



Coming Full Circle: Spirituality and Wellness among Native Communities in the Pacific Northwest

Suzanne Crawford O'Brien

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Coming Full Circle is an interdisciplinary exploration of the relationships between spirituality and health in several contemporary Coast Salish and Chinook communities in western Washington from 1805 to 2005. Suzanne Crawford O'Brien examines how these communities define what it means to be healthy, and how recent tribal community-based health programs have applied this understanding to their missions and activities. She also explores how contemporary definitions, goals, and activities relating to health and healing are informed by Coast Salish history and also by indigenous spiritual views of the body, which are based on an understanding of the relationship between self, ecology, and community.

Coming Full Circle draws on a historical framework in reflecting on contemporary tribal health-care efforts and the ways in which they engage indigenous healing traditions alongside twenty-first-century biomedicine. The book makes a strong case for the current shift toward tribally controlled care, arguing that local, culturally distinct ways of healing and understanding illness must be a part of contemporary Native healthcare.

Combining in-depth archival research, extensive ethnographic participant-based field work, and skillful scholarship on theories of religion and embodiment, Crawford O'Brien offers an original and masterful analysis of contemporary Native Americans and their worldviews.

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