

complex by the inclusion of members from the South, with their slaves, and the returned Pacific Island missionaries, with their Polynesian converts. Add more: the less faithful Saints who did not care for the cold of Utah or the restrictions placed upon them there. The stage is set for the great drama that is played out.

The LDS church held a central position in the colony with apostles Charles C. Rich and Amasa M. Lyman resident emissaries of President Brigham Young. Under them the colony was founded and managed. The author sees clearly the devastating effect on the colony of Brigham Young's initial support turned awry and eventual opposition. Divisions plagued the colony.

Chapter six is a favorite exposition of the social history of the people sacrificing and helping all to enjoy the blessings of the gospel plan. The chapter shows how the people lived, worshipped, and played together. This was not Utah, but California, where others could acquire free land and run for public office without approval of the local high council. Mormon political practice took a different position with regard to democracy. Church

unity in politics was hard to establish and retain.

By the time of the "Mormon War," the stage had been set for the removal of the "true saints" from the place that President Young had come to detest. Chapter eight, "Exodus and After," gives the story of what happened as the settlers had to give up on payment for the remainder of the purchase and get only what they could to cross the desert and return to live in near poverty in the communities of southern Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. It is a tragic story of loss of property and homes, of families split up, of travel most difficult. Then the travellers learn the war was over while they were still on the march, and that with a little help from Brigham Young the colony could have survived and become prosperous enough so that those who wanted to leave could do so without so much pain and sacrifice.

The extensive bibliography attests to the fact that the text is well founded on appropriate sources. The history of Mormon San Bernardino has been written!

Fundamentalist Polygamists

Polygamous Families in Contemporary Society. By Irwin Altman and Joseph Ginat (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

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IRWIN ALTMAN, OF THE UNIVERSITY of Utah, and Joseph Ginat, of the University of Haifa, one a social-environmental psychologist, the other an anthropologist, studied twenty-seven contemporary polygamous families in the American West. They start with a brief history of polygyny (the technical

name for a man having several wives) in the Mormon church and the development of fundamentalist movements which continue to practice polygamy. They then describe their sample who live in a rural and an urban community. These families are numbered, and the communities have fictional names and general characteristics "for purposes of their anonymity." The authors caution, "Many present-day fundamentalist communities are similar. ... Readers are therefore advised not to leap to conclusions about the identities of people or groups" (61).

Altman and Ginat justify their small sample by explaining they wanted to look at a few families in depth. They visited the informants in their homes, talked on the telephone, invited family members to Altman's home, and met in restaurants. From 1987 to 1992 they conducted 189 interviews or observations. Frequently both authors were present; both kept field notes. From these they compiled information about marriages, home life, schedules, and connections between family members. They compare the dyadic (two individuals such as a husband and wife) and communal relationships. While they found no "typical" families, they concluded that in most families the focus was on the link between the husband and wife or the wife and her children rather than the husbands, wives, and children working together as a unit. Their explanations increased my understanding of current polygamous families.

Each chapter highlights one aspect of contemporary polygyny. For example, there are chapters on courtship patterns, marriage ceremonies, living arrangements, and schedules. First, the authors summarize the expe-

riences of polygynous societies throughout the world. After giving this background, they review the experiences of several families from their sample. Stories of nineteenth-century Mormons (from secondary sources) are included in the middle of this discussion to show that the contemporary families are very similar to LDS church-sanctioned marriages.

Occasionally the authors even slip and call their study group "Mormon plural families" (218). I am offended because, although the fundamentalists believe they are following Mormon traditions, technically they are not Mormons. I would prefer to see the Mormons included in the background information rather than mixed into the discussion on the contemporary families, almost implying that the current polygamous groups are Mormons.

I am also uncomfortable with the way that my work on *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987) and other studies of nineteenth-century Mormon polygamy are cited. For example, the authors include stories and statistics from my study as if I were talking about a norm and not a limited sample based on oral history interviews with children. They also depend too heavily on just a few secondary sources. They refer to my citation of Lowell "Ben" Bennion's study of Davis County and Washington County polygamists when Bennion's article is easily available.

Polygamous Families in Contemporary Society is an interesting study of a limited number of plural families in the West today. However, the families should have been studied based on their own merits. There are too many attempts to make them into Mormons.