



12-1-2013

## Shifting Borders and a Tattered Passport: Intellectual Journeys of a Mormon Academic

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### Recommended Citation

Terry, Roger and Mauss, Armand L. (2013) "Shifting Borders and a Tattered Passport: Intellectual Journeys of a Mormon Academic," *BYU Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 52 : Iss. 4 , Article 16.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol52/iss4/16>

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*The Viper on the Hearth*, updated edition by Terryl L. Givens (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Terryl Givens's classic study on Mormon literature entitled *The Viper on the Hearth* is known as one of the most in-depth literary studies of anti-Mormon texts. Givens himself calls this a look at "the long and tumultuous relationship between Mormonism and American society" (5). This updated edition brings the study up to the present by adding consideration of the public media and cultural shifts of the last sixteen years.

The first part of this book, "Mormonism, Politics, and History," gives a basic history of Mormonism and puts it in context of the culture and religions of the United States. In doing this, Givens answers many complex questions about the Church's place in society, bringing those questions and answers up to recent events. Part two, "Mormonism and Fiction," shows how Mormons have been represented—generally negatively—in literature and popular culture since the founding of the religion. This part contains most of the updates in this new edition, the most significant changes being found in the final chapter.

Those looking for Givens's signature sharp and insightful analysis, particularly of recent media events, should not be disappointed, although the book does not give an in-depth treatment of the recent "Mormon Moment," since the wave of media attention surrounding HBO's *Big Love*, John Krakauer's book *Under the Banner of Heaven*, the Broadway musical *The Book of Mormon*, and Mitt Romney's two presidential bids cannot be covered fully in a volume of this breadth. Still, this book comes highly recommended. Its updated information will be valuable, if not essential, for all students of Mormon literature and arts.

—Mickell Summerhays

*Shifting Borders and a Tattered Passport: Intellectual Journeys of a Mormon Academic*, by Armand L. Mauss (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2012).

"When the intellectual history of late-twentieth-century Mormonism is written," begins Richard Bushman in the foreword to this memoir, "Armand Mauss will occupy a preeminent position" (ix). For this reason alone, Mauss's reminiscences should be of interest to any serious student of Mormonism.

Mauss takes his title from the following quote by Neal A. Maxwell: "The LDS scholar has his citizenship in the Kingdom, but carries his passport into the professional world—not the other way around." But Mauss's observation that the borders have shifted over time and his passport is tattered reminds us that travel between the Church and the world is rarely a pleasure trip, especially for those who make the commute frequently. "Not only has the intellectual establishment in Athens sometimes seemed wary of accepting my passport when I have entered as a scholar in religious (especially Mormon) studies," Mauss observes, "but I have often found suspicion about the authenticity of my passport even when I have tried to negotiate it in Jerusalem itself—in the Mormon ecclesiastical kingdom" (1).

Mauss's memoir is a fascinating view of a consequential career, but it is much more. It is also a perceptive and personal accounting of how devotion to a discipline and commitment to a religious tradition can intersect in ways that produce benefits for both the academy and the faith community. His work in sociology enabled him to see how the LDS Church adjusted its degree of tension with the surrounding society in order to both survive and yet remain distinctive. His insight was new to his discipline and has shaped the way sociologists now

view religious movements. It also led to Mauss's influential *The Angel and the Beehive*, which offered a new lens through which Mormons could view their own history, particularly twentieth-century Mormonism, a period most Latter-day Saints had inhabited without really examining in any depth.

The first chapter is titled "Not a Boring Life," and details of that life include growing up in the depression and war years; a mission to New England that included seven-month stretches of proselytizing with "no purse or scrip," referred to by mission president S. Dilworth Young as "country tracting"; a postmission stint in Japan, where his father was mission president, where Armand studied at a Jesuit university and worked at an army intelligence agency, and where he met Ruth Hathaway, who became his wife and the mother of their eight children; his perseverance in pursuing graduate studies over many years while teaching at a high school and a community college; and the opportunities that led to a long and productive career in academia.

The bulk of the book, however, is devoted to the challenges of his chosen discipline (including the challenges

some sociological theories posed for his faith) and to his involvement in Mormon studies, which was put on the back burner until he had earned tenure and a full professorship. Once free to study the sociology of religion, he found himself near the epicenter of many important developments in Mormonism. Mauss's interest in the race issue, his theory of how religions walk the tightrope between retrenchment and assimilation, his long involvement with *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, his association with BYU Studies as both an Academy member and a book reviewer, his participation in Claremont Graduate University's foray into Mormon studies, and his view of Mormonism from an academic post outside of Utah all provide a framework that has enabled him to study LDS history and culture in the latter half of the twentieth century from a unique vantage point. This memoir, if anything, is a personal and professional view of the LDS Church during a time of great growth and transition. As such, it should be a valuable addition to the library of anyone interested in Mormon studies.

—Roger Terry