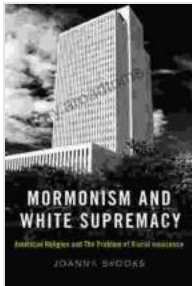


Mormonism and White Supremacy: An Inconvenient Truth



Mormonism and White Supremacy: American Religion and The Problem of Racial Innocence by Joanna Brooks

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language	: English
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A Troubling Legacy

The Mormon Church, also known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), has long been associated with a troubling history of racism and white supremacy. From its founding in the 19th century to the present day, the LDS Church has played a significant role in perpetuating and upholding white privilege and superiority within its doctrines, policies, and practices.

Theological Foundations of White Supremacy

At the core of Mormon theology lies the belief that white people are the chosen race, descended from the righteous Nephites described in the Book of Mormon. This belief, known as "the Curse of Cain," posits that those of

African descent are cursed with dark skin and denied the priesthood due to their supposed wickedness in a pre-mortal existence.

This theological foundation has deeply influenced the LDS Church's history and practices. For over 150 years, the priesthood, a central authority within Mormonism, was exclusively reserved for white males. This exclusionary policy reinforced the notion that Black people were inherently inferior and unworthy of spiritual leadership.

Racial Segregation and the Priesthood Ban

The LDS Church's commitment to racial segregation extended beyond theological doctrine. In the early 20th century, the Church implemented a formal ban on priesthood ordination and temple attendance for Black members, a policy that remained in place until 1978. This ban institutionalized racism within the LDS community and reinforced the idea that Black people were not fully worthy of participating in sacred Mormon rituals.

The Church's defense of the priesthood ban was based on a misinterpretation of scripture and claims of divine revelation. However, these justifications have been thoroughly debunked by historians and scholars who point to the overwhelming evidence of systematic racism within the LDS Church.

Missionary Work and the Promotion of Whiteness

The LDS Church's missionary program has also played a role in promoting white supremacy. Missionaries are instructed to teach that the restoration of the gospel through Joseph Smith is a sign of God's favor upon the white race. This message reinforces the notion that the white male-dominated

LDS Church is the true representative of Christianity and that other cultures and races are inferior.

In addition, the Church's missionary efforts have historically focused on converting people of European descent, while paying less attention to other racial and ethnic groups. This selective approach has contributed to the perception that the LDS Church is a white-dominated institution that values whiteness above all else.

Current Challenges and Reforms

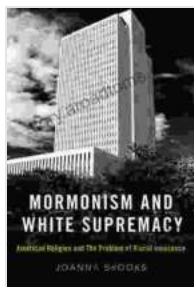
In recent years, the LDS Church has made some efforts to address its history of racism and white supremacy. In 1978, the priesthood ban was lifted, allowing all worthy male members to hold the priesthood. The Church has also made some changes to its missionary program, including encouraging missionaries to focus on sharing the gospel with people of all races and backgrounds.

However, these reforms have not fully eliminated the problem of white supremacy within the LDS community. Many Black and Indigenous members still report experiences of racism and discrimination within the Church. The Priesthood Correlation Committee, a powerful group that oversees the Church's policies and doctrines, remains overwhelmingly white and male, reinforcing the impression that true authority within the Church is reserved for white men.

The Mormon Church's history of white supremacy is a complex and disturbing issue that cannot be ignored. From its theological foundations to its institutional policies and practices, the LDS Church has played a significant role in perpetuating racism and white privilege. While the Church

has made some efforts to address this issue, much more needs to be done to dismantle the systemic racism that continues to exist within the LDS community.

Unveiling the truth about Mormonism and white supremacy is not an easy task, but it is a necessary one. It is only through open and honest dialogue that the LDS Church can confront its past and work towards becoming a more just and inclusive institution. By shining a light on this troubling chapter in Mormon history, we can help to promote healing, reconciliation, and true equality within the Mormon community and beyond.



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