

## Reading Log #1

In *Imagining Head Smashed In*, the author Jack Brink discusses what exactly the Buffalo Jump was, and how they executed one. He also goes into depth about the misconceptions about the aboriginal people that inhabited the plains all those years ago. He then writes about how he believes that their lives were very different than the way that history describes them, and about how different perspectives of the same situation can completely change the way the a story is told.

A buffalo jump was a type of hunt organized by the ancient aboriginal people of the Northern Plains of Alberta, it was the most efficient way to gather food ever conceived. They would run an average of 100 buffalo at a time off of the edge of a sandstone jump, to their deaths below where their corpses were later collected for consumption. Brink discussed a common stereotype of the ancient aboriginal people is that they were all near starvation, scrounging the land for any scraps that they could find to sustain themselves. It is thought that they lived a generally uncomfortable and unpleasant existence, where Brink argues the opposite. He believes that these communal hunts provided many essential skills and opportunities that would greatly improve the quality of life for those taking part even beyond being able to sustain themselves for months thereafter. These gatherings provided a place for these people to reunite with their loved ones, share stories, information, and experiences, arrange marriages, trade goods, and so on. These gatherings would have been greatly important to the tribespeople. Brinks offers

that the Europeans were originally the ones who got to tell the story of the plains and what happened at Head Smashed In, and the misconceptions were just a lack of information, and a different way of living caused an abundance of the misinformation that we accept as history today. He believes that the tribespeople lived a lot more comfortably and happily than most believe. A great example of this is the records of Lewis and Clark proclaiming that once they arrived at the Northern Plains that they were welcomed and fed, suggesting that the natives must have had the extra food to share.

In conclusion, it is very important to consider your sources when examining a historical event. You never know who is telling the true story, and just because something is your reality doesn't mean that the same reality doesn't differ for someone else. The aboriginal people were not able to tell their own story, so it had to be told from a second hand point of view and Brink believes that they were living a much different lifestyle than recorded history is telling us.