



*A female photojournalist finds universal wisdom
in common sense and uncommon work*

Making Circles

The Memoir of a Cowboy Journalist

By Barney Nelson

In *Making Circles*, Barney Nelson unveils working-class cowboy culture through the eyes of one who has lived the life she chronicles. From living on ranch camps to surviving both cowboy school and graduate school, Nelson's story is a journey through time and place, pointing out that cowboys inhabit every continent and century, from Lakota Indians and Hawaiian paniolos to Argentine gauchos and Australian ringers, from Pegasus to Cervantes and Tolstoy. Even Thoreau called himself a cowboy.

Nelson's story is both personal and expansive, guiding the reader in circles around the modern West, from Montana to Mexico. Along the way, she celebrates the many characters she has encountered and considers role models. Unafraid to challenge the status quo, Nelson fearlessly defends embattled ranchers as well as the humanities, while speaking truth to the powerful forces of environmentalism, tourism, and urban voters.

Both a primer for aspiring journalists and an insider's reflection on horse and ranching cultures, this tour de force memoir honors the practice of writing and its manifold benefits: embracing solitude, avoiding boredom, and accepting aging and death as part of human and animal life. Full of valuable tips, lessons learned and taught, and far-ranging musings on philosophy and poetry, *Making Circles* demonstrates brilliantly the value and meaning of the term "cowboy journalist."

Barney Nelson has published hundreds of articles in horse and cattle magazines and is the author of seven books, including *Voices and Visions of the American West* and *The Wild and the Domestic: Animal Representation, Ecocriticism, and Western American Literature*.

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