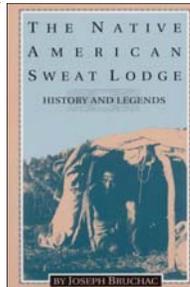


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A SAMPLE OF SOME BOOKS ON THE NATIVE AMERICAN SWEAT LODGE

The Native American Sweat Lodge
By Joseph Bruchac
143 pages \$12.95

The sweat lodge has many functions. It cleans and heals the body. It heals the mind, bringing clarity. It is a testing place, offering a rite of passage where a participant can show endurance, strength and courage. And finally it is a holy place where Native Americans can renew their connection to the cosmos and God. For decades, the U.S. government banned the use of Native American sweat lodges and destroyed those they found. By doing so, the government was attempting to destroy their culture. For Native Americans, the sweat lodge is a church, one of their four sacraments. Joseph Bruchac, part Abenaki Indian, is well qualified to tell the history and meaning of the sweat lodge as it was and still is practiced by native people. The legends he includes are teaching stories, indirectly explaining the sweat lodge to those who will hear.
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The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge
By Raymond A. Bucko
338 pages \$17.95

For centuries, a persistent and important component of Lakota religious life has been the Inipi, the ritual of the sweat lodge. The sweat lodge has changed little in appearance since its first recorded description in the late 17th century. The ritual itself consists of songs, prayers, and other actions conducted in a tightly enclosed, dark, and extremely hot environment. Participants who "sweat" together experience moral strengthening, physical healing, and the renewal of social and cultural bonds. Today, the sweat lodge ritual continues to be a vital part of Lakota religion. It has also been open to use, often controversial, by non-Indians. The ritual has recently become popular among Lakotas recovering from alcohol and drug addiction. This study is the first in-depth look at the history and significance of the Lakota sweat lodge. Bringing together data culled from historical sources and fieldwork on Pine Ridge Reservation. Bucko provides a detailed discussion of continuity and changes in the "sweat" ritual over time. He offers convincing explanations for the longevity of the ceremony and its continuing popularity.

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