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Women and Mormonism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

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From the Outside Looking In is a fascinating collection of lectures that captures both the complexity of Mormonism, with its many facets, and the legacy of the Tanner Lecture series. Anyone interested in Mormon identity, Church history, and the Church's role moving forward will enjoy reading this volume of scholarship.

—Emily Cook

Kate Holbrook and Matthew Bowman, eds., *Women and Mormonism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016)

This offering from the University of Utah Press showcases current scholarship on women and Mormonism and was edited and compiled by Kate Holbrook and Matthew Bowman, seasoned scholars in the field of religious (and specifically Mormon) studies. The book comprises a tapestry of essays, mostly drawn from an August 2012 conference about women and the LDS Church. The theme of the conference and subsequently this book is, appropriately, agency—both a common central theme in the field of women's studies and an essential component of Mormon doctrine since Joseph Smith.

In the growing corpus of academic publications about Mormon women (*At the Pulpit* and *A House Full of Females* being a couple of the most recent), *Women and Mormonism* is unique in its breadth and scope. As stated by the editors, this collection is the first work in over twenty years to offer “a combined thematic, cultural, and historical approach to the study of Mormon women” (3). In addition, one of the book's primary purposes is to inspire and promote additional scholarship, and in that regard, the book moves beyond the stated theme of agency and paints

a picture of not only the present state of studies on women and Mormonism but also what these studies could and should look like in the future.

Those interested in seeing a more inclusive approach to women's and Mormon studies—one that both honors traditional historical work and embraces new disciplines and new voices—will take great interest in this volume. The editors included perspectives from a diverse group of scholars and “gathered essays from outside the historical and theological disciplines to address myriad aspects of the Mormon experience” (3). These other disciplines include the social sciences and personal narratives. In this book, readers will find contributions from scholars who are well published in the field of Mormon studies and/or women's studies (for example, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Claudia Bushman, and Melissa Wei-Tsing Inouye). They will also find non-LDS perspectives (for instance, that of Mary Farrel Bednarowski, a Roman Catholic). In addition to essays by several other scholars, the collection includes personal accounts from nonscholar laypersons (including narratives collected by Neylan McBaine and others as part of the Mormon Women Project). And several of the essays feature the perspectives of women of color and of women from outside of the United States (for example, P. Jane Hafen, a Taos Pueblo Mormon scholar, and Mariama Kallon, an asylee from Sierra Leone).

The twenty-one essays in this collection are organized into four parts: “Historical Methodology Perspectives,” “Historical Narrative Perspectives,” “Contemporary Social Science Perspectives,” and “Contemporary Personal Perspectives.” Given the multidisciplinary nature of the collection, the essays draw from a breadth of sources, including primary documents, surveys, interviews, and oral

histories. A short sampling of the topics discussed include women's agency in the context of priesthood authority and polygamy, women's material culture and ritual objects, Heavenly Mother, LDS women in the Pacific in the nineteenth century, the issue of reformation within the Church, and Mormon women and gender norms in Europe.

The essays in this collection reveal Mormon women's studies to be a rich and broad field with room for many applications. This book is an excellent overview of the many facets of this field that is continuing to grow and garner interest and offers a glimpse of where studies of women and Mormonism may move in the future.

—Alison Palmer

J. Spencer Fluhman, Kathleen Flake, and Jed Woodworth, eds., *To Be Learned Is Good: Essays on Faith and Scholarship in Honor of Richard Lyman Bushman* (Provo, Utah: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University, 2017)

To Be Learned Is Good is a collection of essays given at a scholars' colloquium in June 2016 that explores the tensions between faith and scholarship. This colloquium was held in honor of Richard Lyman Bushman, Gouverneur Morris Professor of History emeritus at Columbia University, who has made significant contributions to Mormon history and scholarship. Among his many publications is the groundbreaking biography *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*. According to the editors of *To Be Learned Is Good*, the essays in this volume feature "twin commitments to academic and religious worlds" and "reflect our vibrant and productive moment in LDS intellectual life that

Richard himself helped to create and shape" (x).

The book is split into six main sections, each of which comprises an introduction and three essays. The first section is titled "Historians Are Never Innocents." In this section, David D. Hall, Philip L. Barlow, Terryl L. Givens, and Mauro Properzi discuss what to do when faith and scholarship seem to clash and how religious prejudices affect scholarship, including how to confront the fear that religious prejudices will damage one's scholarship and how religious prejudices can actually aid scholarship. In the second section, "Anxiety and Obligation in Scholarship," Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp, David Holland, Melissa Wei-Tsing Inouye, and Kate Holbrook focus on how religion relates to the obligations scholars have in certain relationships, such as those between teachers and students, the living and the dead, and universality and particularity.

In the third section, "Reenvisioning Mormonism," Ann Taves, Adam S. Miller, Deidre Nicole Green, and Jared Hickman talk about discussing and studying Mormonism from the perspective of various disciplines; they highlight specifically history, theology, feminism, philosophy, and literary criticism. The fourth section is titled "Can Historians Quest after Religious Truth?" In this section, Robert A. Goldberg, Jana Riess, Matthew J. Grow, and Matthew Bowman discuss the tension between history and religion, the issues scholarship can create in a religious setting, the dangers of using history as a basis for faith, and the importance of being objective and nonjudgmental when teaching and performing scholarly work.

The fifth section is titled "Scholarship in Its Purest and Best Form?" Richard D.