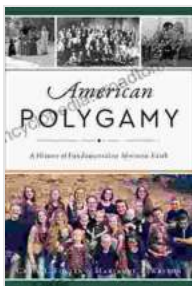


Unveiling the Secrets of American Polygamy: A Journey into the History of Fundamentalist Mormon Faith

Step into the shadowy realm of American polygamy, where the boundaries of faith and societal norms intertwine. This captivating book delves into the enigmatic history of the fundamentalist Mormon faith, exploring its origins, beliefs, and practices. From the controversial teachings of Joseph Smith to the tragic events of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, you will uncover the hidden truths behind this fascinating subculture.



American Polygamy: A History of Fundamentalist Mormon Faith by Craig L. Foster

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 11635 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 414 pages
Lending	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported

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The Genesis of American Polygamy

The seeds of American polygamy were sown in the early days of the Mormon movement. In 1831, Joseph Smith, the founder of the Latter-day Saint Church, secretly introduced the doctrine of plural marriage, claiming it

was a divine revelation. This practice, rooted in ancient biblical texts, challenged conventional notions of family and marriage.

Under the leadership of Brigham Young, Smith's successor, polygamy became an integral part of Mormon society in the 19th century. Young established a "United Free Download," a communal system where multiple wives and children lived under one roof, creating a complex web of familial relationships and allegiances.

Polygamy in Practice

Within fundamentalist Mormon communities, polygamy was not merely an abstract belief but a lived reality. Men could have multiple wives, each occupying a distinct status and role within the family hierarchy. Wives were expected to be subservient, prioritize the needs of their husband, and bear numerous children.

Polygamous families faced unique challenges and complexities. They often lived in isolation, shielded from the judgment of the outside world. Women in these communities endured physical and emotional hardships, including forced marriages, domestic violence, and ostracism from mainstream society.

The Mountain Meadows Massacre

The dark underbelly of polygamy was gruesomely exposed in 1857 during the Mountain Meadows Massacre. A group of Mormon settlers attacked a wagon train of emigrants, killing more than 120 people, including women and children. This horrific event, motivated by religious zealotry and fear of outsiders, cast a long shadow over the history of American polygamy.

The Rise and Fall of Fundamentalism

After the United States government outlawed polygamy in the late 19th century, fundamentalist Mormon groups emerged, rejecting the mainstream church's abandonment of the practice. These groups, led by charismatic leaders such as Warren Jeffs, established their own isolated communities, determined to preserve their religious beliefs and polygamy.

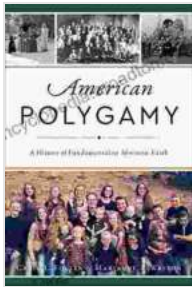
In recent decades, fundamentalist Mormon communities have made headlines due to their controversial practices. They have been accused of forced marriages, child abuse, and shunning of ex-members. These groups continue to exist on the fringes of society, their secretive and insular nature posing challenges to law enforcement and social services.

Unraveling the Legacy

The legacy of American polygamy is a complex and multifaceted one. It is a tale of religious freedom, cultural identity, and the dark consequences of unchecked power. The fundamentalist Mormon faith, with its controversial practice of polygamy, remains a fascinating and unsettling chapter in American history.

Additional Resources

- [PBS: The Mormons](#)
- [Smithsonian: The Secret Life of Brigham Young, America's Most Notorious Polygamist](#)
- [Our Book Library: American Polygamy: A History of Fundamentalist Mormon Faith](#)



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