the Indians are at least alive; however, they still need to band together in a show of tribe solidarity to remain (p.21).Even though the white man knew of the Indian’s physical existence, he had be able to subjugate them through legislation that essentially rendered the Indians nonexistent (p. 7) Then lo and behold, White Man learns that Indians own 135 million acres of valuable land and “Welcome to existence, my Indian friends!” Land ownership made the Indians relevant to the white man, so now he is willing to recognize the Indians as “human-beings” capable of owning, and thereby selling, land (p. 7) The Dawes Act of 1887 made this official as Indians were granted their own private property at 160 acres per Indian which left more than enough left over for them to sell (p. 46).Deloria proposed throughout his manifesto that Indians were only “alive” to the white man when he had something to gain from them, be it land, prestige, a congregation, or funded summer trips to the reservations. Regardless of the motivation behind the legislation, the Citizenship Act of 1924 gave all Indians full citizenship status (p. 76).It’s been established that Indians are alive, and as a corollary, they have dreams and goals of their own devising. The fact that there exists two active organizations mentioned above, the NCAI and the NIYC trying to make better lives for their constituents by focusing on strong tribal membership and short-term projects demonstrates their desire to achieve a state of their own determination (p. 17). Another example of their intentional desires is the continued existence and active participation of the oldest Indian-run organization: the League of Nations, Pan-American Indians (p.18).As mentioned earlier a central theme running throughout Deloria’s manifesto is that tribes need to unite together to achieve their goals. He addresses one of their dreams in his discussion of tribal religion. He notes the years from 1870 to 1930 as a period of conversion from the long-standing tribal religions to Christianity (p. 109). The Indians, as a group, were content with their spiritual practices before the missionaries began meddling into their practices. In fact, they became such a thorn in the sides of the Indians that some “obediently followed the way of the white man because it was the path of least resistance” (p. 109). Despite this, they still desire their age-old practice of religion that includes dances and celebrations of religious expression (p. 119). It seems that they will achieve their dream of tribal religious customs and beliefs as long as they can let the white religious experiment run its course.Finally, Deloria argues in his preface that Indians “are being overrun by the ignorance and the mistaken, misdirected efforts of those who would help them.” This final point of his triad is perhaps the most open to argument. On one side, there are genuine people out there who truly want to help the Indians, even if their sincere efforts have negative effects. On the other side, it is pretty obvious that there are also individuals or groups that have never had the best interest of the Indian at heart. The next two paragraphs offer a few pieces of evidence for each side.Deloria writes on page 173 that “There was never a time when the white man said he was trying to help the Indian get into the mainstream of American life that he did not also demand that the Indian give up land, water, minerals, timber, and other resources which would enrich the white man.” Evidence offered in his manifesto would suggest otherwise. Deloria alluded to a “number of white organizations that attempted to help Indian people” but because he felt they offered no merit, he didn’t mention any by name or even say anything more about them (p. 19). Obviously with the near total lack of information, the intents of these organizations or individuals cannot be examined here so the reader must take Deloria’s word, for whatever he or she thinks it is worth. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 appears to have been conceived in good conscious (though my knowledge is limited to Amy’s lecture, the brief mentions in Deloria’s book and some definitions found on the Internet). It allowed for reservations to practice self-government, manage their land, have land returned to them, and involved rehabilitation programs (p. 48). The discussions around page 112 about missionaries also indicate that they were honestly trying to share their religion with the Indians, even if they were misguided themselves. A final example of good intentions gone wrong involves the anthropologists Deloria hates so much. It doesn’t seem likely that anthropologists would intentionally set out to mislead the Indians. It’s hoped that their intentions of studying the Indians for the Indians’ benefit were genuine and driven by scholarly advancement. Although as we read we discovered that actions of the anthropologists appeared to influence young Indians to drink and older Indians to give up their summer activities of small gardening and livestock care in exchange for pow-wows in attempts to meet the anthropologists’ expectations (pp. 86 & 87).In direct contrast to the genuine instances above, there exist examples of corrupt groups or individuals only looking out for their best interests. For example, bills were introduced that seemed to be in favor of the Indians, but riders were attached that either undermined the bill at hand or proposed some other radical idea that certainly wasn’t in the best interest of the Indians (p. 37). A more obvious example of deliberate deceit involves the stipulation in the treaty with the Chippewas that granted the United States access to and ownership of the copper reserves on their land (p. 44). A third example features Indian Subcommittee leader Arthur Watkins who disregarded the four points that determined a tribe was ready for termination in an effort to quickly terminate a mass amount of tribes before the upcoming Presidential election brought in someone who would realize what he was doing (p. 62).Deloria presented many arguments and selected evidence throughout his manifesto that supported his perspective, however, after giving myself a night to process the book, I still feel that the evidence offered to support his statements was tailored or at the least very carefully selected and interpreted to lend credence to his views. He made his case through personal examples, interpretations of legislation, and reported accounts, but it seemed very one-sided to me. In a way (and he would absolutely hate this!) he approached this subject much like the anthropologists that he claimed already had the answer before they came out to observe. He seemed to have a conclusion and all of the evidence included was destined to support it.In Custer Died For Your Sins, Deloria’s views, motives, and intentions are transparent. He doesn’t leave you guessing where he stands on any issue and provides the reader with many examples to either support his points or to help the reader see his point of view. He writes with an authoritative voice, provides additional evidence in support of the facts he presents, and certainly doesn’t try to hide his thoughts or feelings.Is it a successful and persuasive manifesto? Yes and no. It’s successful in the fact that it meets Merriam-Webster’s definition of a manifesto and continues to sale. It’s persuasive, in my opinion, but only to a degree. As I mentioned earlier, he seems to be omitting important details. In order for me to be persuaded, I have to believe that the source I’m basing my information on is unbiased, has addressed the pros and cons of each side of an argument, and then I like to take the information I’ve learned and formulate my own conclusion. Deloria is certainly biased and I don’t get the sense that I have all of the information. He also lost credibility in my opinion in Chapter four on the anthropologists and some statements he made were oversimplified or too generalized. All things considered, I learned a lot from reading his manifesto, and would like to continue reading more on the subject in order to gain perspective and to have something with which to compare Deloria’s work. ...more

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