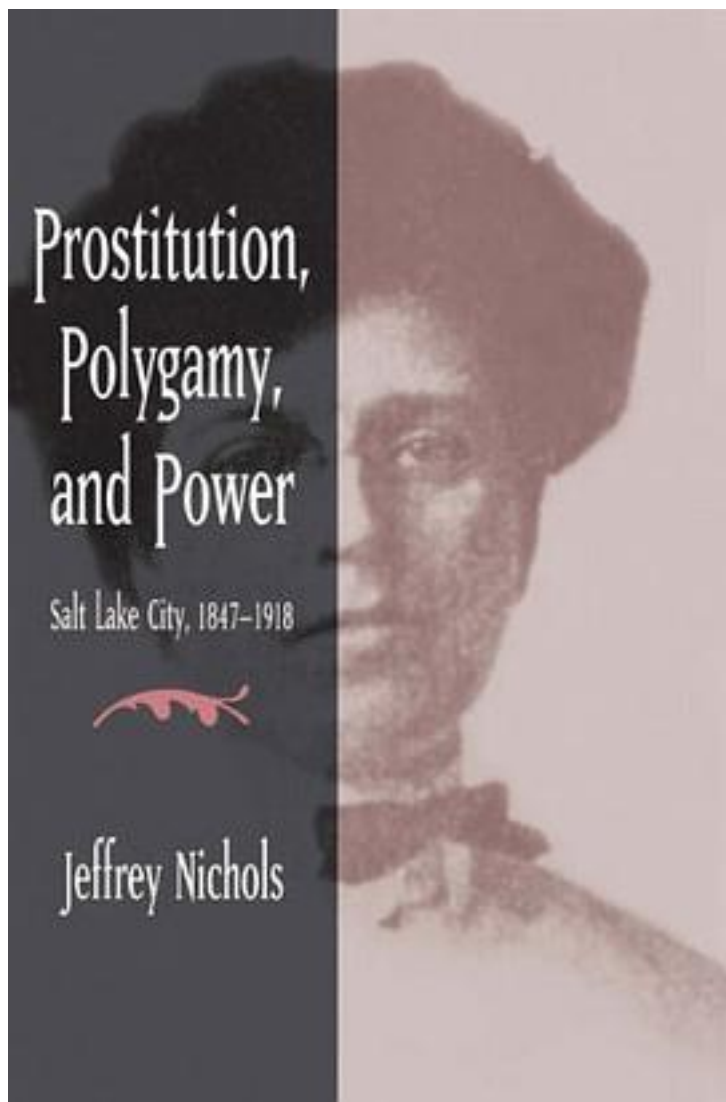


Prostitution, Polygamy, and Power



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This book reveals insights into the complex history of prostitution in Salt Lake City. After the transcontinental railroad opened Utah to large-scale emigration and market capitalism, hundreds of women in Salt Lake City began to sell sex for a living and a few earned small fortunes. Some of the city's best-known businessmen and politicians developed a financial stake in brothels and prostitution, which was regulated by both Mormon and gentile officials. Jeffrey Nichols examines how prostitution became a focal point in the moral contest between Mormons and gentiles and aided in the construction of gender systems, moral standards, and the city's physical and economic landscapes. Both groups used prostitution as a weapon in the battle for political and economic power during the city's formative years. Gentiles likened polygamy to prostitution and accused polygamous Mormons of violating Christian norms of family structure and sexual behaviour. Non-Mormon women in particular denounced plural marriage as a double standard that exploited women and favoured men. Defending their church and its ideals, Mormons blamed gentiles for introducing the sinful business of prostitution into their honourable city. The controversy waned when the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints began to move away from polygamy in the 1890s, but resurfaced with the rise of the anti-Mormon American Party that sponsored the Stockade prostitution district. Nichols traces the interplay of prostitution and reform through World War I, when Mormon and gentile moral codes converged at the expense of prostitutes. He also considers how polygamy and religious conflict distinguished Salt Lake City from other cities struggling to abolish prostitution in the Progressive Era.

作者介绍:

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