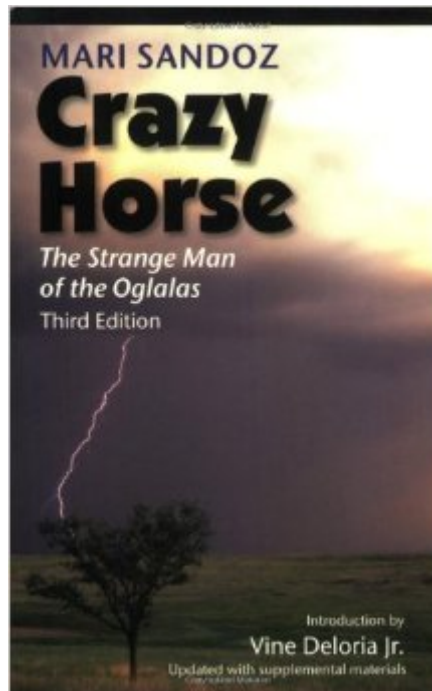


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# Crazy Horse, Third Edition: The Strange Man Of The Oglalas, Third Edition



## Synopsis

Crazy Horse, the legendary military leader of the Oglala Sioux whose personal power and social nonconformity contributed to his reputation as being "strange," fought in many famous battles, including the Little Bighorn, and held out tirelessly against the U.S. government's efforts to confine the Lakotas to reservations. Finally, in the spring of 1877 he surrendered, only to meet a violent death. More than a century later Crazy Horse continues to hold a special place in the hearts and minds of his people. Mari Sandoz offers a powerful evocation of the long-ago world and enduring spirit of Crazy Horse. Chosen as a 2007 One Book, One Nebraska selection, this edition of Crazy Horse includes discussion questions and a comprehensive glossary to enhance the reader's experience with this classic Sandoz text.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Difficult to read but well worth it as Sandoz allows you to enter into a world few have had the privilege to view dispelling myths and even bringing a good deal of controversy regarding long held beliefs about our Native American heroes. She gives the reader the opportunity to see the beginning of the end of our first inhabitants as they learn from the white man about greed, deception and dependency. Even though written through the 40's Sandoz depicts a world of policies and politics that parallels that of our own world today. We should learn from our mistakes!

Not only is this a work of superb literary genius, of the highest order, and world-class, but it is about that rarest of Beings who, although very human in his love story and tragic life, breaks your heart

with his level of ethics, courage, and character that truly achieves an Homeric level of divine beauty. Crazy Horse, Tashunke Witko, was quite simply one of the greatest men who ever lived. And Mari Sandoz is the greatest Writer known to me, worthy in every way of depicting a totally unique and hitherto unknown, un-writeable, Culture so profound in its truthfulness that it takes your breath away with the horror of how the Christian Americans methodically and self-righteously, utterly, destroyed it - and then bragging ever since how much better they were and are than the great Buffalo Nations. These of course are the obvious reasons why Crazy Horse is still dismissed by historians and literature academia as unworthy of their attention or praise - and Sandoz ignored in all the surveys of the 100 Greatest American Authors. Shame shame shame!! love the courage and tenacity and skill of this Woman, and the glorious power of that slight little Warrior who was equal to the Goodness of my beloved West.

First, I'm not a historian, but am reasonably well read in American History, leaning towards the Plains Indians. I only occasionally follow up on references, and don't want to get overwhelmed with minor characters or inundated with dates. While the facts are important, it must be wrapped in a well written story. I read the Marshall book first, which while excellent, leaves out a lot of the warts of the Lakotas. The internal rivalries were not as detailed, and the life was idealized. While Sandoz obviously holds Crazy horse in awe, she presents a more objective view of Crazy Horse and the Lakotas, and weaves an intriguing tale. Whether an expert in the field, just beginning to study the Plains Indians, or just looking for a well written story, Crazy Horse is a must read.

Mari Sandoz's 1942 biography, *Crazy Horse: The Strange Man of the Oglalas*, is widely considered a groundbreaking approach to the examination of the life and times of this great chief. This is due to the author's ability, as a non-Lakota, to understand the culture of the Lakota people. Raised on the Great Plains, Sandoz not only knew many Lakota, she had the opportunity to interview Lakota who personally knew Crazy Horse such as He Dog, Short Bull, Little Killer, Mrs. Carrie Slow Bear, White Calf, and Red Feather. Her work is largely based on these and previous interviews done by others as well as results of comprehensive research into the major historical records of the relationship between the Lakota and the white settlers. These include the archives of Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, and the Library of Congress. Aside from the historical value of the book itself, it stands apart for its poetry and simplicity. In her foreword, Sandoz writes "I have tried to tell not only the story of the man but something of the life of his people through that crucial time. To that end I have used the simplest words possible, hoping by Idiom and figures in the underlying rhythm pattern to say

some of the things of the Indian for which there are no white-man words, suggest something of his innate nature, something of his relationship to the earth and the sky and all that is between."

Sandoz attempted to write as much as possible from the Lakota perspective, using Lakota words and terminology as well as replicating the Lakota manner of speaking. As someone who grew up on the Great Plains with stories of the Lakota, her writing is clearly passionate and sympathetic. When she realized not much had been written about Crazy Horse, Sandoz made the decision to write the book. She reviewed the material compiled by Eleanor Hinman, who had started a biography but never finished. Sandoz and Hinman went together on a 3,000 mile trip in 1930 through Sioux country, visiting important historical sites and conducting interviews of the "few old-buffalo hunters still alive." This trip seems to have laid the foundation for Sandoz's biography unique in its incorporation of both oral and documented historical sources. Sandoz's approach to the biography appears to be a starting place for others who followed in her footsteps. Her picture of Crazy Horse is as the "strange man," known that way by followers and enemies alike. He did not boast of his accomplishments, he tended not to take scalps or capture horses, he did not seek out leadership, he was quiet, he often sought solitude, and he did not want to be a chief. Instead, it was almost as if the role of leader was thrust upon him. Sandoz also focused on the internal Lakota struggle between those who favored cooperation with the whites, known as "agency Lakota," and those who preferred the old ways who were followers of Crazy Horse. Sandoz wrote about some of Crazy Horse's key rivals in this internal Lakota struggle with a specific focus on Red Cloud. Her portrayal of Red Cloud as someone who chose to work with whites as a means of gaining personal prestige and power left a lasting negative impact on his reputation. Sandoz described Crazy Horse's dream and how it lined up with his destiny as a leader who would eventually be betrayed by his own people. Another personal aspect Sandoz addressed was Crazy Horse's romantic relationship with Black Buffalo Woman, portrayed as one of unrequited young love, loss, a love triangle, and loss again. Although others later questioned her portrayal of this and other events and excessive filling in of gaps in the record to present a certain story, she tells a good story. Her work personalized Crazy Horse and provided one explanation for his life's course. As the first thorough biography of Crazy Horse, Sandoz's interpretation set the standard for those who would follow, especially in framing the key events of his life. Her work stands apart as not only compelling history but important literature.

At times, the story lags a little, and 400 pages is a bit on the long side. But the end result is an amazing, enlightening, very sad story of one of the greatest men who ever lived on this earth. Mari Sandoz's story has inspired many books, including a new Native American classic called CRAZY

HORSE APPEARING (a full length e-book for \$3.99). It's written somewhat in the Sandoz style, but much more concise. It's also claimed that Crazy Horse Appearing has the only real photo of Crazy Horse ever found. But Mari Sandoz was the first author to publish a book about Crazy Horse. And she didn't even have the help of the internet. Mari Sandoz is the lady who first introduced this very great man to the world. I am certain that the spirit of Crazy Horse regards her as a friend. Crazy Horse Appearing

Great book, and the author's attempt at a history of Crazy Horse and the Sioux bands from their own perspective makes it original. You won't read another history book quite like this one. I'll leave it to the reader to determine how accurate the history is, yet one thing you can say about Sandoz, she didn't pull any punches and points the finger of blame at red man and white man alike for the travesty that was the plains Indian wars and the reservation system.

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