

# **under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith**

## **Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith**

In recent years, the gripping narrative of "Under the Banner of Heaven" has captured widespread attention, revealing the dark intersections of faith, violence, and extremism. This compelling account, based on real events and extensive research, explores how religious conviction can sometimes escalate into brutal acts of violence. At its core, the story underscores the profound influence of faith—both inspiring and destructive—and challenges us to examine the complex relationship between belief and violence.

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## **Overview of "Under the Banner of Heaven"**

"Under the Banner of Heaven" is a nonfiction book written by Jon Krakauer that delves into the origins and consequences of religious extremism within the Mormon community. It intertwines historical context, personal stories, and investigative journalism to narrate two intertwined tales: the early history of Mormon fundamentalism and a modern-day double murder linked to extremist beliefs.

### **The Book's Focus and Themes**

- Historical Roots of Mormon Fundamentalism: Tracing the origins of polygamy and radical beliefs within Mormonism.
- Modern Extremism: Examining how certain groups adopt violent interpretations of their faith.
- Violence as a Faithful Act: Exploring how some adherents justify violence as divine or righteous.
- The Role of Authority and Obedience: Analyzing how hierarchical structures foster radical beliefs.

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## **The Roots of Violent Faith in Mormon History**

Understanding the violent episodes detailed in "Under the Banner of Heaven" requires a grasp of the historical context that shaped fundamentalist beliefs.

## **The Practice of Polygamy and Its Controversies**

- Early Mormon Beliefs: Founder Joseph Smith and early leaders promoted polygamy as a divine commandment.
- Persecution and Suppression: Polygamous communities faced legal and social hostility, leading to clandestine practices.
- Splinter Groups: Over time, some members believed that the mainstream church abandoned vital truths, giving rise to fundamentalist sects.

## **The Emergence of Fundamentalist Mormon Groups**

- Key Groups: Such as the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS).
- Core Beliefs: Strict adherence to early Mormon doctrines, including polygamy and theocratic governance.
- Rejection of Modern Mormon Leadership: Viewing the mainstream church as corrupt or apostate.

## **Historical Violence and Religious Zealotry**

- Incidents where fundamentalist groups justified violence to defend their beliefs.
- Examples include clashes with authorities and internal conflicts over doctrine.

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## **Modern Manifestations of Violent Faith**

The narrative in "Under the Banner of Heaven" emphasizes how violent faith persists and manifests in contemporary settings.

## **The Case of the Double Murder**

- Background: In 1984, a brutal double murder in Colorado shocked the nation.
- Perpetrators: Fundamentalist Mormon adherents who believed they were acting under divine command.
- Motivations: The killers believed they were purging evil and restoring righteousness through violence.

## **The Role of Religious Authority and Obedience**

- Leadership Influence: Charismatic leaders often justify violence to uphold divine law.
- Obedience to Doctrine: Followers may commit acts of violence believing they are fulfilling God's will.

- Isolation: Many extremist groups operate in insular communities, reinforcing radical beliefs.

## **Psychological and Sociological Factors**

- Group Identity: Loyalty to the community and faith can override personal morals.
- Fear and Control: Leaders manipulate followers' fears to maintain control.
- Sense of Divine Purpose: Violence is perceived as a sacred duty.

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## **The Dynamics of Faith and Violence**

Understanding how faith can intertwine with violence involves examining multiple dimensions.

## **The Justification of Violence in Religious Contexts**

- Many extremist groups interpret sacred texts as mandates for violent action.
- The concept of divine justice often supersedes secular laws.

## **Examples of Religious Violence**

- Historical: Crusades, Inquisitions, and jihadist movements.
- Contemporary: Acts of terrorism, sectarian conflicts, and extremist murders.

## **The Psychological Appeal of Violent Faith**

- Provides a sense of purpose and righteousness.
- Reinforces community bonds through shared beliefs.
- Offers a framework to explain and justify suffering or hardship.

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## **The Impact of "Under the Banner of Heaven"**

This book has significantly influenced public understanding of religious extremism.

## Educational and Cultural Significance

- Raises awareness about the dangers of radical interpretations.
- Encourages dialogue on religious tolerance and extremism.

## Critiques and Controversies

- Some critics argue it may unfairly stigmatize Mormonism as a whole.
- Others emphasize the importance of distinguishing between mainstream faith and extremist factions.

## Relevance to Contemporary Issues

- Highlights the importance of understanding the roots of religious violence.
- Serves as a cautionary tale for recognizing and preventing extremism.

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## Conclusion

"Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith" offers a sobering look at how deeply held beliefs can, in certain contexts, lead to tragic acts of violence. The book prompts us to reflect on the power of faith—its capacity to inspire, unite, and also to destroy when misinterpreted or manipulated. Recognizing the signs of extremist beliefs and understanding their roots is essential in fostering a more tolerant and safe society. As history and recent events show, the line between faith and violence is often thin, and vigilance, education, and compassion are vital tools in preventing faith-based violence from claiming more lives.

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Meta Description:

Explore the compelling story of "Under the Banner of Heaven," a gripping account of violent faith rooted in Mormon history and modern extremism. Understand how belief can sometimes lead to tragic acts of violence.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the central theme of 'Under the Banner of

## **Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith'**

The book explores the intersection of religious extremism, faith, and violence, focusing on how extreme beliefs can lead to tragic acts, particularly within the context of Mormon fundamentalism.

### **How does Jon Krakauer depict the relationship between religion and violence in the book?**

Krakauer examines how rigid interpretations of faith and religious doctrines can motivate individuals to commit violent acts, highlighting the dangerous consequences of extremism rooted in religious conviction.

### **What real-life events does 'Under the Banner of Heaven' analyze?**

The book investigates the 1984 murders of Brenda and Eric Turner by fundamentalist Mormon members, illustrating how religious fanaticism can escalate into violence.

### **How does the book address the history of Mormon fundamentalism?**

Krakauer delves into the origins and development of Mormon fundamentalist groups, exploring their beliefs, practices, and the ways in which they diverge from mainstream Mormonism.

### **What impact has 'Under the Banner of Heaven' had on discussions about faith and violence?**

The book has sparked conversations about the dangers of religious extremism, the importance of religious tolerance, and the need for understanding the roots of fundamentalist movements.

### **Is 'Under the Banner of Heaven' purely a true crime story, or does it also explore broader themes?**

While it investigates specific crimes, the book also examines broader themes such as faith, religious interpretation, cultural identity, and the societal factors that contribute to radicalization.

## **Additional Resources**

Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith offers a compelling and often unsettling exploration of the intersections between religious fanaticism, violence, and the quest for faith. This gripping narrative delves into real-life events and the complex psychology behind extreme devotion, raising critical questions about the nature of belief

and the dark consequences it can sometimes spawn.

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## **Overview of the Book and Its Context**

John Craig Roberts' *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith* is both a true crime account and a profound inquiry into the origins and implications of religious extremism. The book was published in 2003, inspired by the 1984 murders of Brenda Lafferty and her infant daughter by members of a fundamentalist Mormon sect. Roberts weaves together historical background, investigative journalism, and personal narratives to paint a comprehensive picture of how religious ideologies can escalate into violence.

The title itself evokes imagery of divine mandate and holy war, echoing historical and scriptural references. Roberts aims to understand not just the events but also the belief systems that justify such acts, examining the broader landscape of fundamentalist Mormon groups and their doctrines.

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## **Thematic Breakdown**

### **Religious Zealotry and Extremism**

One of the central themes of *Under the Banner of Heaven* is the exploration of religious zealotry—how sincere faith can morph into dangerous fanaticism. Roberts portrays fundamentalist Mormon groups that believe they are fulfilling divine commandments, often justifying violence as a religious duty.

Features:

- Detailed accounts of LDS fundamentalist practices.
- Analysis of scriptural interpretations used to justify violence.
- Case studies of individuals influenced by extreme beliefs.

Pros:

- Provides nuanced insights into the psychological and sociological factors behind extremism.
- Challenges readers to consider the thin line between faith and fanaticism.

Cons:

- Some readers may find the detailed descriptions distressing or graphic.
- The complex religious doctrines may be difficult for those unfamiliar with Mormon history to fully comprehend.

# Historical and Cultural Context

Roberts offers an extensive background on the history of Mormon fundamentalism, tracing its roots back to the early days of the LDS Church, including practices like polygamy, which were officially abandoned but persisted in some sects. Understanding this history is vital to grasp how these groups evolved into violent entities.

Features:

- Chronological account of Mormon fundamentalism's development.
- Insight into societal reactions and legal conflicts.

Pros:

- Contextualizes the religious motivations within a broader historical framework.
- Illuminates how cultural isolation and doctrinal divergence foster extremism.

Cons:

- Some readers may find the historical details dense or overly academic.
- The focus on specific sects might overshadow broader religious narratives.

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# Case Studies and Real-Life Incidents

A significant strength of the book lies in its meticulous recounting of real-life cases, especially the 1984 murders, which serve as a grim illustration of how religious belief can lead to violence.

## The Lafferty Murders

Roberts details the chilling account of Ron and Dan Lafferty, who believed they received divine revelations commanding them to kill in the name of faith.

Features:

- Psychological profiling of the perpetrators.
- Examination of their interpretations of religious doctrine.

Pros:

- Provides an intimate look at the minds of individuals pushed to the brink.
- Sparks reflection on the dangers of literal biblical or scriptural interpretations.

Cons:

- Graphic descriptions may be disturbing.
- The focus on specific individuals might lead to questions about generalizability.

## Broader Incidents and Influence

The book also touches upon other incidents of violence linked to fundamentalist groups, such as the Mountain Meadows Massacre and ongoing conflicts within Mormon fundamentalism.

Features:

- Comparative analysis of different violent episodes.
- Discussion of leadership dynamics and community isolation.

Pros:

- Demonstrates patterns and commonalities across multiple incidents.
- Highlights the role of charismatic leaders in escalating violence.

Cons:

- Some readers may perceive the coverage as sensationalist.
- The complex interplay of social, economic, and religious factors can be challenging to unpack.

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## Psychological and Sociological Insights

Roberts delves into the psychology of faith-driven violence, exploring how personal grievances, social alienation, and charismatic authority intersect with doctrinal beliefs to produce lethal outcomes.

Key Points:

- The concept of divine authority as a justification for violence.
- The role of groupthink in reinforcing extreme actions.
- The impact of isolation and lack of external influence.

Features:

- Interviews with former fundamentalists.
- Theoretical frameworks from psychology and sociology.

Pros:

- Offers a multidimensional understanding of why individuals commit such acts.
- Encourages empathy and nuanced thinking about faith and violence.

Cons:

- The psychological analysis may seem speculative without direct evidence.
- Some readers might find the discussions dense or academic.

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# Evaluation and Critical Analysis

## Strengths:

- Thorough Research: Roberts' meticulous investigation and sourcing lend credibility to his account.
- Balanced Perspective: While critical of violent extremism, the book respects genuine faith, avoiding caricatures.
- Engaging Narrative: The storytelling combines factual reporting with compelling personal stories, making complex issues accessible.

## Weaknesses:

- Graphic Content: The detailed descriptions of violence might be distressing to some readers.
- Potential Bias: As an outsider examining deeply held beliefs, some might question whether the portrayal captures the full nuance of faith communities.
- Limited Scope: The focus on Mormon fundamentalism, while detailed, might leave readers curious about similar phenomena in other religions.

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# Impact and Relevance

Under the Banner of Heaven remains highly relevant in contemporary discussions about religious extremism and domestic violence. Its exploration of how faith can be exploited or misunderstood underscores the importance of religious literacy and critical engagement.

In the context of ongoing religious conflicts and domestic terrorism, Roberts' work serves as both a cautionary tale and a call for understanding. It emphasizes that while most faith communities promote peace, a dangerous subset can veer into violence under certain conditions.

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# Conclusion

Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith is a compelling, thought-provoking work that sheds light on the perilous edges of religious belief. Its detailed historical context, real-life case studies, and psychological insights make it a valuable resource for readers interested in understanding the darker facets of faith-driven violence. While it may be challenging due to its graphic content, the book ultimately serves as a sobering reminder of the importance of critical thinking, community accountability, and the need to distinguish genuine spirituality from fanaticism.

Overall, this book is highly recommended for those interested in religious studies, criminology, psychology, or social justice, as well as anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the potential consequences when faith is taken to dangerous extremes.

## **Under The Banner Of Heaven A Story Of Violent Faith**

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith:** Under the Banner of Heaven Jon Krakauer, 2004-06-08 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • From the author of *Into the Wild* and *Into Thin Air*, this extraordinary work of investigative journalism takes readers inside America's isolated Mormon Fundamentalist communities. • Now an acclaimed FX limited series streaming on HULU. "Fantastic.... Right up there with *In Cold Blood* and *The Executioner's Song*." —San Francisco Chronicle Defying both civil authorities and the Mormon establishment in Salt Lake City, the renegade leaders of these Taliban-like theocracies are zealots who answer only to God; some 40,000 people still practice polygamy in these communities. At the core of Krakauer's book are brothers Ron and Dan Lafferty, who insist they received a commandment from God to kill a blameless woman and her baby girl. Beginning with a meticulously researched account of this appalling double murder, Krakauer constructs a multi-layered, bone-chilling narrative of messianic delusion, polygamy, savage violence, and unyielding faith. Along the way he uncovers a shadowy offshoot of America's fastest growing religion, and raises provocative questions about the nature of religious belief.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith:** *Under the Banner of Heaven* Jon Krakauer, 2003-08-01 NOW A MAJOR TV SERIES STARRING ANDREW GARFIELD True crime in the American heartland. *Under the Banner of Heaven* is a riveting account of Mormon fundamentalism and renegade prophets, from the bestselling author of *Into the Wild* and *Into Thin Air*. Brothers Ron and Dan Lafferty insist they were commanded to kill by God. In *Under the Banner of Heaven*, Jon Krakauer's investigation is a meticulously researched, bone-chilling narrative of polygamy, savage violence and unyielding faith. An incisive look inside isolated Mormon Fundamentalist communities in America, this gripping work of non-fiction illuminates an otherwise confounding realm of human behaviour. PRAISE FOR UNDER THE BANNER OF HEAVEN 'A provocative look at the twisted roots of American fundamentalism.' Will Self, *Evening Standard* 'Books of the Year' 'Excellent . . . a lucid, judicious, even sympathetic account not just of Mormon Fundamentalism but of the seductive power of fanaticism in general.' *Daily Telegraph* 'Remarkable . . . for anyone interested in the wilder frontiers of spiritual conviction, this book is a must.' *Independent* 'Powerfully illuminating. . . . Almost every section of the book is fascinating in its own right, and together the chapters make a rich picture. . . . An arresting portrait of depravity.' *New York Times Book Review* 'Illuminating . . . provocative. . . . Krakauer is an adept chronicler of extremists [and] the tour guide of choice for secular quests.' *Los Angeles Times Book Review*

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith:** Summary of Under the Banner of Heaven Booknation, 2020-09-24 *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith* by Jon Krakauer: Conversation Starters From the bestselling nonfiction author of *Into the Wild* and *Into Thin Air*, Jon Krakauer comes another masterpiece named 'Under the banner of heaven: A story of violent faith.' Known to write about physical adventures in his previous books, he shifts gears to write about the religious beliefs and extremism still prevalent in some parts of the country. The author weaves the story of the beginnings of the LDS church with modern-day stories of fundamentalism. It is a gripping and razor-edged examination of extremism, religious fanaticism focusing predominantly on the fundamentalists of Mormonism and their outrageous beliefs of polygamy and violence. A Brief Look Inside: EVERY GOOD BOOK CONTAINS A WORLD FAR DEEPER than the surface of its pages. The characters and their world come alive, and the

characters and its world still live on. Conversation Starters is peppered with questions designed to bring us beneath the surface of the page and invite us into the world that lives on. These questions can be used to create hours of conversation: -Foster a deeper understand of the book -Promote an atmosphere of discussion for groups -Assist in the study of the book, either individually or corporately -Explore unseen realms of the book as never seen before Disclaimer This book is an independent resource to supplement the original book and is not affiliated nor endorse by the original work in any way. If you have not yet purchased a copy of the original book, please do before purchasing this unofficial Conversation Starters. Download your copy now on sale Read it on your PC, Mac, iOS or Android smartphone, tablet devices.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith:** *Delusions and the Madness of the Masses* Lawrie Reznick, 2010-11-16 We all think that we can tell the difference between someone who is mad, or whom psychiatrists call psychotic, and someone who is sane. But can we really tell who is mad and who is not? Do we really know what madness is and how it should be recognized? Have psychiatrists made a sensible distinction between the patient who believes that aliens are beaming messages to him from a foreign planet, and the religious fanatic who believes God communicates to him via automatic writing? Is there a difference between the paranoid patient who believes that the FBI is after him, and the sizeable proportion of our normal population that believe that the US government orchestrated the 9-11 bombings? Here, Reznick hopes to shed light on the delusions of the masses-those delusions that are common to everyday people living so-called ordinary lives. He provides an understanding of madness and the psychological processes that drive us to adopt delusions, arguing that it is a mistake to view only schizophrenic patients as delusional, while excluding large groups of society from such an analysis. If we abandon the idea that whole communities cannot share a delusion, we can come to a better understanding about why the world is such a dangerous place.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith:** *Urban Captivity Narratives* Heather Hillsburg, 2019-07-30 Evolving from a rigorous study of post-9/11 women's writing, Dr. Heather Hillsburg's new monograph identifies an emerging genre, which she names Urban Captivity Narratives. Using examples ranging from memoir to young adult fiction, each of the texts examined in the study follows a female protagonist who has survived abduction, been held captive for months or even years, and subjected to sexual, emotional, and physical abuse by their captor. Hillsburg contextualizes these narratives, and takes into consideration our current political atmosphere, the role of patriarchy, and various social anxieties that come into play when discussing the kind of oppression seen in these narratives.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith:** Faith in Democracy? Religion and Politics in Canada Boris DeWiel, John Young, 2009-01-14 This collection of essays questions the capacity of Canadian democracy to promote religious pluralism and recognize disparate faith groups as legitimate players on the political stage. These are more than rhetorical questions, as issues and public policies in contemporary Canada reflect an increasing concern that religion and religious belief ought not to intrude in political debate and matters of governance. Despite playing an active role in Canadian politics in the past, religious faith now risks relegation to the private sector. Efforts to push religious belief outside the public square set a dangerous precedent, provide rationale for further exclusion rather than inclusion, and logically culminate in monism rather than pluralism. Faith in Democracy focuses on contemporary challenges to religious pluralism in Canada with attention to the changing religious landscape throughout the country. These challenges are both old and new. They include such tasks as reconciling universal and particular perspectives of liberalism in law and recognizing the limits of secularism as an emergent dominant faith. How Canada responds to these challenges will not only influence public policy, but also test its commitment to democracy.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith:** *The Educational Prophecies of Aldous Huxley* Ronald Zigler, 2015-03-05 The visionary legacy of Aldous Huxley is as relevant today as ever. Huxley possessed a sober understanding of the human condition as well as an inspired vision of the

human potential. This volume presents an interdisciplinary examination and appreciation of Aldous Huxley's three visionary novels – *Brave New World* (1932), *Ape and Essence* (1948), and *Island* (1962) – to reveal the extent to which Huxley's prognoses into our possible futures was prophetic. The author assesses each novel to reveal the foresights that define our current educational, social, religious, political, and economic institutions, while also exposing our conflicts within those institutions. This volume examines the educational, cultural and technological changes that have shaped our society since Huxley's work, with special reference to the enduring legacy of educational philosopher John Dewey. It offers profound insights into the educational forces and moral foundations of our society that shape us, both inside and outside of our schools. It is the first of its kind to focus exclusively on all three of Huxley's visionary novels and detail their relevance to our world today.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: Coming of Age in Jon Krakauer's Into the Wild** Noël Merino, 2014-11-10 The subject of endless speculation, Chris McCandless' abrupt journey into the American wilderness and his subsequent mysterious death play a central role in Jon Krakauer's 1996 nonfiction book *Into the Wild*. This comprehensive edition provides an in-depth analysis of the life, work, and career of author Jon Krakauer, focusing particularly on the theme of coming of age as it relates to *Into the Wild*. Readers are presented with a series of essays that tackle questions about McCandless' death, the substantiality of Krakauer's theories, and the parallels between McCandless' story and other travel-based coming of age stories. Modern perspectives on coming of age and travel narratives are also discussed, allowing readers examine concepts such as self-actualization, the relationship between travel and gender, and the dangers of inexperienced traveling.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: Christianity** Diarmaid MacCulloch, 2010-03-18 The New York Times bestseller and definitive history of Christianity for our time—from the award-winning author of *The Reformation and Silence* A product of electrifying scholarship conveyed with commanding skill, Diarmaid MacCulloch's *Christianity* goes back to the origins of the Hebrew Bible and encompasses the globe. It captures the major turning points in Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox history and fills in often neglected accounts of conversion and confrontation in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. MacCulloch introduces us to monks and crusaders, heretics and reformers, popes and abolitionists, and discover Christianity's essential role in shaping human history and the intimate lives of men and women. And he uncovers the roots of the faith that galvanized America, charting the surprising beliefs of the founding fathers, the rise of the Evangelical movement and of Pentecostalism, and the recent crises within the Catholic Church. Bursting with original insights and a great pleasure to read, this monumental religious history will not soon be surpassed.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: Wandering Souls** S. Scott Rohrer, 2010 In *Wandering Souls*, Rohrer examines the migration patterns of eight religious groups and finds that Protestant migrations consisted of two basic types. The most common type involved migrations motivated by religion, economics, and family, in which Puritans, Methodists, Moravians, and others headed to the frontier as individuals in search of religious and social fulfillment. The other type involved groups wanting to escape persecution (such as the Mormons) or to establish communities where they could practice their faith in peace (such as the Inspirationists). --from publisher description.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: Modern Polygamy and Mormon Fundamentalism** Brian C. Hales, 2006-01-01 2007 Best Book Award, John Whitmer Historical Association Under the subject of alternative lifestyles, the issue of polygamous relationships falls squarely in the middle of the debate. Polygamous marriages are a common practice in many other countries, but the United States has vehemently opposed such unions and will no doubt find itself disputing its position on them again in the near future. As with the same-sex marriage issue, a firestorm of controversy surrounds the question since the right to participate in a polygamous union is very much tied to the right to live out one's preferences, religious or not. Detailed accounts of

sexual abuse and child brides are frequently leaked from the various polygamous societies, notwithstanding their extreme efforts to remain under the radar of law enforcement and the press. A by-product of these mysterious societies is that public interest is vitalized by their continuous efforts to gain independence from traditionalist culture. This fascinating study seeks to trace the historical tapestry that is early Mormon polygamy, details the official discontinuation of the practice by the Church, and, for the first time, describes the many zeal-driven organizations that arose in the wake of that decision. Among the polygamous groups discussed are the LeBaronites, whose "blood atonement" killings sent fear throughout Mormon communities in the late seventies and the eighties; the FLDS Church, which made news recently over its construction of a compound and temple in Texas and Warren Jeffs' arrest and conviction; and the Allred and Kingston groups, two major factions with substantial membership statistics both in and out of the United States. All these fascinating histories, along with those of the smaller independent groups, are examined and explained in a way that all can appreciate.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: The Books They Gave Me** Jen Adams, 2012-11-06 This beautiful full-color treasury of stories about gift book-giving celebrates the enduring power of literature: stories of significant books people have received and what those books mean to them. THE GIFT OF A BOOK BECOMES PART OF THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE. Perhaps it came with a note as simple as "This made me think of you," but it takes up residence in your heart and your home. The Books They Gave Me is a mixtape of stories behind books given and received. Some of the stories are poignant, some snarky, some romantic, some disastrous—but all are illuminating. Jen Adams collected nearly two hundred of the most provocative stories submitted to the tumblr blog TheBooksTheyGaveMe.com to capture the many ways books can change our lives and loves, revealing volumes about the relationships that inspired the gifts. These stories are, by turns, romantic, cynical, funny, dark, and hopeful. There's the poorly thought out gift of Lolita from a thirty-year-old man to a teenage girl. There's the couple who tried to read Ulysses together over the course of their long-distance relationship and never finished it. There's the girl whose school library wouldn't allow her to check out Fahrenheit 451, but who received it at Christmas with the note, "Little Sister: Read everything you can. Subvert Authority! Love always, your big brother." These are stories of people falling in love, regretting mistakes, and finding hope. Together they constitute a love letter to the book as physical object and inspiration. Illustrated in full color with the jackets of beloved editions, The Books They Gave Me is, above all, an uplifting testament to the power of literature.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: Faith and Betrayal** Sally Denton, 2007-12-18 In the 1850s, Jean Rio, a deeply spiritual widow, was moved by the promises of Mormon missionaries and set out from England for Utah. Traveling across the Atlantic by steamer, up the Mississippi by riverboat, and westward by wagon, Rio kept a detailed diary of her extraordinary journey. In Faith and Betrayal, Sally Denton, an award-winning journalist and Rio's great-great-granddaughter, uses the long-lost diary to re-create Rio's experience. While she marvels at the great natural beauty of Utah, Rio's enthusiasm for her new life turns to disillusionment over Mormon polygamy and violence against nonbelievers, as well as the harshness of frontier life. She sets out for California, where she finds a new religion and the freedom she longed for. Unusually intimate and full of vivid detail, this is an absorbing story of a quintessential American pioneer.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: House of Faith House of Cards** Eric N. Davis, 2010-05-21 Concise. Vivid. Honest. - Dan Barker, critically acclaimed author of 'Godless' and 'Losing Faith in Faith' Brutally honest, insightful, and compelling storytelling. - Lyndon Lamborn, author of 'Standing for Something More' When a young couple searched for clues connecting them to a famous ancestor, their journey led them on a path they never expected - converting to Mormonism. House of Faith House of Cards tells the turbulent life story of their son, Eric, including all the typical Mormon experiences, and some extraordinary episodes no Mormon will ever encounter. He participated with family members in his first secret temple ritual - normally reserved for adults - at the age of four, only to be excluded from a similar ceremony, involving his

family, thirteen years later. In 1857, a company of 120 immigrants set out from a small Arkansas town, toward California. In a tragic twist of fate, they never reached their destination. While encamped in southern Utah, local Mormons and Paiute Indians launched an ambush, brutally slaughtering the group, in what became known as the Mountain Meadows massacre. 125 years later, Eric would be raised as a Mormon in the same Arkansas community where this wagon train initially departed. There, he learned just how much some people still despised that faith. While training for and serving a church mission in Canada, in the mid-1990s, Eric shared a room and became acquainted with a fellow missionary named Mark Hacking. Less than a decade later, when the disappearance and murder of Hacking's wife became highly publicized, several international media outlets approached Eric, searching for any juicy detail of the man's troubled past. These stories are just the tip of the iceberg.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: Polyamory, Monogamy, and American Dreams** Mimi Schippers, 2019-10-28 This book introduces the poly gaze as a cultural tool to examine how representations of polyamory and poly lives reflect or challenge cultural hegemonies of race, class, gender, and nation. What role does monogamy play in American Identity, the American dream, and U.S. exceptionalism? How do the stories we tell about intimate relationships do cultural and ideological work to maintain and legitimize social inequalities along the lines of race, ethnicity, nation, religion, class, gender and sexuality? How might the introduction of polyamory or consensually non-monogamous relationships in the stories we tell about intimacy confound, disrupt or shift the meaning of what constitutes a good, American life? These are the questions that Mimi Schippers focuses on in this original and engaging study. As she develops the poly gaze, Schippers argues for a sociologically informed and cultivated lens with which anyone, regardless of their experiences with polyamory or consensual non-monogamy, can read culture, media images, and texts against hegemony. This will be a key text for researchers and students in Gender Studies, Queer Studies, Cultural Studies, Critical Race Studies, Media Studies, American Studies and Sociology. This book is accessible and indispensable reading for undergraduate student and postgraduates wanting to gain greater understanding of debates around the key concept of heteronormativity.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: The Judas Effect** Amy Hawk, 2024-06-20 In 2016, Amy Hawk was a hyper-patriotic, Jesus-loving, white, evangelical, church-attending, and ministry-leading wife and mom living in a small town in the Pacific Northwest. She came into the election determined to vote Republican, but when she saw the video of Donald Trump mocking a disabled journalist, she hurled herself off the Trump train and never looked back. Shunned by some in her conservative evangelical community, her world was shattered and her faith tested as she was forced to reevaluate the Christian institutions she devoted her life to. Disoriented and confused by the church's embrace of a man who is the antithesis of Jesus, Hawk turned to the Scriptures for answers. Part Bible study and part personal faith journey, *The Judas Effect* is about the selling out of Christian values for political gain. It's about how, buoyed by Trumpism, the message ringing from church bells across America has morphed from goodwill toward men to it's us against them. By sharing her own faith crisis, Hawk casts a vision for the evangelical church that steers us away from Judas's power lust, toward a Christ-centered mission of servitude, humility, compassion, and kindness.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: Writing Life Stories** Bill Roorbach, 2008-06-17 How to Make Memories into Memoirs, Ideas into Essays, and Life into Literature From drawing a map of a remembered neighborhood to signing a form releasing yourself to take risks in your work, Roorbach offers innovative techniques that will trigger ideas for all writers. *Writing Life Stories* is a classic text that appears on countless creative nonfiction and composition syllabi the world over. This updated 10th anniversary edition gives you the same friendly instruction and stimulating exercises along with updated information on current memoir writing trends, ethics, internet research, and even marketing ideas. You'll discover how to turn your untold life stories into vivid personal essays and riveting memoirs by learning to open up memory, access emotions, shape

scenes from experience, develop characters, and research supporting details. This guide will teach you to see your life more clearly and show you why real stories are often the best ones.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: Answer Them Nothing** Debra Weyermann, 2011-08-01 When police raided the Short Creek compound of the Fundamental Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1953, it soon became a political and publicity nightmare and eventually cost the governor of Arizona his job. From that point on, skittish public officials allowed the polygamist sect to practice its tenants unmolested for the next 50 years and turned a blind eye to child abandonment, kidnapping, statutory rape, incest, and massive tax and welfare fraud. But then Warren Jeffs, a new FLDS prophet, escalated the sect's crimes to near madness. Activists watched in horror as he used his limitless authority and the resources of a tax-supported community—in essence, a feudal empire on the Utah/Arizona border—to devastate thousands of lives on cruel whims, marrying girls as young as 11 to 60-year-old men and driving off teenage “lost boys” who Jeffs felt threatened his authority. Answer Them Nothing is the chilling story of the victims, activists, prosecutors, judges, cops, and attorneys who in 2001 began the struggle to dismantle the FLDS empire and bring Jeffs and his henchmen to justice. It is a mesmerizing journey into one of America's darkest corners, a story that stretches over three states and deep into history of the powerful Mormon Church.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: Statebuilding from the Margins** Carol Nackenoff, Julie Novkov, 2014-01-06 The period between the Civil War and the New Deal was particularly rich and formative for political development. Beyond the sweeping changes and national reforms for which the era is known, Statebuilding from the Margins examines often-overlooked cases of political engagement that expanded the capacities and agendas of the developing American state. With particular attention to gendered, classed, and racialized dimensions of civic action, the chapters explore points in history where the boundaries between public and private spheres shifted, including the legal formulation of black citizenship and monogamy in the postbellum years; the racial politics of Georgia's adoption of prohibition; the rise of public waste management; the incorporation of domestic animal and wildlife management into the welfare state; the creation of public juvenile courts; and the involvement of women's groups in the creation of U.S. housing policy. In many of these cases, private citizens or organizations initiated political action by framing their concerns as problems in which the state should take direct interest to benefit and improve society. Statebuilding from the Margins depicts a republic in progress, accruing policy agendas and the institutional ability to carry them out in a nonlinear fashion, often prompted and powered by the creative techniques of policy entrepreneurs and organizations that worked alongside and outside formal boundaries to get results. These Progressive Era initiatives established models for the way states could create, intervene in, and regulate new policy areas—innovations that remain relevant for growth and change in contemporary American governance. Contributors: James Greer, Carol Nackenoff, Julie Novkov, Susan Pearson, Kimberly Smith, Marek D. Steedman, Patricia Strach, Kathleen Sullivan, Ann-Marie Szymanski.

**under the banner of heaven a story of violent faith: God and the Folly of Faith** Victor J. Stenger, 2012-04-03 A thorough and hard-hitting critique that is a must read for anyone interested in the interaction between religion and science. It has become the prevalent view among sociologists, historians, and some theistic scientists that religion and science have never been in serious conflict. Some even claim that Christianity was responsible for the development of science. In a sweeping historical survey that begins with ancient Greek science and proceeds through the Renaissance and Enlightenment to contemporary advances in physics and cosmology, Stenger makes a convincing case that not only is this conclusion false, but Christianity actually held back the progress of science for one thousand years. It is significant, he notes, that the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century occurred only after the revolts against established ecclesiastic authorities in the Renaissance and Reformation opened up new avenues of thought. The author goes on to detail how religion and science are fundamentally incompatible in several areas: the origin of the universe and its physical parameters, the origin of complexity, holism versus reductionism, the nature of mind

and consciousness, and the source of morality. In the end, Stenger is most troubled by the negative influence that organized religion often exerts on politics and society. He points out antiscientific attitudes embedded in popular religion that are being used to suppress scientific results on issues of global importance, such as overpopulation and environmental degradation. When religion fosters disrespect for science, it threatens the generations of humanity that will follow ours.

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