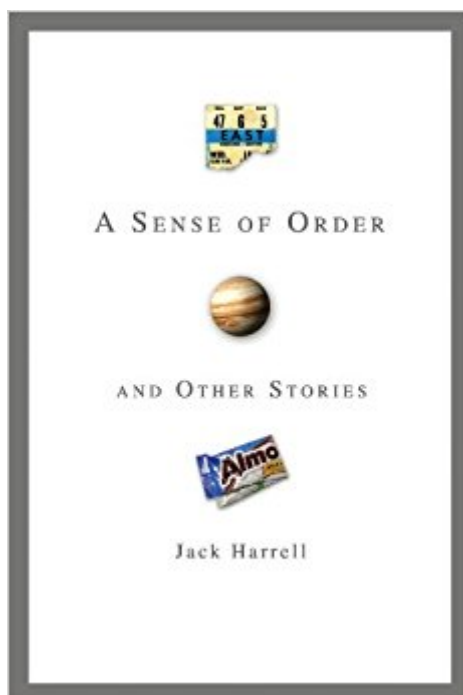


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A Sense Of Order And Other Stories



Synopsis

The author asks a big question: Who is responsible? One person in need of this information is Lon, who wonders why his marriage is falling apart. Lon thought his wife would re-initiate intimacy at some point. She doesn't, and he sets out to find the man he thinks stands between them but only finds an apparition—and he still can't fix his marriage. In another story, the LDS prophet is drawn to a simpler time when he could wander out unnoticed and buy a candy bar. Church Security won't let him outside on his own and Public Relations won't let him wear anything but a suit and tie. Still, the impulse to be a regular guy for an afternoon is compelling. Can he make his own decisions? He can, but what are the consequences? And then there's Jerry, who passes three men in suits who are talking and laughing at the loading dock behind an LDS temple. One of them looks up, drops a cigarette and crushes it, then slips into a nearby car. Another man—someone who has made Jerry's life miserable—taunts him, saying: "Jerry, your goodness is your enemy" and tell all your friends. • Who is responsible? Maybe it's the author's reverie that's to blame, but his stories have a way of getting deep inside the psyche and haunting us. Â Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

What an amazing collection a knockout achievement that leaves the reader reeling. In Harrell's universe the supernatural is natural, and God has imbued human beings with power they're not quite sure how to wield. In each masterful, utterly original story, I saw myself, and I saw my culture,

in a startling new light. I closed the book feeling enlightened and unsettled and thrilled reactions that only great literature can produce. --Angela Hallstrom, author of "Bound on Earth" Jack Harrell's fiction is the finest we've seen by a Mormon author. He is a convert rather than a hot house Mormon, which explains how he can so strikingly conjure both the darkest abyss and the utmost heavens. Writing about redneck cowboys or more urbane souls, his creations are believable. He reminds us of Gogol, and as the noted critic Belinsky once replied when someone compared a young Dostoevsky to Gogol: Gogols don't just grow like mushrooms. Nor do Harrells. His evocation of menace seems to me to recall the haunting mood of Cormac McCarthy as well a no small achievement. Harrell's prose is impressive, his imagery captivating, and his plot turns unexpected. He is unrivaled among LDS authors. --Thomas F. Rogers, author of "Huebener and Other Plays"

Jack Harrell teaches English and creative writing at Brigham Young University-Idaho and co-edits the LDS literary journal *Irreantum*. He has published fiction and essays in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, *Manna*, *Words of Wisdom*, *Popular Music and Society*, and the anthology *Dispensation: Latter-Day Fiction*. His novel, *Vernal Promises*, received the Marilyn Brown Novel Award from the Association for Mormon Letters, and of his short stories, "Calling and Election" won the 2007 Fiction Contest from *Irreantum* and "A Prophet's Story" won the 2009 Brookie and D. K. Brown Fiction Contest from *Sunstone*. He lives in Rexburg, Idaho.

Does the supernatural really exist and, if so, what is its purpose? Mid-nineteenth century Romantic writers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Hermann Melville, and Edgar Allan Poe use the supernatural often in their writings, its origin is ambiguous and its effect is usually negative. A reader can interpret these occurrences as supernatural, natural, or a combination of the two. While Jack Harrell's presentation of the supernatural is also frequently ambiguous, he clearly embraces its reality and ability to affect the universe. His presentation of the supernatural in *A Sense of Order and Other Stories* frees a reader to consider how, when, and why a person has a supernatural encounter and to determine whether the experience is demonic, divine, or natural.

It's a Good read they are a collection of short stories. Some of the stories are more easy to follow than others. Some stories after reading them will make you question what the point of the story was. Others are well written and quite a page turner.

I enjoyed the writing style and approach of the author. His ability to make you rethink about life and people and what you should expect was excellent.

I'm a big fan of the fiction of Levi Peterson and Douglas Thayer which is informed by the American West, Utah and Mormonism. I can now add Jack Harrell, a professor of literature at BYU-Idaho in Rexburg, to my list of favorites. The short stories in this book introduced me to a wide variety of characters and made me genuinely interested in their lives. I highly recommend this short story collection. Now that I have finished it, I intend to read Harrell's award-winning novel, *Vernal Promises*, which came out in 2003.

Chaos seems to be more prevalent in the world than order- or does it? "A Sense of Order and Other Stories" is a collection of stories from Jack Harrell as he provides a collection of short stories with a collection of characters looking for the status of the world and the problems that lurk everywhere around them, and the order that can be found anywhere as well. "A Sense of Order" is a riveting collection, very highly recommended.

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