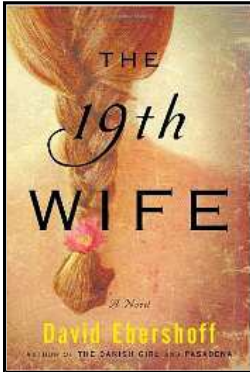


## Books, Cooks, Looks & Ms. Elani



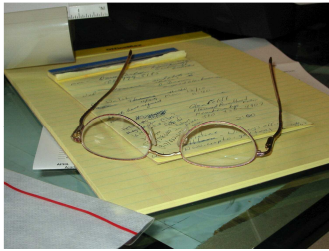
Dear Friends and Readers,

*The story of her life is fascinating and rings true ...?*

***The 19th Wife***

by David Ebershoff

ISBN 978-1400063970



The history of every religion is interesting in that there is usually more than one version of how it started. Also readers find many statements from religious zealots on why a certain religion is the 'only' true religion. In David Ebershoff's *The 19th Wife*, the religion discussed is the Mormonism. Though the book is fiction, it is based on the story of Ann Eliza Young, the 19th wife of Brigham Young. Ebershoff did extensive research on Ann Eliza and discovered she was indeed a very strong woman; intelligent, outspoken, contradictory and could be prone to being over dramatic so thus sometimes unreliable. But she did divorce Young, something rare for Mormons in the late eighteen hundreds, did face apostasy, as well as write two books and went on a speaking tour around the country to denounce polygamy as well as the prophet himself. Unable to stay in contact with her mother, one son and many other family members, she eloquently tells the tale of what it was like to be a plural wife then suddenly have no contact with family members. The story of her life is fascinating and rings true of some of what has been written about polygamy today in states such as Utah, Colorado and Arizona.

Woven into the story of Ann Eliza is another 19th wife, fictional BeckyLyn Young, who in present day Mesadale, Utah, is arrested for killing her husband. Her son Jordan learns of this killing and leaves Pasadena,

He had been cast aside and become a 'lost boy' in Mesadale, a town where polygamy is practiced, and left to make it on his own. Forced to reenter the place he vowed never to return he discovers he is not only not wanted, but actually fears for his life as he learns secrets that no one wants others to know. Jordan believes his mother when she states she did not kill her husband, Jordan's father. Through contacts in Mesadale and the newspaper Jordan is pulled into the life of Ann Eliza and her past and how she and his mother's fate are intertwined.

When the last page of this book is finished, the reader not only has a better understanding of the formation of the Mormon religion but also the trials that the thousands of plural wives went through after it was decided by the Prophet, Brigham Young, that it was not only right but required to believe in polygamy. The changes that this rule brought not only to women but to the male children changed the face of many Mormons for years. Although now outlawed in the Mormon religion, it is believed that polygamy is still practiced in many areas. To have a book so thoroughly researched yet easy to read is a good find.

*Ms. Elani*

California to find out what he can about his mother whom he had not seen since he was a teenager, some dozen years before.