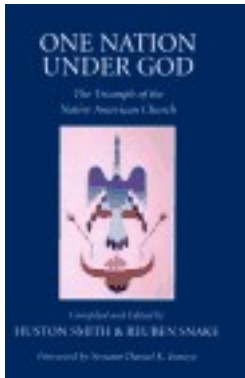


One Nation under God



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"Two very important books have appeared in 1996: 'Reuben Snake: Your Humble Serpent' and 'One Nation Under God: The Triumph of the Native American Church.' I say they're important because they are designed for the U.S. Government and the American people as an audience. The books are not teaching Indigenous people about peyote; they're documents to voice the concerns of indigenous Nations, to protect those of us who participate in the spirituality of peyote -- as members of the Native American Church or as individuals". (The Native American Press, Ojibwe News) "One Nation Under God is an essential and informative contribution to Native American studies reading lists". (The Midwest Book Review) "Reuben Snake's personal testimony on behalf of the sacred peyote is seconded and supported by the chapter 'Voices of the Native American Church, ' which presents a persuasive collection of short, heartfelt testimonials... about the life-affirming teachings of love and respect that are at the heart of the peyote way". (Shaman's Drum) This book celebrates the endurance of the Native American Church, which now has some 80 chapters throughout the country. Prayer meetings, the sacramental use of peyote, and the significance of various practices and objects are described. Eloquent testimony of Church members from different tribes demonstrates that peyote is not used to obtain "visions" but to heal the body and spirit and to teach righteousness. The authors describe the legal battle to

overturn the Supreme Court's Smith decision of 1990, which cited peyote use to deny the Native American Church the First Amendment right to "the free exercise of religion". The American Indian Religious Freedom Act Amendments, passed by Congress in 1994, providing an exemption allowing the use of peyote by the Native American Church, was overturned by the Supreme Court in 1997.

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