

**UCLA**

**American Indian Culture and Research Journal**

**Title**

The Shadow's Horse. By Diane Glancy.

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4hn791t4>

**Journal**

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 27(4)

**ISSN**

0161-6463

**Author**

Larson, Sidner

**Publication Date**

2003-09-01

**DOI**

10.17953

**Copyright Information**

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

**The Shadow's Horse.** By Diane Glancy. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2003. 62 pages. \$15.95 paper.

As emptiness shapes form and silence determines sound, the binaries that structure Diane Glancy's *The Shadow's Horse* represent the universe in which we live. Images of leaves are juxtaposed with images of animals; freedom is subject to confinement; both are associated with portraits presented within a larger historical and critical context. Poets and novelists write some of our best criticism, and always have. Such criticism is a result of the failure of the revolutions of the 1960s. Today the strategies of confrontation that failed in the streets begin to succeed on the pages of books such as *The Shadow's Horse*, although the free-for-all atmosphere that resulted from rebellion against the rigid patriarchal order being transposed into a network of graduate programs, research institutes, conferences, journals, and university press publications might seem to have left little ground for the independent critical voice. Not so.

In fact, the era of poststructuralism, not yet ended, has helped engender its opposite: a resurgence of social and cultural criticism arguing that there is a world *outside* the text that is nevertheless inscribed *in* the text. In *The Shadow's Horse*, Diane Glancy asserts the idea that the personal is political and that the way we live is bound up closely with the way we write and read. Glancy does this by using her writing as a major form of public discourse, with a primary goal of interesting and holding its readers. Second, Glancy's writing is personal: "Who touches this book touches a man (woman)," said Whitman. Finally, Glancy's writing is a social activity, an intervention in the world of men, women, and animals that seeks subtly to change the world, starting with the mind of the reader.

The lessons of *The Shadow's Horse* begin with an invocation of the Other(s) that inhabit the world within which we live. Trees, birds, horses, and interlocking relationships elevate the importance of what the mainstream often considers lesser beings to equal status with *Homo sapiens*: "What is a horse?/A leaf?/ The meaning of breaking?" (p. 3). In this context, Glancy thinks of "The cows and pigs my father yarded/before they walked up the ramp to the kill,/a story she makes . . . /because there's no shade,/where cattle die like Christ on the cross and the packing house is brutal as the union thugs who bomb houses as well as slaughter innocent animals for profit?" (pp. 4-5). This hard look at anthropocentrism, is, of course, premature; yet we all know it to be true, moral, and righteous.

Although horses in the purview of *The Shadow's Horse* are, to a certain degree, spared the fate of cows and pigs, they are, "like union packinghouse workers, broken spirits, /back arched as if bent in prayer, /worthy of some holy revelation, but usually instead contained within/the fence rails of the corral" (p. 12). This sensibility is reminiscent of Joy Harjo's signature early poem, *She Had Some Horses*, in which woman and horse intersect and are connected by bonds both physical and metaphysical.

*The Shadow's Horse*, signified by the image, "wholeness in a horse's heart is when its shadow and its rider's are one" also echoes James Welch's poetry,

especially in its sense of unification of the past, present, and future (p. 56). In *The Goodnight Trail*, Glancy relates, "We became the cows we killed" (p. 44). In *Birth on Range 18*, Welch writes, "he became the sky" (p. 8); in *The Versatile Historian*, "I became the statue needing friends in wind" (p. 12). The poet bases both images on the tribal belief that things that do not shift and grow are dead.

All good writing is personal, or it is nothing. However solitary it might seem, it is also a social activity, which is consistent with the binaries Glancy uses to address the idea that there is a world outside *The Shadow's Horse* to which the text refers. From images of constraint to those of ultimate spiritual freedom, we are treated to a sacred language of the heart that nonetheless addresses the profanity of a phenomenon such as the meat packing industry. *The Shadow's Horse* offers a unique intervention in the world that seeks subtly to change that world.

Sidner Larson

Iowa State University

**Surviving Conquest: A History of the Yavapai Peoples.** By Timothy Braatz. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003. 301 pages. \$55.00 cloth.

Looking at the title of Timothy Braatz's *Surviving Conquest: A History of the Yavapai Peoples*, one can imagine some people asking "do we really need another book about American Indian survival?" quickly followed by "who are these Yavapai, anyway?" The second question alone warrants the publication of this eloquently written study. Little has been written about the Yavapai and no monograph critically examines their history. When they appear in the works of historians their story has been misrepresented and misinterpreted, and the Yavapai people themselves often have been misidentified as groups of Apache. But without their accurate story neither the history of the indigenous peoples of the American Southwest nor that of Arizona would be complete because the Yavapai occupied more than 20,000 square miles of land in central and northern Arizona for hundreds of years. The initial question regarding another examination of Native survival must also be answered with a resounding yes. Indigenous groups developed different strategies to adapt to changing environments, not only to survive, but to keep their identity intact. This volume tells the story of how the Yavapai were able to survive as Yavapai people.

*Surviving Conquest* provides a detailed overview of Yavapai history from its origins to the beginning of the twentieth century. The Yavapai consisted of four different, mainly independent groups: Tolkepaya, Yavapé, Wipukepa, and Kwevkepaya. Euro-American intruders mislabeled and misidentified them as hostile Apache in their extermination campaign against Native groups in Arizona. Historians have perpetuated this misidentification, even in the most recent scholarly works, such as D. C. Cole's *Chiricahua Apache* (1988) and J. Haley's *Apaches* (1997). Spanish explorers, missionaries, and Euro-American intruders interfered with every aspect of Yavapai life. As a response to this ongoing assault, the Yavapai developed strategies that ensured their