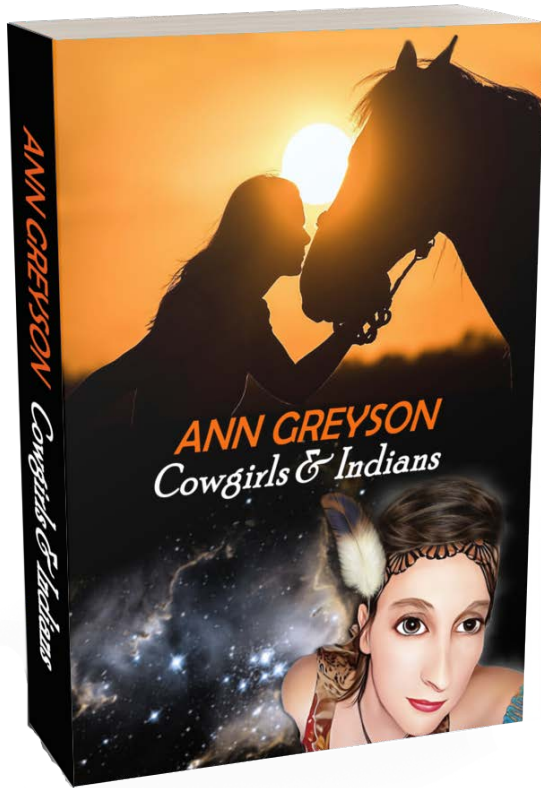




Cowgirls & Indians

Ann Greyson, author

Reviews

Chick Lit Book Cafe | Gail Schwartz {5-star rating}

Cowgirls & Indians plunges us into the arid, sunbaked streets of Tombstone, Arizona, just after the Earp faction, and quintessential frontier gambler 'Doc' John Henry Holliday had their gunfight with the Clanton gang in a vacant lot behind O.K. Corral. It was a fine line the Earps had to walk between keeping people safe and letting the liquored-up cowboy rustlers have their fun in the saloon-filled cow town. During the 1880's the line between civilization and lawlessness blurs—while in the background chaos of the Apache conflicts rages. As in the world of Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*, violence isn't just a consequence of human nature—it is woven into the very fabric of existence.

Into this fractious world steps Sequoia, a young, beautiful Cherokee woman building a life with her future husband Dakota. In a heartbeat, her world shatters when Dakota is senselessly murdered by a drunken white man outside a saloon, a casualty of the ever-present racial tensions. Here, the author explores the collision of indigenous and settler cultures with tenderness and sharp critique, depicting women not merely as victims of history, but as agents, however flawed, in their own right.

With few options left, Sequoia attempts to make her living selling almond milk—an innocent gesture of hope of building bridges between the indigenous people and the settlers—yet Tombstone, ever the microcosm of American ambition and prejudice, holds no place for her. The milk trade, from cows not from nuts, is as much about profit as it is about power, dominated by three formidable Cowgirls, the daughters of prominent settler families. Their control over the town's economic lifeblood mirrors the territorial dominance seen in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, where social hierarchies are enforced with brutal precision.

What unfolds is a twisting, evocative tale in which Deputy Sheriff Clancy Barton is thrust into a mystery that begins with an accusation of horse theft by Sequoia from the societal Cowgirls. The absence of evidence, the discovery of the horse trotting on the street, and unsettling questions, hint at a more complex than it first appears situation, pointing towards discrimination of Indians.

Ann Greyson's *Cowgirls & Indians* is a masterful exploration of the American frontier, crafted with the same raw intensity as the best of Western literature, but infused with social conscience and historical clarity. Her portrayal of women in the West is both authentic and courageous, characters that are vivid, multi-dimensional, and undeniably human—imbued with the same contradictions and complexities that mark the history they inhabit.

Like all great works of historical fiction, *Cowgirls & Indians* compels the reader to confront uncomfortable truths while offering catharsis in its portrayal of resilience, survival, and moral complexity. In Sequoia, Greyson has created a character whose story will not be forgotten, whose voice rises from the dust of Tombstone to echo through the accounts of American frontier mythology.