

# FIGHTING RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

*Portraits of Hate, Lessons of Hope*



## Lesson Plan: Overview of Anti-Mormonism

### Objectives:

- The student will be able to define anti-Mormonism.
- The student will be able to recognize themes of intolerance in anti-Mormon images.
- The student will be able to articulate why religious intolerance exists against Mormons, using images to support their claims.

### Activities:

- Introductory lesson on Mormonism in America. See provided Background Information sheet.
- Begin class with 2-3 images from our website to initiate discussion of themes and root causes for anti-Mormonism.
- Using the worksheets as guides, have students work in groups or pairs to present an image to the class representing different themes of anti-Mormonism. They may need to do some outside research as well to support their claims.
- Concluding Class Discussion Questions – Why was Mormonism portrayed in such negative ways? What are the effects of the federal government’s involvement upon anti-Mormon sentiment? Is anti-Mormon sentiment still present in today’s society? If so, what examples can you think of and how are they related to older anti-Mormon sentiment?

### Assessments:

- In-class responses to worksheet questions.
- Participation in class discussion.
- In-class presentation with partner(s) on an image from our site and outside research. (Possible rubric provided.)

# A Brief Overview of Anti-Mormonism in America

## Early Nineteenth Century

- October 27, 1838: “Mormon Extermination Order” signed by Missouri governor Lilburn Boggs. This led to the Haun’s Mill Massacre on October 30, 1838.
- 1841-1843: Joseph Smith, Jr. revelations (baptism of the dead, plural marriage)
- 1843: Joseph Smith, Jr. runs for president of the United States.
- June 27, 1844: Joseph Smith, Jr. and his brother, Hyrum, killed by a mob in Nauvoo, Illinois jail.
- 1846: Mormon exodus westward to avoid persecution.

## Mid-Nineteenth Century

- 1862: Congress passes the Morrill Act, outlawing bigamy in all U.S. territories. However due to the Civil War, the act was all but impossible to enforce.
- 1874: Congress passes the Poland Act, establishing district courts in Utah, making it easier to prosecute polygamists.
- 1878-9: “Reynolds vs. United States” Supreme Court case upheld the Morrill Act, calling Mormonism “disruptive of peace and good order, and threatening [to the] foundations of the country.”

## Late Nineteenth Century

- 1880: The Women’s National Anti-Polygamy League successfully pressured Congress to deny a seat to Utah’s territorial representative George Cannon, a known polygamist.
- 1882: Congress passes the Edmunds Act, making unlawful co-habitation illegal, thus removing the need for proof that polygamous marriages had actually happened.
- 1890: The Woodruff Manifesto officially suspended the practice of polygamy, which eliminated some of the controversy surrounding Utah’s bid for statehood.
- 1894: President Grover Cleveland pardoned all polygamists who had formerly been disenfranchised.
- January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1896: Utah finally becomes the 45<sup>th</sup> state after six attempts at statehood.

## Twentieth Century

- 1968: George Romney runs for president of the United States.
- June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1976: Missouri governor Christopher S. Bond officially rescinded the Extermination Order and apologized to Mormons for their suffering and misfortune as a result of the 1838 decree.

## Twenty-first Century

- 2007: Mitt Romney, son of George Romney, runs for president of the United States.