

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Borrowed Trousers: Diary of a Mormon Missionary

- (1) What was your favourite aspect of *Borrowed Trousers*? What specific passages in the book struck you? How did they make you feel?
- (2) Have you met any Mormon missionaries? How closely does what you know of their beliefs and daily practices align with those this missionary writes about? How much do they differ?
- (3) What did you think of this missionary's struggle to adapt to the rules required of him by the church?
- (4) Were you surprised to learn that missionaries are required to pay their own living expenses while on a two-year mission for a church comprised of multi-billion dollar corporations? What are your thoughts about this?
- (5) Did you notice more affluent missionaries were able to (1) afford meals in restaurants while others ate cheap food in their rooms? (2) afford hotel rooms while others slept sideways, four to one bed, in squalor? (3) drive vehicles while others walked and hitch hiked? What did you think about this?
- (6) How did this missionary's acceptance of hunger, lack, and physical ailments - and the toll on his emotions - while never doubting his faith, make you feel about him? About the church?
- (7) He was required to keep detailed records of the members of the church and their finances, in the towns and cities that he served in - and collect their tithing and donations. What did you think of his being chastised by a salaried leader when he remarked that this seemed to be a priority?
- (8) How did you think about the woman who waited at home while his love deepened for a woman missionary? What did you think of him and how he handled this situation?
- (9) In the Introduction, after Maggie's mother gives her the journal and she reads it, she reflects on the church. Did you think her conclusions were reasonable?
- (10) In the Epilogue, Maggie writes about her parents' relationship and her relationship with her father. How did this make you feel about Maggie and her life?
- (11) Do you believe Maggie's reading of her father's journal brought her the resolution about her relationship with him, that was lacking in her life?