



1-1-2014

The Mormon Quest for Glory: The Religious World of the Latter-day Saints

Holly Smith

Melvyn Hammarberg

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq>

Recommended Citation

Smith, Holly and Hammarberg, Melvyn (2014) "The Mormon Quest for Glory: The Religious World of the Latter-day Saints," *BYU Studies Quarterly*: Vol. 53 : Iss. 1 , Article 21.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol53/iss1/21>

This Notice is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in *BYU Studies Quarterly* by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

The Mormon Quest for Glory: The Religious World of the Latter-day Saints, by Melvyn Hammarberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

The Mormon Quest for Glory is a look into the Latter-day Saint religion and culture, as examined by anthropologist and professor Melvyn Hammarberg. Hammarberg initially began his twenty-five years of study of Latter-day Saints when working on an undergraduate paper about Joseph Smith Jr., eventually taking a closer look at the Church during a graduate program that focused on American civilization. He has since shifted from studying the history of the Church to studying the way the Church functions in the world currently. Through this book, Hammarberg seeks “to provide a qualitative picture of the church in the contemporary present” (13).

In *The Mormon Quest for Glory*, Hammarberg discusses his findings from an ethnographic study involving direct observations of the Church at a local level. The book traces the religious and cultural aspects of the Church through various age groups, focusing on children, young adults, and adults; a special look is given to converts to the

Church and the path to becoming LDS. Hammarberg examines Church doctrines and the way they are presented to each age group, and also discusses key principles such as the organization of the Church, missionary work, marriage, and the role of temples. His discussions include personal observations from his time studying the Church, as well as interviews of Latter-day Saints.

Hammarberg describes the audience as “the educated lay public, as well as scholars and other students of the LDS. . . . The lay public includes all members of the church, as well as those who have a special interest in the LDS” (13). This book will appeal to anyone interested in learning more about the basic principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from an unbiased viewpoint. *The Mormon Quest for Glory* is different than other existing LDS survey books in that it provides an in-depth sociological look at the religion in a way that has not been done since Thomas O’Dea’s *The Mormons* was published in 1957. Hammarberg’s immersion into LDS culture allows him to write knowledgeably about the Church as it stands today.

—Holly Smith