

Letters to the Tundra Times

Editor,
Tundra Times
639 I Street
Anchorage, Ak 99501

Dear Editor,

Although my book, *Cabin Fever*, Comments on Modern Alaska Life, has sold over a thousand copies in Alaska (including Bethel, Barrow, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Anchorage) I have had a hard time getting it reviewed in local newspapers.

Joe Senungetuk offered to write a review for the Tundra Times. Here it is.

Your readers may order copies at \$6 each from *Cabin Fever*, 603 W. 18th Ave., Anchorage, Ak 99503 or buy them at their favorite bookstore.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Stephen Conn

Cabin Fever: Comments on Modern Alaska Life, by Stephen Conn, 1979, 151 pp, illustrated by Bradley S. Stockwell.

It finally happened. A book written in Alaska about Alaskans is reviewed by an Alaskan. I would add that he is Jewish and I am Inupiaq but that is testing the frosting without regard to the piece of cake that the book is.

It is a fast reading replacement for previous publications such as Mile Post; Anchorage Magazine; Alaska Magazine; Tour Guides of Nome, Kotzebue, Barrow, Fairbanks, Anchorage and Juneau—any publication purporting to be definitive and informational literature on Alaskana. Not that I would consider Steve's book a tour guide; however, it is a way to provide a setting on how people cope with the stereotypes of the typical Alaskan after all of the aforementioned publications get through with them.

It is a bit like reading Harry Reasoner and his commentary on something closer to home than Washington, D.C. and its assorted problems. Much of the time, this terseness and lack of digression in Conn's book is a useful aid for the reader since it is like reading local TV news and it is all neat, black and white, and picture clear. But, if one is not familiar with Conn's pet peeves which happen to range with in the thousands and thousands of square miles composing Alaska and its sparse population, one can be left lost in the taiga between the Brooks Range and Ranger Rick's backyard.

If I were to describe this book in one word, it would be: irony. In two words: Socratic irony. It is like looking into a mirror on a bedroom ceiling and seeing Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse doffing seal skin pants.

Steve, your turn to review my book.

Joseph E. Senungetuk