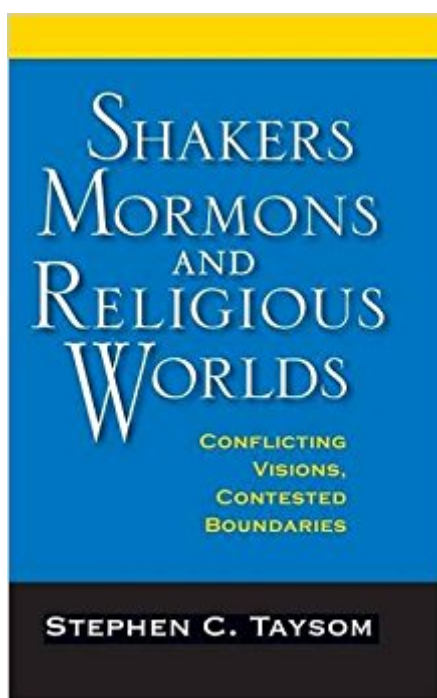


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Shakers, Mormons, And Religious Worlds: Conflicting Visions, Contested Boundaries (Religion In North America)



Synopsis

Among America's more interesting new religious movements, the Shakers and the Mormons came to be thought of as separate and distinct from mainstream Protestantism. Using archives and historical materials from the 19th century, Stephen C. Taysom shows how these groups actively maintained boundaries and created their own thriving, but insular communities. Taysom discovers a core of innovation deployed by both the Shakers and the Mormons through which they embraced their status as outsiders. Their marginalization was critical to their initial success. As he skillfully negotiates the differences between Shakers and Mormons, Taysom illuminates the characteristics which set these groups apart and helped them to become true religious dissenters.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"In *Shakers, Mormons, and Religious Worlds*, Stephen Taysom... has written an intriguing and theoretically rich monograph that compares Shaker and Mormon approaches to religious identity formation and boundary maintenance.... *Shakers, Mormons, and Religious Worlds* establishes Stephen Taysom as an insightful historian of the Latter-day Saint experience and will shape our understanding of how Latter-day Saints understood their relationship with the broader world." *BYU Studies Quarterly* "Regardless of their views about the early Mormons, all serious students of Utah and LDS history will find Taysom's book worthwhile, if sometimes controversial, reading." *Utah Historical Quarterly* "Beyond the specifics of Shaker and

Mormon history, this book will be valuable to anyone interested in how religious groups form and sustain distinctive identities." *Nova Religio: Jnl Alternative & Emergent Rel.* "In addition to its scholarly accomplishments, this book has pedagogical utility.... [Taysom's] examples are provocative and his writing is accessible. These attributes make the book useful in the classroom and should elicit lively discussion among students. Overall, Taysom's book is a worthy addition to the ever-growing corpus of American religious history." *Church History* Taysom (Cleveland State Univ.) compares the efforts of 19th-century Mormons and Shakers to define 'their communal identities over and against the religious, political, economic, and social elements of the larger culture of which they were a part.' This is well-worked terrain: the two groups are mentioned in the same breath quite often, and the significance of boundary maintenance to new groups is an essential subject for scholars of new religious movements. Taysom's contribution is to distinguish between the kinds of tension sought and maintained by the Mormons and the Shakers. He offers some interesting arguments about the two groups separately--a reevaluation of the concept of 'Zion,' as Mormons applied it to settlements in Missouri, Illinois, and the Great Basin is particularly notable.... Summing Up: Recommended. Lower- and upper-level undergraduates; general readers. --Choice S. Perry, University of Chicago Divinity School, October 2011 "In a provocative sociological analysis of historical events and actors, Stephen C. Taysom interprets nineteenth-century Shaker and Mormon responses to social opposition. His interpretation relies on a broad range of interpretive tools, including organizational behavior, cognitive anthropology, ritual studies, and critical theory. He is to be congratulated also for bringing a comparative approach to subjects too frequently treated in isolation." *American Historical Review* "Taysom's contribution is to distinguish between the kinds of tension sought and maintained by the Mormons and the Shakers. He offers some interesting arguments about the two groups separately--a reevaluation of the concept of 'Zion,' as Mormons applied it to settlements in Missouri, Illinois, and the Great Basin is particularly notable... Recommended." *Choice*, October 2011 "[E]nlightening and challenging, even a must." *Association for Mormon Letters*, 2011 "Shakers, Mormons, and Religious Words provides an engagingly written, analytically sophisticated, and historically well-grounded study of the nineteenth-century Shaker and Mormon history from the perspective of boundary-maintenance theory." *The Journal of Religion*

Stephen C. Taysom teaches in the Department of Religious Studies at Cleveland State University.

So much of "Mormon Studies" is just history that matters to people other than Mormons. Taysom

shows how religion actually *works* in this dual case study. Highly recommended!

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