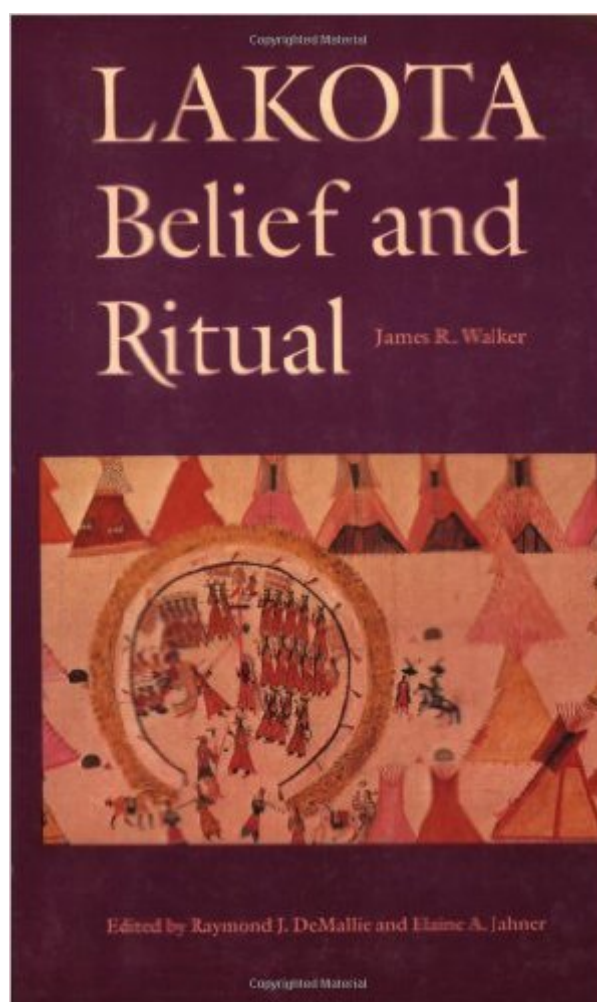


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Lakota Belief And Ritual



Synopsis

Provides raw narratives without any pretension of synthesis or analysis

Book Information

Paperback: 329 pages

Publisher: Bison Books; Revised ed. edition (May 1, 1991)

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Customer Reviews

This book is the litmus test for subsequent interpretations of the Lakota religion. Since the true authors felt that their culture was disappearing, they were extremely forthcoming with their information to Dr. Walker. All Lakota expressions of religion that follow this revelation of the Lakota medicine men are in fact derivative of it. Some have questioned the qualifications of the "informants" within Lakota society, but I have seen no contemporary Lakota belief or ritual that deviates from the broad strokes of this book. If you truly want to learn about traditional Lakota religion, start here, and then move on to Raymond J. DeMallie's edited texts under the title *The Sixth Grandfather*.

James Walker went to the Pine Ridge reservation in 1896 (as a Christian) to serve the Indians as a Medical Doctor. 18 years later when he left the reservation, he had adopted the Sioux form of Spirituality, and had become a wicasa wakan (holy man). He was trained by George Sword, and other medicine and holy people. Some of this material is very dry, and difficult reading because a large part of the book (especially the rituals and myths) were translated into English from the Language of the Sioux. But if you have a sincere wish to understand this form of Spirituality; this book is well worth reading. I do wish to confirm one statement in this book by wicasa wakan (George Sword). "Any pipe can be used in a sacred manner" I could NOT agree more! I have used a meerschaum pipe, a pipestone (catlinite) pipe, and a briar pipe. The condition of the heart and mind

is far more important than the kind of pipe one uses. I encourage questions and comments about my reviews; Two Bears. Wah doh Ogedoda (We give thanks Great Spirit)

Lakota Belief and Ritual is a book rich in oral history. It was recorded at the a time when there were First Nations members who had the personal experiences of a lifetime and whose tradition was an oral tradition. Dr. Walker (a physician and anthropologist) collected and preserved this oral history in the face of the destruction of most First Nation's cultures through the intervention of the European cultures. The narratives are all excellent and there are 90 + documents containing those first-person narratives along with several photographs. The Bison Books edition has an extensive (and very valuable) series of appendices, including an extensive (modern) bibliography. The original Walker papers (or the majority, at any rate) are now part of the Colorado Historical Society collection. A first rate piece of work by the editors, DeMallie & Jahner, working from the primary materials created and preserved by Dr. Walker and his family. An invaluable work. This book -or at least excerpts- should be part of any text on U.S. History. The inclusion of First Nations culture in our textbooks is rare, indeed.

In my obsession to learn about the Lakhota culture, I have read many books on the subject. I have just read The 6th Grandfather, now I am finishing Walker's book. Between these two books one can get a feeling and understanding of the Lakhota culture. I've always felt that instead of forcing "civilization" down the Native American throats, The Washichuns should have paid more attention to the beliefs of the Indians. Why are Christians myths any more valid than those of all other cultures? Shunghilaska imachiyapi

I purchased this book with the expectation of being able to use it as supplemental reading for a class that I teach. It is pretty accurate. I like the way the book is laid out with good sections so it is easy to assign certain sections to read. I would recommend this book to anybody that wants info on Lakota culture.

This contains a great deal of information now lost to many Lakota people and as such is helpful in reconstructing heritage and culture. Unfortunately it was not written in the Lakota language and must be read with an open mind and should be verified where problematic with a Lakota elder in order to capture the Truth within the text from a spiritual perspective.

Since so much of our teachings and stories are missing because of the interruption of our culture because of the invasion of the Europeans, this book is an awesome resource.

I am a serious student of Native American spirituality. I find this to be an excellent resource because it is based in documents actually created by Native Americans. The book is indexed, which I find a definite asset to any serious book I purchase. I also recommend any of the papers written by John G. Neihardt, and in particular *The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt* (1984, a Bison Book) *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions* (Enriched Classics) *Between Earth & Sky: Legends of Native American Sacred Places* *365 Days of Walking the Red Road: The Native American Path to Leading a Spiritual Life Every Day [365 DAYS OF WALKING THE RED ROAD]* *Rainbow Tribe: Ordinary People Journeying on the Red Road*

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