

him and his efforts as a historian, had I known of the essays preceding the actual letters, I may have been less likely to read the entire book.

However, given my partial negative review above, I do think the editors did a fantastic job introducing Andrew Jenson as a man and historian to the reader. I believe the editors did exactly what they intended to do and illustrated every facet of this man to the reader. I feel that the true purpose of this book, given the title, should have been to highlight the letters themselves. In this book, Jenson appeared to be the centerpiece.

Finally, the annotations to the letters are extremely helpful and add a second layer of factual substance. Like the fact-finding mission of these three men, this book and the footnotes were no doubt a fact-finding mission for me.

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Newell G. Bringhurst and Craig L. Foster, eds., *The Persistence of Polygamy: Fundamentalist Mormon Polygamy from 1890 to the Present*, Volume 3, Independence, Mo.: John Whitmer Books, 2015. xiv + 629 pp. Paperback; \$44.95; ISBN 978-1-9349-0119-9.

Reviewed by Adam J. Powell

The third volume of Newell Bringhurst and Craig Foster's trilogy on Mormon polygamy may follow the release of two sister volumes, contributing to the exciting growth of literature on Mormon history, but *The Persistence of Polygamy: Fundamentalist Mormon Polygamy from 1890 to the Present* is unique in many ways. An edited collection of sixteen historico-cultural essays plus a "historical bibliography," the book ranges from compelling investigations of underexplored narratives (Hale's "John Taylor's 1886 Revelation") to social-scientific, mixed-method studies of polygamous ancestry (Watson's "Polygamous Ancestry of Contemporary Fundamentalist Mormons"), all in an effort to illuminate the history of Mormon polygamy from the years surrounding the 1890 Manifesto to the present day. Adding to its uniqueness is the insiders' perspectives of polygamy featured in a number of chapters, including Joseph Lyman Jessop's religious memoir of life among the Allred group ("A Personal Perspective: Growing Up and Out of the Polygamist Community of Pinesdale, Montana"). However, the volume also includes contributions of a theological bend and others more accurately described as studies of cultural anthropology. At nearly 650 pages, of course, the volume

is quite literally unparalleled in its coverage of post-Manifesto Mormon polygamy, and readers will therefore likely appreciate the choice to publish the title in paperback at a reasonable price point.

Those peculiarities, such as its size and diversity of analytical perspectives, betray the book's vices even while spotlighting its virtues. From the outset, readers familiar with Mormon studies generally and the basic contributions of John Whitmer Books specifically (not to mention the preceding volumes of this particular trilogy) will recognize the amalgam of specialist and informed-lay compositions. The editors should be commended for integrating sometimes incongruous chapters, producing a singular work that often exhibits impressive scope and near encyclopedic reference potential. Indeed, the editorial decision to include a bibliographic essay covering not only Mormon polygamy but also polygamy in the Christian Bible, Protestantism, and the Islamic tradition, as well as their accommodation of the complete 1929 account of "John Taylor's 1886 Revelation," means that the volume is likely to serve as a useful resource for students of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Mormonism. Again, the breadth of inquiry would be difficult to surpass, with many, many branches of fundamentalism enjoying respectful discussion between the book's covers.

Of course, this third volume of *The Persistence of Polygamy* contains all of the usual shortcomings of edited anthologies. In the introductory chapter, the editors establish a sizable yet regrettably loose agenda for all three volumes of their trilogy: to explore "the various aspects of Mormon plural marriage as it evolved from the time of Joseph Smith Jr. to the present" (21). Admittedly, publishers are now quite wary of edited collections and rarely seem shy to note their reluctance. This often results in pressure to perform editorial alchemy, turning the raw materials of author contributions into a title of precision and unified focus. In this case, however, one suspects that the imprecise nature of the topic resulted less from publisher imposition and more from an honest effort to blend uneven compositions in the hopes of growing the relatively gaunt body of knowledge concerning Mormon fundamentalism.

As Mormon studies matures, the resources and publications of the field must keep pace with the broadening audience and deepening levels of analysis. Unfortunately, this volume suffers from a distracting imbalance, both in the quality of writing and in the levels of critical engagement with the material. Given the diversity of perspectives, this is largely inevitable. Situating memoir alongside social-scientific analysis, for instance, can create a destabilizing juxtaposition. It should also be noted that the organization, and therefore line of argumentation, of some chapters (e.g., 10 and 16) would benefit from the simple inclusion of section divisions. At least one other chapter (Wilde's "Section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants: A Fundamentalist Mormon Perspective") lacks consistency in its formatting, inexplicably (to this reviewer) forgoing footnotes in favor of internal citations

on some pages (510, 514). To be clear, such shortcomings do not overshadow the value of the book as a compilation of largely *emic* perspective. In the case of Wilde's contribution on section 132 of Doctrine and Covenants, for instance, its failings do not rob it of its usefulness as a fundamentalist Mormon angle on the relationship of scripture to collective identity as well as belief to behavior. Furthermore, its survey of the history of section 132 is enough to justify its place in the anthology.

In the end, the import of this final installment of *The Persistence of Polygamy* lies in its willingness to address this comparatively contentious, yet arguably integral, aspect of Mormonism's history and sociocultural position, accomplishing that admirable goal by giving voice to many who have personal ties to Mormon fundamentalism. Its breadth of inquiry and the almost ethnographic approach of many of its essays helps counteract the sometimes discordant presentation and will likely situate the volume as a notable supplement to the more dispassionate existing works on polygamy by scholars such as Richard S. Van Wagoner and Brian C. Hales.

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Adam J. Powell, *Irenaeus, Joseph Smith, and God-Making Heresy*, Madison, Wis.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2015. 267 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. Hardback; \$85.00; ISBN 978-1-61147-871-6.

Reviewed by Cristina Rosetti

Adam J. Powell's work utilizes a robust theoretical framework to present the connection between the opposition faced by religious communities and the development of new doctrines, specifically deification. To illustrate this connection, Powell uses a comparative method that analyzes the experience and doctrinal outcomes of Christians in the second century and nineteenth-century Mormons. Powell posits that his work is founded on the premise that heresy serves as a significant tool for analysis and that an "elective affinity" exists between new religions that experience opposition and accusations of heresy (6). This is particularly valuable for scholars of Mormonism's early history and the effects of persecution on the community and doctrinal formation.

The text is divided into two parts, each containing two chapters. In addition, the author offers a conclusion that summarizes the central argument. From *Journal of Mormon History*, Vol. 43, No. 3, July 2017. Copyright 2017 by the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois. Complimentary copy--not for distribution without permission.