

Heaven can be almost whatever an individual Mormon envisions her to be" (74).

These articles have stimulated research and discussion, both of which have been further fueled by the diversity of Mormon women themselves.

—Doris R. Dant

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*Women, Family, and Utopia: Communal Experiments of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons*, by Lawrence Foster (Syracuse University Press, 1991)

"Gentiles rush in where Saints fear to tread" might be a good summary for Lawrence Foster's *Women, Family, and Utopia*. Drawing on his research published in *Religion and Sexuality: Three American Communal Experiments of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981) and previously published articles, Foster looks at women in the Shaker, Oneida, and Mormon communities. Despite Foster's efforts to provide a continuing thread to tie the theories together, the book still reads like disconnected essays.

The information is not all a rehash, though. Foster "updates" the chapters by including modern feminist jargon and trying to imagine how women of today would view the positions of their sisters in the past. With respect to the Mormons, he believes that the Church gave women liberating opportunities in the nineteenth century but is repressive today, and he attempts to analyze data according to that hypothesis. Foster, however, fails to

recognize that Mormon women in the past were not as emancipated as he supposes, and he oversimplifies the complex queries female Latter-day Saints deal with today.

Yet he is willing to ask the hard questions about women in the Mormon Church, past and present, that some "inside" scholars might shy away from. Foster at least gives us a point from which to begin a discussion.

—Jessie Embry

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*Scriptural Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, annotated by Richard Galbraith (Deseret Book, 1993)

Before buying this hefty volume, take a good look. When I first saw this book's cover, I was thrilled: here (I thought) is a new book discussing Joseph Smith's teachings about various scriptural topics. Instead I was surprised to find a verbatim reprinting of the familiar 1976 edition of Joseph Fielding Smith's 1938 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, augmented with three brief additions, one alteration, and thousands of scripture reference footnotes.

Those footnotes were generated by computer searching, a procedure that hits a few real gems but also tons of unsifted scree. Some footnotes lead the reader to specific quotes, but others are based on single words or loose verbal or conceptual similarities. I would have appreciated some indication of which word or phrase is tied to each scripture reference, how the less-obvious scriptures are pertinent to the text, or when one might believe

that Joseph Smith had these particular scriptures in mind as he spoke.

While this book will serve well to encourage more meticulous study of the teachings of Joseph Smith in light of his unparalleled scriptural fluency, the volume missed a good opportunity to utilize some of the recent textual research on the words of Joseph Smith.

Nevertheless, the title has an undeniable lure to it. It will undoubtedly sell like hotcakes.

—John W. Welch

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*Temple and Cosmos*, by Hugh W. Nibley, vol. 12 in the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley (Deseret Book and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1992)

If the temple is to be seen as the cosmic mountain, then think of this book as a mountaineering guide. A good guide knows the terrain, the routes of ascent, the weather, the equipment, and everything necessary to lead a party successfully to the summit. More than that, a good guide loves to climb.

*Temple and Cosmos* puts the temple on the map and marks all the main features of its idealized topography and eternal coordinates. It discusses temple gear, clothing, compasses, symbols, holy ground, and the rules of the trail as one makes the step-by-step journey upward into the presence of the Lord. It expands the enjoyment of each vista that opens beneath the rising trekker, and it exults in the view from the top. It reminisces with others like Adam, Moses, Benjamin, apostles of Jesus, and the Prophet

Joseph, who have left their names in the registry at the cairn on the lofty summit. The book contains sixteen chapters, essays, talks, articles, notes, and comments, together with copious illustrations.

No guide is perfect, but every page of this book reflects the wisdom of an old man of the mountains—one whose deep love of the peak and whose constant attention to its details have produced remarkable insights and the impelling desire to share them with others. I can't think of a better guide to do some climbing with. And after all, you wouldn't want to climb Mt. Everest without an expert along.

—John W. Welch