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Mormonism's Inside-Outsider

Gordon Shepherd and Gary Shepherd. *Jan Shipp: A Social and Intellectual Portrait: How a Methodist Girl from Hueytown, Alabama, Became an Acclaimed Mormon Studies Scholar*. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2019. 254 pp. Paperback: \$24.95. ISBN: 978-1-58958-767-0.

Reviewed by Cristina Rosetti

Jan Shipp is Mormonism's "inside-outsider" who transformed the field of Mormon studies and paved the way for many who followed in her footsteps. Her book *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* remains one of the most widely read and assigned books about the Mormon Restoration, offering a concise introduction to the faith from someone on the outside of it. Her status as an outsider who earned the respect and trust of insiders lent credibility to both her writing and a field that was insular and dominated by believing historians. Drawing on previously published autobiographical writing, oral history interviews by the Church History Department, and lengthy personal interviews, Gordon and Gary Shepherd's biographical sketch of Shipp's life welcomes readers into the life of one of Mormon studies' pioneering voices.

In *Jan Shipps: A Social and Intellectual Portrait: How a Methodist Girl from Hueytown, Alabama, Became an Acclaimed Mormon Studies Scholar*, the scholar becomes the subject, and readers of Mormon history are given the opportunity to learn about one of the field's leading voices. The biography is written in two parts. The first tells the story of Jan's life, her upbringing, marriage, college career, and arduous journey through the academic job market. Most importantly, her biographers highlight the extent to which Jan immersed herself not only in Mormonism but in the academic study of Mormonism. Jan was among the first to bridge the academic study of the Latter-day Saints and Community of Christ. She was the first non-Mormon to serve as president of the Mormon History Association, advocated for the Mormon Studies Unit at the American Academy of Religion, and published one of the most widely read books on Mormonism in the twentieth century.

The second half of the book takes a different approach from the first, which is purely biographical overview. In chapters 5–8, the authors analyze the major events in Jan's life that led to her rise to fame in Mormon studies and place her life alongside other prominent women in the field. The authors chose to compare Jan's life and work to Juanita Brooks and Fawn Brodie because, as they argue, their books are "indisputably the most important or impactful that have ever been written about Mormons and their history" (143). While some may dispute this claim, these three authors represented women's scholarship in a field comprised mostly of men. Along these lines, the Shepherds conclude their overview of Jan's life with a focus on Jan's view of feminism. Although Jan does not identify as a feminist, the authors situate Jan in a long line of "proto-feminists" who impacted both Mormon history and the lives of Mormon women.

Readers will be impressed by Jan's determination and intellectual journey. Graduate students and those interested in academic work will find this book particularly compelling. Jan spent years on the academic job market and struggled to find full-time employment, with varied jobs including a brief position at the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research.

While her life represents that of an exemplary and groundbreaking scholar, the biographers did not paint an easy ascent in academia. It is honest and represents a reality that many entering the field will find useful, even consoling.

It would be dishonest not to admit that this book was not only intellectually but personally meaningful to me. As a fellow non-Mormon woman in Mormon studies, Jan Shipps became something of a role model to me and someone whose scholarship I have admired since graduate school. In their conclusion, Gordon and Gary Shepherd write, “Jan Shipps’s salient scholarly contributions to the understanding go Mormon history, and her influential role in legitimating Mormon Studies as a significant discipline area of inquiry, merit deep appreciation of all contemporary scholars of the religious culture and history of the Latter-day Saints” (208). I, for one, am grateful.

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From Private Dreams to Public Damnings

George D. Smith, ed. *Brigham Young, Colonizer of the American West: Diaries and Office Journals, 1832–1871*, 2 vols. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2021. 1296 pp. Hardcover: \$95.00. ISBN: 978-1-56085-274-2.

Reviewed by Katie Ludlow Rich

“Dont give me Council, its an insult to me . . . any man who takes a course independent of me—its a stink to me—I can not bear it” (1:200). On Saturday, September 23, 1849, Brigham Young spoke from the stand