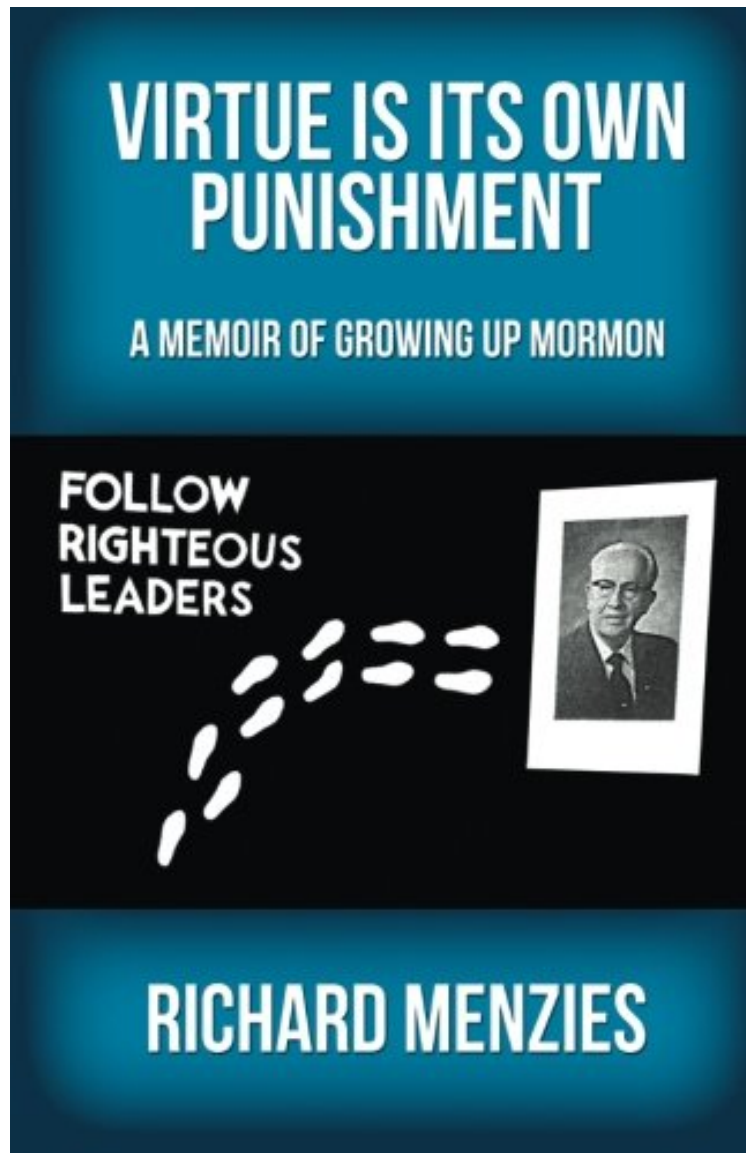


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Virtue Is Its Own Punishment: A Memoir of Growing up Mormon

Richard Menzies

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Richard Menzies : Virtue Is Its Own Punishment: A Memoir of Growing up Mormon before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Virtue Is Its Own Punishment: A Memoir of Growing up Mormon:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Another great read by Utah storyteller MenziesBy L. AngierFor at least 25 years, I've enjoyed the writing (and photography) of Utah writer Richard Menzies. I first read his works in the

late 1970s in the pages of Nevada and have been hooked ever since. The people he's met and has written about paint a lyrical portrait of the West, not of the imagination of of real characters that have been shaped by their environment. Menzies manages to consistently find obscure places and common people who are between the cracks and respectfully brings them to the world to honor the unknown stars of the west and immortalize them not only with prose but many times with beautiful photography. In the case of *Virtue*, his words paint and image more vividly than any photo of growing up as a square and thinking peg in a round and unthinking culture and gives hope that others can learn to survive the trauma and thrive within the confines of a highly structured socio-theocratic cult that creates a rigid structure for many but has little room for any not in lockstep with its groupthink. I read this in on setting and saw a parallel to part of my life and meaning to the questions that confronted by experience. In the end, we are lucky to have this square peg to add some reality to back to our interpretations of the meaning of life. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful and Hilarious By FlaIrish12 "*Virtue Is Its Own Punishment*" is pure Richard Menzies. I looks forward to reading about his childhood and was not disappointed. Menzies is both a wonderful humorist and an insightful reader of characters. And he brings these two talents to bear in this book. While Frank McCourt wrote about growing up Irish Catholic, Menzies paints as compelling a memoir as growing up Morman. His tales of climbing the Morman leadership ladder, camping adventures and college romances kept me smiling, and even laughing out loud. As with "*Passing Through*", Menzies provides great characters with his unique talent for irony and humor. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Trying so hard By John Brinley Life is tough for an artist. Not only can't you go home again, you can't even have a home once you are conscious. Menzies has written a whimsical, punny, and eventually sad story of a young man struggling to be like the other Mormon kids around him as he grew up. He couldn't do it and no one else can either who thinks long and hard about life and it's randomness. My heart goes to him for a valiant try. Being an existentialist is hard, but can be a lot of fun. Highly recommended for the humor and the humanity portrayed.

Virtue Is Its Own Punishment is the story of a boy's journey of growth and discovery from childhood through college at Brigham Young University. It is not about religion so much as it is a story of growing up in the culture of small town, Utah, Mormon society. The author is a wry social commentator whose humorous depiction of coming of age will appeal to Mormons, ex-Mormons, and other participants in restrictive cultures. Highlights include full-immersion baptism, beliefs about Heaven, avoiding missionary work, and learning about girls and technical virginity. Ever wondered what it's like to grow up Mormon? This entertaining memoir is a look inside Mormonism in the 1950s when the most pressing concern of boys everywhere is who would get to be Roy Rogers and who would be Gene Autry in schoolyard games. Later, going on a mission is the pre-ordained destiny of 18-year-old boys regardless of their inclination toward missionary work. The author's tumultuous years at Brigham Young leads to a poignant end to the first part of his life, and a shaky new start to the second. This is a story of innocence preserved and paradise lost-written by one of America's funniest writers. Encouraged as a boy to be perfect, the narrator finds the path to perfection to be a bumpy road. Which isn't to say he doesn't give it a shot, forswearing alcohol, tobacco, coffee, and even cola drinks in order to curry favor with his elders, friends and neighbors in the LDS community, and especially with girls. Alas, in college the road only becomes bumpier as romantic fantasies remain just fantasies and the chastity belt begins to feel more like a straitjacket. Without really wishing for it to happen, Richard eventually finds himself on the outside of the institution looking in, a reluctant heretic. But not all suffering is for naught. In fact, when it comes to raw material for an inventive, insightful and irreverent memoir, Mormonism is a treasure trove of raw material.

About the Author Born on April 6—same day as the Mormon Church—young Richard Menzies was thought to be a child of destiny. Instead, he grew up to become a freelance journalist whose byline has appeared in newspapers and magazines too numerous and/or obscure to enumerate. He has published two previous books and has been the subject of a PBS documentary. He resides in Utah, gateway to Nevada.