



# **Saints Under Siege: The Texas State Raid on the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints (New and Alternative Religions)**

*Stuart A. Wright, James T. Richardson*

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In April 2008, state police and child protection authorities raided Yearning for Zion Ranch near Eldorado, Texas, a community of 800 members of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints (FLDS), a polygamist branch of the Mormons. State officials claimed that the raid, which was triggered by anonymous phone calls from an underage girl to a domestic violence hotline, was based on evidence of widespread child sexual abuse. In a high-risk paramilitary operation, 439 children were removed from the custody of their parents and held until the Third Court of Appeals found that the state had overreached. Not only did the state fail to corroborate the authenticity of the hoax calls, but evidence reveals that Texas officials had targeted the FLDS from the outset, planning and preparing for a confrontation.

Saints under Siege provides a thorough, theoretically grounded critical examination of the Texas state raid on the FLDS while situating this event in a broader sociological context. The volume considers the raid as an exemplar case of a larger pattern of state actions against minority religions, offering comparative analyses to other government raids both historically and across cultures. In its look beyond the Texas raid, it provides compelling evidence of social intolerance and state repression of unpopular minority faiths in general, and the FLDS in particular.

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