



7-1-2020

Dime Novel Mormons

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Recommended Citation

Anderson, Veronica (2020) "Dime Novel Mormons," *BYU Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 59 : Iss. 2 , Article 22.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol59/iss2/22>

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Dime Novel Mormons, edited and introduced by Michael Austin and Ardis E. Parshall, *The Mormon Image in Literature* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2017)

In *Dime Novel Mormons*, editors Michael Austin and Ardis E. Parshall invite the readers to experience late nineteenth- to early twentieth-century portrayals of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members. Beginning in the 1860s, dime novels gained popularity in the United States. These novels, full of thrilling storylines and heroic characters, often included negative stereotypes of various groups of people. Among them, “Mormons” were often depicted as murderous villains who kidnapped women for polygamist marriages and operated an underground society of Danites—dangerous vigilantes out to kill “gentiles” (x–xi).

After a short but informative introduction, the book presents the full text of four dime novels that include examples of how members of the Church were portrayed in these sensational stories. *Dime Novel Mormons* includes the following novels: *Eagle Plume, the White Avenger. A Tale of the Mormon Trail* (1870), by Albert W. Aiken (1); *The Doomed Dozen; or, Dolores, the Danite’s Daughter* (1881), by Prentiss Ingraham under the pseudonym Dr. Frank Powell (59); *Frank Merriwell among the Mormons; or, the Lost Tribe of Israel* (1897), most likely by Gilbert Patten under the pseudonym Burt L. Standish (149); and *The Bradys among the Mormons; or, Secret Work in Salt Lake City* (1903), by “A New York Detective” (185).

The editors bring combined expertise in both literature and history. Michael Austin, who has a PhD in English literature from the University of California at Santa Barbara, is an author or editor of

seven books and many smaller works. His book *Useful Fiction* was named a CHOICE outstanding academic title in 2011. Ardis E. Parshall is an author, historian, and freelance researcher specializing in Latter-day Saint history. With Paul Reeve, she coedited *Mormonism: A Historical Encyclopedia* and is presently writing a history of the Church told through the lives of Mormon women.

Dime Novel Mormons will appeal to readers interested in American and literary history, nineteenth-century pop fiction, and specifically the history of the calumny of the Latter-day Saints.

—Veronica Anderson

The Saints Abroad: Missionaries Who Answered Brigham Young’s 1852 Call to the Nations of the World, edited by Reid L. Neilson and R. Mark Melville (Provo: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2019)

In a specially called conference in August 1852, the First Presidency issued a summons to over one hundred elders, most of whom were husbands and fathers, to serve missions to “the four quarters of the globe” (286). The global reach and large number of these calls were startling at the time and reflected an impressive devotion on the part of the elders, their families, and their leaders.

From the beginnings of the Restoration, taking the gospel message to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people had been contemplated, and in the late 1830s and 1840s, under the leadership of Joseph Smith, the global missionary project was modestly started. This 1852 initiative, however, signaled a turning point for the internationalization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day