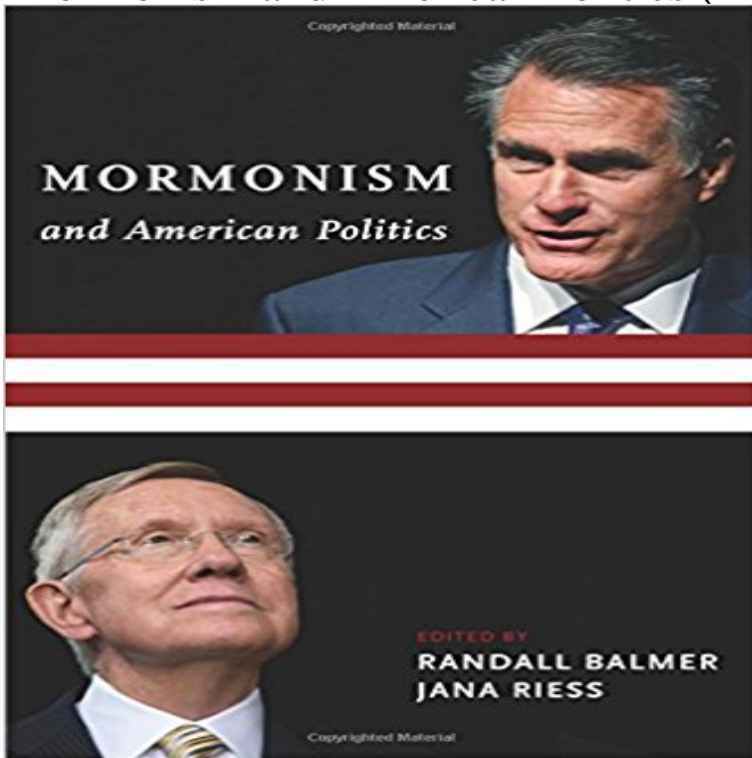


# Mormonism and American Politics (Religion, Culture, and Public Life)



When Joseph Smith ran for president as a radical protest candidate in 1844, Mormons were a deeply distrusted group in American society, and their efforts to enter public life were met with derision. When Mitt Romney ran for president as a Republican in 2008 and 2012, the public had come to regard Mormons as consummate Americans: patriotic, family-oriented, and conservative. How did this shift occur? In this collection, prominent scholars of Mormonism, including Claudia L. Bushman, Richard Lyman Bushman, Jan Shipps, and Philip L. Barlow, follow the religions quest for legitimacy in the United States and its intersection with American politics. From Brigham Youngs skirmishes with the federal government over polygamy to the Mormon involvement in Californias Proposition 8, contributors combine sociology, political science, race and gender studies, and popular culture to track Mormonisms rapid integration into American life. The book takes a broad view of the religions history, considering its treatment of women and African Americans and its portrayal in popular culture and the media. With essays from both Mormon and non-Mormon scholars, this anthology tells a big-picture story of a small sect that became a major player in American politics.

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