

Mormon Women at the Crossroads: Global Narratives and the Power of Connectedness

Caroline Kline

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In Caroline Kline's *Mormon Women at the Crossroads*, the stories of devout Mormon women in Mexico, Botswana, and the US are placed in conversation with church theology.

The book is both about the interviewed women's ways of thinking of themselves, and about outside perceptions of them. The subjects identify themselves in multifaceted terms: as Mormons, as women, and as products of their various cultures. Abundance and connectedness to family, themselves, and to God are central themes of their exchanges with Kline. The book, too, is layered and complex—not wholly a scientific treatise, nor wholly a work of human interest. It is appealing from multiple angles and creates new vantage points from which to examine religious life.

Kline first lays out her approach, as with details of why the locations were chosen and about her methods (she relied on oral histories). She hints at the book's ultimate conclusion early on. The women's individual histories are compelling and are made to dovetail with explanations and assessments of how they fit into established and emerging schools of thought. Their stories are complemented by graphs and resources that reveal related data.

The book strikes a conversational tone: both the subjects and their interviewer are welcoming. Still, its style is academic in nature (though it explains its theological terms well for the laity). The book integrates the women's contributions into a wide body of knowledge through its theological contextualization. And even as it emphasizes their personal experiences, the book says that the research changed Kline herself: her subjects revealed biases in her questions, and their answers helped her to grow in faith and understanding.

Mormon Women at the Crossroads blends personal stories with theological considerations of women's roles in contemporary Mormonism.

MARI CARLSON (July / August 2022)

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