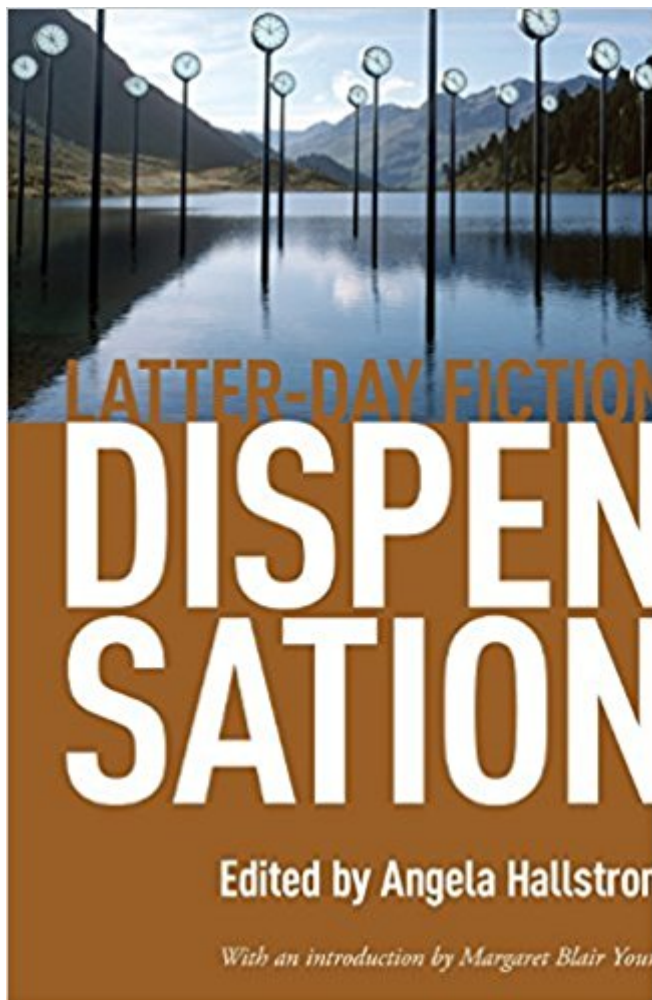


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Dispensation: Latter-Day Fiction



Synopsis

DISPENSATION anthologizes the best Mormon short stories written near the turn of the twenty-first century. Each of the extraordinary twenty-eight stories in this volume represents a potent individual voice, from popular and nationally acclaimed authors Brady Udall and Orson Scott Card, to well-respected Mormon literature veterans Douglas Thayer and Margaret Blair Young, to talented up-and-coming writers Lisa Madsen Rubilar and Todd Robert Petersen, and many more.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

This is a solid collection of Mormon short stories, and deserves attention from anyone interested in contemporary Mormon writing. Not all the stories are perfect, but the Hallstrom's selection might be. Some of the other reviewers complain that the book is not "faith-promoting". These people have a very childish idea of faith; God built a world with child rape, the Shoah, and pediatric cancer, after all. A mature faith can handle suffering and ambiguity, folks, and good art will present this darkness. If these reviewers had their way, we would keep things to the kiddie pool and wind up with a corpus of intellectually stunted morality tales.

Three things about this book surprised me. First, the size of it. Second, how many of the authors I recognized. And third, how many of the 28 stories I ended up liking. Although all of the stories have Mormon characters or themes, the writers don't aim to preach to or even to uplift the reader. Some of the best stories here are intense, haunting, or sad. I was already a fan of Douglas Thayer (whose

story I jumped to first, and it didn't disappoint), Orson Scott Card (whose story is the only one that I might call preachy), Brian Evenson, and Levi Peterson. And I had read at least something by a few of the other authors. I was happy to see Jack Harrell's bizarre Job-like story "Calling and Election" included--that's one I had read before and enjoyed. I could comment more on specific stories, but then I'd probably never get this posted.

Some of these stories were well developed and interesting. Some seemed to end abruptly even for a short story format. I liked that many did not fall into the typical "faith promoting" genre that has made mormon literature soooo boring and dry.

Didn't find it enjoyable to read. It wasn't very faith building. Would not recommend overall.

This collection of stories made me realize the dispensation the compilers aimed at was to dispense with uplifting literature; I found their selection of stories to be quite depressing. There were only two stories in the whole book I enjoyed; the others left me wondering where the author's faith had gone. One story, by Orson Scott Card, left me wishing the whole book had been of that caliber. Sadly, the majority left me wishing each author had not wasted his (or my) time.

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