



Powwowing Among the Pennsylvania Dutch: A Traditional Medical Practice in the Modern World (Pennsylvania German History and Culture)

David W. Kriebel

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Known in Pennsylvania Dutch as *Brauche* or *Braucherei*, the folk-healing practice of powwowing was thought to draw upon the power of God to heal all manner of physical and spiritual ills. Yet some people believed—and still believe today—that this power to heal came not from God, but from the devil. Controversy over powwowing came to a climax in 1929 with the York Hex Murder Trial, in which one powwower killed another who, he believed, had placed a hex on him.

Based on seven years of fieldwork and extensive interviews, David Kriebel's study reveals the vibrant world, history, and culture of powwowing in southeastern and central Pennsylvania. He describes, compares, and contrasts powwowing practices of the past and the present; discusses in detail the belief in powwowing as healing; and assesses the future of *Braucherei*. Biographical sketches of seven living powwowers shed additional light on this little-understood topic.

A groundbreaking inquiry into Pennsylvania German culture and history, *Powwowing Among the Pennsylvania Dutch* opens a window onto an archaic, semi-mystical tradition still very much in practice today.

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