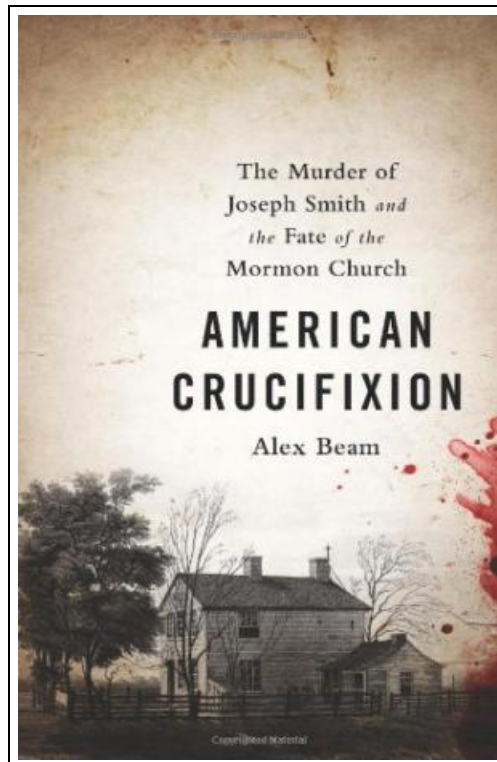


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Reviews

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(Joana Champlin)

AMERICAN CRUCIFIXION: THE MURDER OF JOSEPH SMITH AND THE FATE OF THE MORMON CHUR

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PublicAffairs. 1 Cloth(s), 2014. hard. Book Condition: New. On June 27, 1844, a mob stormed the jail in the dusty frontier town of Carthage, Illinois. Clamorous and bloodthirsty, they were hunting down a man whom they saw as a grave threat to their otherwise quiet lives: the founding prophet of Mormonism, Joseph Smith. At 39 years old, Smith had already lived an outsized life, having created his own "Golden Bible," started his own religion, and founded a city for his followers. Smith was also running for president and had secretly married more than 30 women. The author of the New York Times Notable Books Gracefully Insane and A Great Idea at the Time, Alex Beam here tells how Smith went from charismatic leader to public enemy, how his doctrine of polygamy created a rift among his people, and how his murder propelled the Mormons to colonize the American West."The story Beam tells is full of dramatic detail: the precautions the Mormons took to prevent the Smiths' bodies from being snatched; Emma Smith's dogged, pathetic delusion that she was Joseph's only wife; the capers of the kangaroo court that acquitted the murderers; the Mormon fantasies about divine punishments meted out."NYTBR" Chased out of Missouri, founding prophet Joseph Smith and his Mormon followers settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, to lay down roots, build a temple, and deepen their hold in American life. They had quasi-independent status, operated their own businesses and courts, and maintained a paramilitary corps. Seeing himself as 'king of the kingdom of God,' Smith sought reparations from Missouri and prepared a bid for the U.S. presidency. But by 1844, the tide had turned against the charismatic leader after a local newspaper editor and a faction that had seceded from the Mormons joined to expose its rising 'militarism' and the practice of...

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