



# Nature and Spirituality in the Poems of Joy Harjo

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## Introduction

Joy Harjo is a renowned Native American poet. She was born on May 9, 1951, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She is the first Native American Poet Laureate, a position she has held since 2019. Harjo is to be called the poet of natural forces. Her collections of poems are evidence of this claim. Her poetry is deeply connected to the natural world and filled with a spiritual element. This research aims to show the themes of nature and spirituality in the "Remember" poem and to show animals as representations of these themes in the "Eagle Poem" and "She Had Some Horses" poems.

## Discussion

Native Americans have a unique way of experiencing spirituality through their deep connection with nature. They believe that everything in nature, from living beings to inanimate objects, has its own spirit and is interconnected. This reverence for nature is deeply ingrained in their culture, and they have a long history of peacefully coexisting with nature. Joy Harjo, being of Native American descent, draws inspiration from her identity and uses nature as a way to express her experiences and address the challenges faced by indigenous peoples. Harjo's poetry is the voice of the indigenous way of life.

Animals hold great significance in Native American culture and spirituality. They are seen as sacred beings and are believed to possess wisdom, power, and unique qualities that can guide and teach humans. In Joy Harjo's poetry, animals play a vital role as a representation of spirituality, nature, and the interconnectedness of all living beings. Eagles and horses are among the most common animals that appear in Harjo's poetry. In her poem "Eagle Poem," through the symbol of the eagle, Harjo invites us to open ourselves to the natural world, to listen to our inner voice, and to recognize the languages of nature that exist beyond words and sounds. Also, in the "She Had Some Horses" poem, Harjo invokes a sense of reverence for nature, connecting the reader to a deeper understanding of the natural world.

Moreover, Harjo's poem "Remember" is deeply rooted in Native American culture. It delves into the relationship between humans and nature. It is about remembering our birthplace, our origins, and the importance of gratitude towards the natural world. The poem's central idea is the interconnectedness of all life.

## Conclusion

This research paper explored the profound role that the themes of nature and spirituality play in Joy Harjo's poetry. By delving into the Indigenous perspective and examining specific poems, we have gained a deeper understanding of how Harjo's poetry reflects the deep connection between Indigenous people and the natural world. Also, by examining poems like "Eagle Poem," "She Had Some Horses," and "Remember," the analysis shows how Harjo utilizes various literary devices like symbolism, metaphor, and imagery to represent these themes.

## Methodology

This research, titled "Nature and Spirituality in the Poems of Joy Harjo," is based on a well-structured and close reading technique to analyze the themes of nature and spirituality that Harjo employed in her poetry. It analyzes how Native Americans' deep connection to the natural world has had a profound influence on her poetry. Also, it pays attention to the metaphors, imagery, and symbolism used by Harjo in depicting nature and spirituality in her poetry and explores their potential meanings.

## List of References

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