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Our Review

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This is an even-handed look at the Mormon religion, from its very early days, to the recent sensational headlines generated by some of the religion's more fanatical rightwing survivalist members. While the author, Coates, is not a mormon, he grew up surrounded by their influence, and as a newspaper reporter, covered numerous stories involving their culture and community. This certainly isn't an "anti-mormon" book, it's more like an affectionate look at the crazy neighbors living next door.

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From the Book Cover

"A fascinating narrative of the heroic struggle of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and the band of 'Saints' who built a new Zion in the wilderness of the Far West." --

-- *L.A. Times*

"An absorbing, informative report."

-- *Publishers Weekly*

"An unblinking look at this uniquely American faith."

-- *Chicago Tribune*

In Mormon Circles delivers a rare and powerful inside look at the past and present of the fastest-growing branch of Christianity. Behind the fresh-scrubbed exterior of this uniquely American institution lies a church troubled by internal conflicts and outbreaks of violence that have caused many rank-and-file members to agonize over their beliefs, if not their very way of life. Revealed here is the church's often contradictory character: the emphasis on traditional values of devotion to the family, loyalty to the community, and fair play warring with a history of secrecy, authoritarianism, and intolerance of dissent. As the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints continues to grow both in political and economic power as well as in numbers, the questions the Saints wrestle with have become important for non-Mormons as well as for those within the fold. This dynamic and important book deepens the reader's understanding of the Mormon church as it fast approaches a crossroads in its history.

James Coates is an award-winning investigative reporter for the *Chicago Tribune* and chief of its Rocky Mountain Bureau. The author of *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right*, Coates lives with his family in Denver.

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