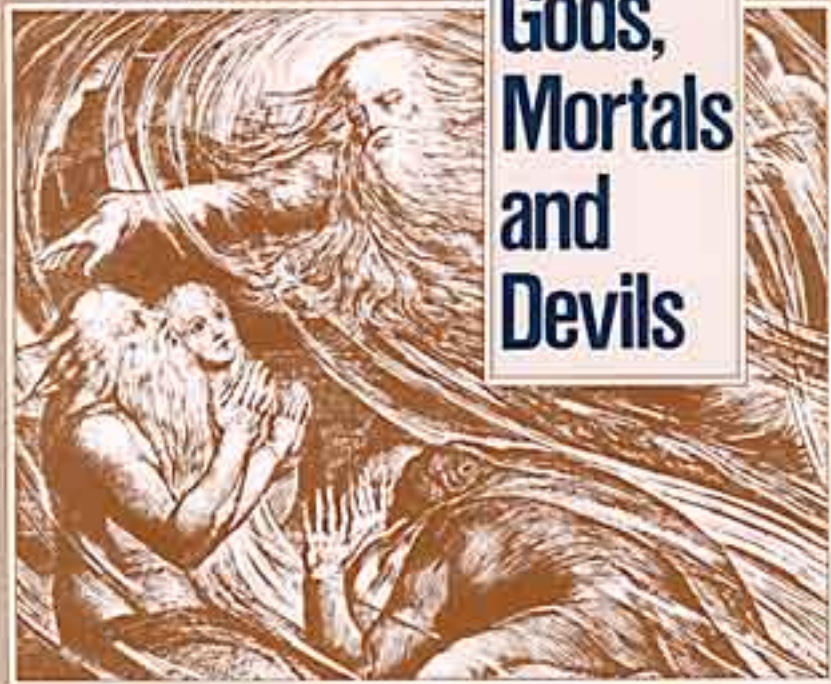


SUNSTONE

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VOLUME 14 NUMBER 1

Of Gods, Mortals and Devils



SUNSTONE

VOLUME TEN NUMBER TWELVE

FOUR DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS

FROM THE EDITORS

A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

Daniel Rector 3

MY BURDEN IS LIGHT

Elbert Eugene Peck 4

RELIGION

OF GODS, MORTALS, AND DEVILS

As Satan Is, Man may yet become

Boyd Kirkland 6

FICTION

SUNSWATH

First Place Story in the 1986
D.K. Brown Fiction Contest

Levi Peterson 13

PERSONAL ESSAY

PERCEPTIONS OF LIFE

Four Paths on Our Journey through Life

Louis A. Moench 30

CONTEMPORARY

THE MORMON DOCUMENTS' DAY IN COURT

A Closer Look at Some Historical Documents

Linda Sillitoe 23

NEWS

RECORD TURNOUT AT SYMPOSIUM EIGHT

40

UPDATE

NEW DIRECTOR FOR SMITH INSTITUTE

41

LDS POET MEG MUNK DEAD AT 42

42

RECENT TITLES

PROPHET IN THE PROMISED LAND

Brigham Young: American Moses
by Leonard J. Arrington

Richard W. Sadler 44

SIN OR BORE?

Mormon Polygamy: A History
by Richard Van Wagoner

Kerry William Bate 46

DEPARTMENTS

READERS FORUM

2

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ALL-TIME LOW

In publishing the vicious personal attack on Linda Newell (SUNSTONE, 10:11), SUNSTONE reached an all-time low. It should be beneath the dignity of a respectable journal to disseminate such a scurrilous statement.

*Sterling M. McMurrin
Salt Lake City, Utah*

JUDGE NOT . . .

Is SUNSTONE so hard up for copy that you have taken to publishing what, at best, is invective and at worst libel? I refer, of course, to the argument *ad hominem* attack on Linda King Newell in the letters column. Must I remind you that as editors, you have the right to edit? It is not necessary to publish every piece of slime that oozes under the door. It is one thing to attack a published work; it is quite another to allow vitriolic readers to vilify an author personally. Your editorial policy should assign hate mail to the waste basket lest your magazine should meet the same fate.

I suggest this policy for you and your letter writers: Argue ideas but leave judgement of the testimonies of others to the appropriate authorities, i.e. Our Heavenly Father and the testimony bearers themselves.

*Mary L. Bradford
Arlington, Virginia*

You're right. We apologize to Ms. Newell and repent. In the future we'll share only the letters that responsibly deal with issues and ideas—not with personalities.

-Editor

EARLY MORNING ENRICHMENT

May I express a more positive view of morning seminary than this propounded by F. Lambert, Karen Lynn and Charles Sellers? This Church program is not a conspiracy cooked up by rise-and-shine cultists and poorly educated, empire-building CES bureaucrats. It does not cause mental

breakdowns, poor health and low grades. It is not the reason gifted LDS artists and scholars underachieve.

Seminary is not a Primary class that meets daily. It is a high school level course in theology. One cannot become a good pianist through a correspondence school. The best way to teach mathematics is in the classroom, not as a home study course. One of the most effective ways to convey the tenets of our faith is in a classroom setting.

I am a morning seminary graduate. As a young convert to the Church it was the single most important spiritual experience of my high school years. Contrary to Karen Lynn's opinion, it did make a "distinctive contribution to [my] spiritual development".

Seminary offers camaraderie to young Mormons who feel isolated in schools where they are in the minority. There are lively, frank, open discussions on topics important to adolescents. Completing a dry home study booklet alone is a poor substitute for shared spiritual experiences with one's peers.

The contentions of Lambert, Lynn, and Sellers is that morning seminary is okay for some people (they imply the not-so-bright), but an "inhumane" burden for serious students and artists is fatuous. My eleven years' experience as a teacher for this program has shown the opposite to be true. Only the most motivated and capable kids are willing to pay the price to attend. Over 90% of my students go on to college—many with scholarships. Their GPA and class standing are high. They participate in extracurricular activities from music to athletics. A lot of them have part-time jobs. They do mountains of homework, have fun in their spare time and still find time to study the scriptures. I don't know why these kids can do it and others can't.

For those who are able to take advantage of the opportunity, morning seminary can be a worthwhile and enriching experience.

*Michael Rayback
Boulder, CO*

Daniel H. Rector

In order to acquaint our readers with the new leadership at SUNSTONE, and to convey a sense of direction, I want to publish answers to some of the questions I've been asked most frequently during the last few months.

Q: How do you justify SUNSTONE's existence? Do we really need both SUNSTONE and *Dialogue*?

A: First of all, the presence of more than one independent Mormon voice helps to insure a balanced and fair representation of views, and the competition is healthy. Of course, there is some overlap in what we do, but there are specific needs that can only be met by a publication like SUNSTONE.

Q: For instance?

A: Relatively few people have the time or the inclination to wade through a hundred-page article with hundreds of footnotes. Most of us would rather keep the longer article for reference, but read a more concise treatment that gets right to the heart of the issue in a few pages.

Q: Is SUNSTONE going to fold?

A: Over the last eleven years SUNSTONE has built a broad base of support. We've struggled financially in the past and that struggle will continue for a while, but our debts are lower than ever, and we have some very good people committed to a strong future.

Q: Who are these people?

A: The SUNSTONE board of trustees includes: J. Bonner Ritchie, department chair of Organizational Behavior at BYU; Kent Frogley, advertising executive with O.C. Tanner; Martha Bradley, PhD. in history from the University of Utah and the 1985 symposium chair; John Ashton, a Salt Lake attorney; Elbert Peck, our editor; and myself, I'm publisher and president.

Q: How about the full-time staff?

A: The staff box in this issue contains an updated list of names and positions. We have a full complement of highly talented, committed people. I'm very excited about them.

Q: What about you? How did you get involved in SUNSTONE?

A: I was working for Steve Christensen a year ago when the Salt Lake bombings left me unemployed. I eventually came to work as business manager at SUNSTONE.

Just before Peggy Fletcher left she chose me to be the president. The position came quite unexpectedly.

Professionally, I have a business background with some minimal publishing experience and a love for religious ideas, but I'm not an editor so I was greatly relieved when Elbert Peck agreed to come on board. The two of us fill Peggy's old shoes.

Q: Some have expressed concern that the new leadership at SUNSTONE may be more conservative than before. Are you an Iron Rodder?

A: One advantage of growing up in a General Authority's home was that I never shared the popular conception of Church leaders as nearly infallible authority figures. I therefore tend to be quite independent in my views. This, I suppose, disqualifies me from being an Iron Rod. However, I don't consider myself a Liahona in the sense that the word often connotes a distrust of personal revelation as a possible source of knowledge. Regardless of one's private theology a person in my position must have tolerance and respect for the full range of Mormon viewpoints. In this regard I am well qualified.

Q: Are you a closet doubter?

A: I am a believer, most of whose beliefs are constantly changing. This is because I don't feel that doubt is incompatible with genuine religious sentiment. Doubt can make belief dynamic; and as I define the terms, doubt need not destroy faith because the two ideas can operate in separate dimensions. For me, faith is a decision to trust someone. My faith in Jesus Christ does not mean that I never doubt him, but only that I'm still relying on him.

Q: Your father is an LDS General Authority. A lot of people are interested in what he thinks of your involvement with SUNSTONE.

A: My father is open minded and curious about Church history and theology. *Dialogue* was always in the house, as have been scholars such as Andrew Ehat, Michael Quinn, Robert Fillerup and Paul and Margaret Toscano. Recently, my father has taken a particular interest in temple theology, folk magic, and Hugh Nibley's social commentary. He and my mother have also attended the last two Salt Lake Sunstone Symposia.

Regarding my position with SUNSTONE, my father has always been completely supportive of what I've chosen to do, and this is no exception. I really admire him for that.

Q: What is your feeling about publishing controversial issues?

A: As an open forum representing the full spectrum of Mormon thought, we should never foreclose discussion on significant issues, and we should continually break ground on new ones. Of course, this must be done in a responsible fashion. All sides of an issue should eventually get fair representation. We should also remember that we are dealing with religious ideas that merit a certain reverence and respect. But to me, genuine respect for an idea means that I should be willing to explore it fully.

Q: What does the future hold for the Sunstone Foundation?

A: Our chief goal now is to publish with greater regularity. We are not making promises we can't keep, but you will notice improvement. Our content will remain essentially the same with perhaps a better balance of articles reflecting the values and attitudes of our predominantly believing LDS readership.

Q: Do you foresee changes in the symposium or other programs?

A: This is the area where we have the greatest potential for expansion. I want to encourage discussion of Mormon ideas in every appropriate setting. Already we have organized another regional symposium and subscriber groups in several western cities. We are also broadcasting recorded symposium presentations over radio in Salt Lake City. Our next step is to produce a reprint catalog which could complement the one compiled by F.A.R.M.S., covering a broad range of topics and viewpoints. Eventually, I see SUNSTONE sponsoring a center where people can drop by for lunch or dinner and conversation. We could also host a variety of educational functions in such a location.

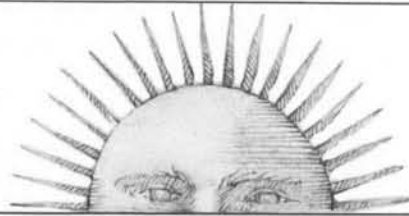
These ideas are just a beginning. As the Church grows, the opportunities for independent initiative will increase, and SUNSTONE will be at the forefront, innovatively expanding the range and scope of Mormon discourse.

MY BURDEN IS LIGHT

Elbert Eugene Peck

"ONE COOL JUDGMENT IS WORTH
A THOUSAND HASTY COUNSELS.
THE THING TO DO IS TO
SUPPLY LIGHT AND NOT HEAT."

—WOODROW WILSON



The car wasn't out of the Salt Lake airport when Peggy Fletcher turned to me and announced, "Elbert, I'm getting married and moving to Africa. I think you should come back to SUNSTONE and be the next editor." Unexpectedly, my simple symposium excursion inaugurated a career decision which would take nine months of petitions and refusals before I saw the sunlight. But at that time, speeding along North Temple Street, my mind excited at the possibilities, my spirit feared burnout, and my body felt exhaustion. And, since I blissfully enjoyed my Washington, D.C. life and service as an elders quorum president, a tempted and flattered, but confident, "no" was my quick and easy reply. After all, I had already done the Mormon publications scene and, for all its glories, had little desire to dive into the exhilarating yet treacherous river of deadlines, personalities and notoriety. Joseph Smith may have wanted to tread deep waters; but, with these rapids, once capsized, twice cautious.

As co-founder and first editor of the late BYU independent student newspaper the *Seventh East Press*, in my inaugural editorial I appropriated the simplistic reason Orson Welles gave Charles Foster Kane for starting a newspaper: "I think it would be fun to run a newspaper." Like Kane's, my impulsive endeavor has a mixed legacy. On one hand, it was a shining moment of student intellectual activism confronting issues and events. On the other, some of its naive and unprofessional boldness gave painful offense, alienated initial well wishers and added to the increasing polarization at BYU and in the larger LDS community. Decreasing the one thing I wanted

to increase: bridge building dialogue. Regretfully, perhaps as much heat was added to the Grand Conversation as light.

So, this time, with much less bravado, I cautiously begin the editorship of another intellectual and "controversial" periodical by borrowing a Robert Frost quote that integrates fun *with* purpose to describe my reasons:

*Only where love and need are one,
And the work is play for mortal sakes,
Is the deed ever really done,
For heaven and the future's sakes.*

Because of the impact SUNSTONE may have on its readers' mortal work for heaven's sake they deserve to know how the editor views the Church and what his agenda is for the magazine. (This may also reduce the inevitable reading of omens into each item printed, even for issues in which I had little or no input, like this one.)

Like most SUNSTONE readers, I am acquainted with the disillusionment that comes from discovering that things are not as I was taught and believed; with the despair from realizing that nothing in heaven functions as it ought; and with the cynicism from concluding that things may never change. I have responded with outrage and indifference, apologetics and avoidance, love and hate. I have screamed "a plague on both your houses" upon finding that the "liberal" reformers are polluted by the very vices they decry—malicious gossip, presumptuous judging, blinding pride, arrogant intolerance, and unforgiving memories. I've agonized when the schisms between groups and individuals demanded me to take sides, dividing loves and thoughts when my heart and mind yearned to be one. Lastly, of course, I have frightened in introspective moments upon seeing a spiritual

darkness growing in my own soul and wept, remembering my light-hearted days when scriptures were revelations; prayers answered; truths simple and sure; prophets omniscient; and sins forgiven.

In one such moment I returned home. Home to what, I still knew was true: To a mortal yet divine church; to a believing community essential for spiritual growth; and to communion with a loving God. Still, I was not the same person I was before I left the Garden.

I now believe fewer things than I did before, but in what I believe, I am more certain. Because I feel and see God work through this church I don't ask, "Does this mean the Church isn't true?" but rather, "What does this tell me about how God deals with men and his church." The answers, however ambiguous, help me understand and constructively act within the Church with charity and without impatient outrage. Although my religious thinking is primarily utilitarian—how to build the kingdom—it is complemented by a compulsive mystical quest for holiness, unity and knowledge of God, which demands an intellectual speculation that produces rough and tentative conclusion that are less important than the ponderings themselves.

If I'm tentative about dogma, I'm passionate about establishing Zion: which cause combines all my diverse attributes into one; which cause draws me to SUNSTONE in search of intellectual and spiritual understanding and also for community; which cause saddens me when I see the wranglings, posturings, rages, and schisms of many in the LDS intellectual community.

In summary, using Elder Packer's model, I am a "therefore" Mormon intellectual instead of a "however" one: I celebrate the Restoration, *therefore* I seek, search, ponder and probe to discover its implications; and I serve, teach, discuss, bridge, and cultivate charity to effect its implementations. I want my life to supply bonding light and not contentious heat.

Now, whither the magazine? While SUNSTONE will never be all things to all people, it is many different and important things to different people for many different reasons. I value the varied roles that it plays and have

no desire to make it conform to my current theology. For me, SUNSTONE—like Zion—is a tent into which *all* people gather who thirst to explore the Mormon church’s doctrine, culture, past, present and future. SUNSTONE would lose its vitality if it became merely a publication in which only “liberals” addressed other “liberals,” repeating perspectives each already believed. Rather, the fun and work of SUNSTONE lies in its role as a forum for differing ideas and issues on things mortal and heavenly. Hence, it doubly supplies light: first, because the variety of studies refines our ideas and assumptions, stretching our minds to the utmost heavens and to the darkest abyss; and, second, because by bringing differing individuals and groups together to talk to each other (instead of about each other in their insular circles), false judgments are dispelled and understanding fostered. This understanding along with good also reduces the contentious heat that divides people and darkens knowledge.

Finally, although SUNSTONE must continue to boldly discuss the “cutting edge” issues of Mormonism, it is simply a vehicle for discussion, not an activist journal advocating specific reforms. SUNSTONE is not the “watchdog” on the Church; rather, it is like an informal group huddling in the church foyer to continue discussion after Sunday School. Indeed, its independence which permits unorthodox views strengthens the Church by providing a vehicle for rigorous treatment of the Gospel by educated Saints who hunger for such analysis and interchange. Understandably this forum is not possible in Church meetings nor is it desirable that the Church sponsor it and imply endorsement. Yet such conversation and community is an essential spiritual need for many members.

Those who want SUNSTONE to “stay the same” may be unfamiliar with its evolving eleven year history from a quarterly student journal, to an academic professional journal, to spinning off and then incorporating the SUNSTONE REVIEW with its news and columns and book reviews, to becoming a “brightly

edited” magazine with shorter articles and fewer footnotes. Change is part of SUNSTONE. And to the degree that past changes were reflections of the personalities of SUNSTONE’S editors, so will be future changes. Nevertheless, while some things changed, thankfully some remained the same. I don’t see this as an era of dramatic revision but as an improvement era—making SUNSTONE better at what it does best: sharing ideas and discussing issues. To relieve fears and build support, here is what I specifically see happening with the content of the magazine.

1. *Perfect it as a magazine.* The void SUNSTONE fills is in being a magazine not a scholarly journal. As such, it targets with moderate length feature articles the educated person who is interested in LDS history, theology and culture. And, like most magazines, has a variety of departments with different formats and lengths.

2. *Hold fast to the good.* The proven mix of departments will be maintained, with contributing authors from all intellectual camps—liberal and conservative: theology, history (with footnotes), contemporary issues, news, book reviews, fiction, poetry, classified ads, letters and columnists.

3. *Create an advisory editorial board.* This board, consisting of individuals from all academic disciplines, will review articles in their fields submitted for publication and make recommendations. This will improve both the quality of individual articles and the overall quality of the magazine.

4. *Add a touch of humor.* To help us keep perspective and to provide a needed light-hearted touch we plan to include several cartoons in each issue, as well as instituting a humor column.

5. *Expand the news.* The news is a unique service the magazine provides and one readers outside of Utah appreciate most.

6. *Interview thinkers.* We’ll regularly run interviews with individuals who have exciting ideas and opinions but who may never take time to write an article.

7. *Increase Christian living articles.* We need to talk not only about LDS theology but also about the

dynamics of living the religion. I’m personally interested in essays which explore the mystical side of Mormonism as well as comparative religion articles.

8. *Summarize LDS research.*

Periodically, probably semi-annually, we’ll include a feature which will summarize the best research from periodicals, books and dissertations that are relevant to Mormonism.

9. *Publish regularly.* For the past few years SUNSTONE’S goal has been to publish monthly; of this I am an exponent, too. Starting in 1987 the editorial staff will produce a magazine each month while Daniel Rector arranges the financing to print it monthly. Wish us Godspeed.

Since SUNSTONE is a forum for open thoughtful discussion, all readers are invited to participate. Here are some ideas: Report interesting news items; recommend individuals to interview; encourage authors to submit articles; chastise us for our mistakes; and, (this is essential to our survival) give a gift subscription, which helps us doubly—increasing revenue and the number of subscribers which attracts advertisers.

At the end of the U.S. Constitutional Convention Benjamin Franklin, who did so much to keep it together with his humor and good will, concluded that the half sun on the back of Washington’s chair was indeed a rising sun, an ensign of the new nation created out of many different parties. I feel the same of our SUNSTONE. The magazine, which is a collection of many groups, is and will be a rising sun as long as it enlightens our minds, hearts and paths. As editor, I feel keen responsibility to see that it continues to do all three of those things, so that it remains a constructive agent both for individuals and the LDS society. I am not scared but I am serious about the task, yet I feel the same optimistic attitude the retired Thomas Jefferson described to John Adams: “My temperament is sanguine. I steer my bark with Hope in the head, leaving Fear astern. My hopes indeed sometimes fail; but not oftener than the forebodings of the gloomy.”

WILLIAM BLAKE: Illustrations of the Book of Job. 1825. LINE ENGRAVINGS



Mormonism maintains that gods, angels, humans, and devils are all related beings, all members of one great family or species, who are simply at varying stages of development and intelligence in their eternal existence. The difference between each class of beings is determined by their progress in obeying eternal, self-existent cosmic laws. The Church refers to this concept as eternal progression, and it lies at the base of the Church's view of God's nature and humanity's purpose and potential. It makes Mormon theology unique and radically different from traditional orthodox Judeo-Christian theology, which views God as the only self-existent reality, the creator, and considers angels, humans, and devils to be creatures wholly dependent upon God for their existence.

However, despite the importance of the concept of eternal progression to Mormon theology, it has been interpreted in many ways throughout Mormon history. Most of Brigham Young's ideas on this topic are relatively unknown to the

Church at large today, and some are even considered heretical by contemporary Mormon leaders. Likewise, Brigham's beliefs about the second death, which he advanced as being the logical opposite to eternal progression, seem to have died with him. Eternal progression concerns the origin and future of gods. According to Brigham, eternal retrogression, or the second death, concerns the origin and future of devils. Brigham usually discussed these two concepts together, contrasting them with each other to illustrate more clearly the nature of each.

Before I explore these concepts as understood and taught by Brigham Young I will briefly review Joseph Smith's theology, as it evolved from the very conservative Book of Mormon teachings to his later, more radical Nauvoo theology. This review will provide insight into both the origins of Brigham's thought and its apparent lack of acceptance in the church today.

Joseph Smith's earliest writings (i.e., the Book of Mormon, Book of Moses, and early sections of



Of Gods, Mortals, and Devils

Eternal Progression and the Second Death in the Theology of Brigham Young

By Boyd Kirkland

the Doctrine and Covenants), reflect the traditional theology of the Protestant environment in which he lived. God is creator—eternal and self-existent. He spoke the cosmos into existence to provide an environment for man, his special creation made in his image. The two contradictory creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2 are reconciled in the Book of Moses by presenting the first as a spiritual creation and the second as a material creation. Humans are creatures, wholly dependent upon God for their existence. Because of the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, all humanity is essentially depraved and unworthy of God's presence. We must therefore prove ourselves by accepting the "infinite and eternal" atonement made for our sins by God as Christ, and by obeying God's commandments. Satan and his followers are fallen angels, who tempt us to disobey God, and with whom God shall condemn the unrighteous to be punished everlastingly in hell. God will reward the righteous by returning them to his presence in heaven, where they will sing ceaseless praises to him

forever. Our banishment from God's presence in this world is defined as spiritual death. Following the judgment, those who do not prove worthy of salvation are eternally banished from God's presence. This second spiritual separation from God is the second death.

Later in his ministry, Joseph revised his thinking about the nature of God and humans and their relationship to the cosmos (see *BYU Studies*, vol. 18 no. 2, pp. 198-225). He no longer considered God to be the only totally uncontingent ultimate reality, but began to teach that people and the elements of the universe are also self-existent, and just as eternal as God (D&C 93:33). He taught that God's own status is contingent upon his obedience to eternal, natural laws. If he disobeyed them, he would fall from his exalted station and cease to be God. Further, Joseph portrayed God as a temporal being occupying space and existing in time; that is, as having a past, present, and future (D&C 130:4-9, 22; Abraham 3:3, 9, 18; 5:13). Sometime in his past,

In many ways, Brigham's theology picks up where Joseph left off.

he was mortal. As he learned obedience to the eternal cosmic laws, he progressed to Godhood. Human spirits, coequal with and of the same nature as God, are capable of this same kind of progression (Abraham 3:18; D&C 93:23, 29). The ideas that God had progressed to godhood, and that people could become gods themselves, logically implied the existence of a plurality of gods. Indeed, Joseph taught that God Himself has a Father, or God, to whom he is accountable. Just how far back Joseph believed this paternal line of gods extended is unclear. At times, he hinted at the existence of an ultimate or Head God to whom all other gods are answerable, and who directs the lesser gods in their creation efforts (D&C 121:32; Ehat, ed., *Words of Joseph Smith*, pp. 345 & 397 n. 70).

Since Joseph considered matter to be uncreated and eternal (even spirit is only matter on a more refined level—see D&C 131:7-8) he taught that God creates by organizing these pre-existing materials as a master craftsman or artisan (Abraham 3:24; 4:1). That which can be organized can also be disorganized on the same principles. That which has a beginning, can have an ending. On this basis, Joseph reasoned that the human spirit, in order to be truly eternal, must never have had a beginning. Since the human spirit is self-existent, Joseph believed God's creative work with regard to humanity is to nurture us, and provide the opportunity and environment for us to progress from one stage of existence to another. He implied that life came to this earth through a natural process of procreation rather than by special creation. He observed: "Where was there ever a son without a father, —where ever did a tree or anything spring into existence without a progenitor; —and everything comes this way." (*The Words of Joseph Smith*, 380). Joseph's doctrine of celestial marriage, by which a man and several women might be sealed together for all eternity, was given with the promise that the seed of those who so married would continue forever. The parents could thus create and populate future worlds (at least one for each wife), and preside over them as gods (D&C 131:1-4; 132:19-20, 30, 63; "Buckeye's Lamentation for Want of More Wives," *Warsaw Message*, 7 February, 1844).

Satan and his angels are also self-existent spirits who, prior to the creation of the world, rebelled against God and the laws of eternal progression. God cast them out of His presence, and they forever forfeited their right to progress into mortality with the more valiant spirits. The spirits who did not rebel and who entered mortality are being tested to determine their worthiness to progress further along the road to godhood. The vast majority of them will receive some form of redemption and be resurrected to one of the three kingdoms of glory. Only the sons of perdition, those committing "the unpardonable sin" of murdering Christ or assenting

to his death after having sure knowledge of him as Savior, will be resurrected to a kingdom of no glory, where they will suffer the "second death" of eternal banishment from God into outer darkness with Satan and his followers (D&C 76:19-113; 88:3-39; 132:26-27). Joseph described the torment of those so condemned as being so terrible that he could not reveal it (D&C 76:43-48). However, in 1844 he did indicate that there would never be any further possibility for their redemption:

"There also have been remarks made concerning all men being redeemed from hell, but those who sin against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven in this world or in the world to come. But I say that those who commit the unpardonable sin are doomed to Gnolaum, and must dwell in hell, worlds without end; they shall die the second death." *BYU Studies*, vol. 18 no. 2 pp. 207-208).

Joseph's early, traditional teachings and his later, more radical progressive theology co-exist in the canonized writings of the Church. However, his most unorthodox views of the nature of God and men and women were only taught publicly just prior to his death and have never been canonized. The extreme polarity of these two philosophies is a major cause of differences of opinion among leaders and members, who have long tried to reconcile these seemingly irreconcilable viewpoints. Harmonizers have been forced to give diluted interpretations of the more radical statements of Joseph at each end of the spectrum, or in some cases to challenge the authenticity of the statements themselves. The same is true of the attempts of Church leaders to deal with the theology of Brigham Young, which picks up where Joseph left off in Nauvoo.

Brigham Young and Joseph Smith both seemed to ignore this dichotomy in Mormon thought. They did not attempt to reconcile the two points of view; rather, they abandoned earlier Mormon theology in favor of the later theology. Although both Brigham and Joseph claimed that there was no disharmony in the doctrines of the Prophets and Apostles of ancient days or of modern days, they did not feel the need to justify their new doctrines by reconciling them with the scriptures (JD 5:329; *Words of Joseph Smith*, pp. 378-381). When they did cite the scriptures to support their theology, however, their exegetical method focused on present needs with little regard to original context and meaning. In addition, Brigham Young maintained that the scriptures were written according to our ability and readiness to receive the truth. Therefore, the author of scriptures that seemed to conflict with his new revelations were to be excused for having a more limited understanding than he had. New ideas supersede and need not necessarily be in total harmony with old ideas. Consequently, Brigham continued to promote Joseph's later theology, often elaborating on and even revising Joseph's teachings to suit his own views.

For example, whereas Joseph did not seem to believe that our spirits had a beginning, Brigham taught that we were begotten in the spirit of God and his wife. Prior to this spiritual birth, humans did not exist as self-aware, eternal entities. He considered the spiritual elements comprising the spirit to be our eternal part. Brigham carefully revised Jonathan Grimshaw's 1855 amalgamation of Joseph Smith's King Follett discourse (prepared for inclusion in the Manuscript of Joseph Smith's History) to make it more harmonious with his concept of spiritual birth. He changed all of Joseph's statements that the spirit had no beginning and is coequal to God to read that the "intelligence" of spirit had no beginning, thus greatly changing the original meaning. (BYU Studies, vol. 18, no. 2 p. 196; also, Van Hale, "The Origins of Man's Spirit in Early Mormon Thought," paper presented at Aug. 1985 Sunstone Theological Symposium, in Salt Lake City, Utah.)

Brigham also went beyond Joseph's teaching that all life began on this earth through a natural process of procreation, and gave further details on the *modus operandi* of that enterprise. He taught that God had acted as a gardener and husbandman in transplanting all the forms of plant and animal life on the earth from another previous world, rather than commanding the earth to spontaneously produce them as described in the scriptural accounts. Likewise, according to Brigham, humanity originated on this earth by God himself and one of his wives voluntarily descending from their exalted, immortal status to become Adam and Eve, the parents of the human race. God's Father presided in his place while God enacted the role of Adam (Unpublished sermons in LDS Archives, 8 Oct. 1854 and 25 Aug. 1867; JD 1:50; 3:318; 7:285; 9:148). This idea is consistent with Joseph's concept of a plurality of gods, but Brigham rejected the possibility of an ultimate or Head God to whom all other gods were accountable. He believed in an endless hierarchical chain of gods extending back to the eternities with no beginning, and which would continue endlessly into the future (LDS Archives, 8 Oct. 1854 and 10 Aug. 1862; JD 9:243). This infinite line of gods formed a patriarchal hierarchy, at any point of which the "head god" would be the one who presided as over those below him in time of his succession to godhood. According to Brigham, God's role as Adam was a one-time responsibility. He believed that God's next role of progression would be to preside as "Grandfather" when his posterity became Adams and Eves of their own worlds, producing offspring of their own (Wilford Woodruff Journal, 6 May 1855; JD 4:271; 8:61, 208; 12:97; Samuel W. Richard Journal, 11 Mar. 1856).

Along with Joseph, Brigham believed that all space, time, and matter existed eternally, without beginning or end. In other words, he did not seem to envision the universe as a closed system

which was ever expanding, but as an infinite system which had no boundaries. He viewed the idea of totally empty space or space containing no matter as an impossibility. An infinite supply of material must exist, in order for an eternal future of gods to organize worlds without number for spirits who would be born in infinite numbers (LDS Archives, 8 Oct. 1854 and 10 Aug. 1862; JD 1:275-276; 9:243). Brigham also believed that the entire universe and all that it contained must either progress or retrogress. Neither life nor inanimate matter could remain in a totally static or unchanged state, but must move forward or fall backward:

"All organized existence is in progress, either to an endless advancement in eternal perfections, or back to dissolution. You may explore all the eternities that have been, were it possible . . . and where is there an element, an individual living thing, an organized body, of whatever nature, that continues as it is? IT CANNOT BE FOUND. . . . There is no period, in all eternities, wherein organized existence will become stationary, that it cannot advance in knowledge, wisdom, power, and glory" (JD 1:349).

Because of this belief, Brigham wanted to build the Salt Lake Temple out of adobe rather than granite. He felt that adobe would last longer because it was on its way to becoming rock, whereas granite had already peaked in its forward progress and would soon start to deteriorate (JD 1:218-220). Luckily for future generations his desires did not prevail, and granite was used in the Temple's construction. Brigham taught that the entire earth would continue to progress until ultimately, it would be redeemed and be made a celestial world, a sea of glass—a giant Urim and Thummim (see D&C 130:4-9 for Joseph's ideas on this subject). It would be returned to its place of origin near the throne of God, from whence it "fell" through space into its present orbit because of the fall of man (LDS Archives, 8 Oct. 1854; JD 17:144).

Just as he saw no limits to the physical universe, Brigham saw no limits to the possible progression of humans and gods. Although men and women would be assigned a kingdom in the next life according to their merits, they would still be able to progress forward in a continuum within their assigned kingdom, as well as eventually advance to higher kingdoms (Wilford Woodruff Journal, 5 Aug. 1855). The process of progression never ceased even for the gods, who would eternally acquire more dominion, power and knowledge. Brigham reasoned that putting boundaries to the amount of knowledge one could attain was equivalent to putting boundaries on the universe itself (JD 8:17; Wilford Woodruff Journal, 17 Sept. 1854 and 4 Mar. 1860; *Deseret News* 22:308-309; contrast Brigham's views on these subjects with Bruce R. McConkie, "Eternal Progression," *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 238-239; and "The Seven Deadly Heresies", 1980 *Devotional Speeches of the Year*, Provo, BYU Press 1981).

Brigham believed in an endless chain of gods stretching into the eternities.

Logically, those who opposed the gospel would reap the opposite of eternal life.

Brigham taught that the only individuals who would cease to learn and progress were the devils and the sons of perdition:

"We might ask, when shall we cease to learn? I will give you my opinion about it; never, never. If we continue to learn all that we can . . . is there a time when a person will cease to learn? Yes, when he has sinned against God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—God's minister; when he has denied the Lord, defied Him and committed the sin that in the Bible is termed the unpardonable sin—the sin against the Holy Ghost. That is the time when a person will cease to learn" (JD 3:203).

He felt that these rebellious individuals had made a conscious decision to fight against the laws of progression. Whereas Joseph had said he could not reveal their terrible future destiny, Brigham Young had a great deal to say about it. His teachings in this regard are an integral part of his perception of the nature of the universe and the spirit. The key concepts are these: That which has a beginning may have an ending. The spirit as well as the body had a beginning. The material of the universe did not have a beginning but is eternal. All things are either in a state of progression or retrogression. Given these parameters, one can begin to understand Brigham's beliefs about the fate of sons of perdition, and the second death they would suffer. He explained:

"I told you some time ago what would become of such men. But I will quote the Scriptures on this point, and you can make what you please of it. Jesus says, he will DESTROY death and him that hath the power of it. What can you make of this but decomposition, the returning of the organized particles to their native element, after suffering the wrath of God until the time appointed. . . . When the elements in an organized form do not fill the end of their creation, they are thrown back again, like brother Kimball's old pottery ware, to be ground up, and made over again. . . . And if he [Jesus] ever makes 'a full end of the wicked,' what else can he do than entirely disorganize them and reduce them to their native element?" (JD 1:275).

"We read in the Scriptures of the second death not having power over certain ones. The first death is the separation of the spirit from the body; the second death is, as I have stated, the dissolution of the organized particles which compose the spirit and their return to their native element" (JD 9:149).

Brigham Young felt that the purpose of the gospel was to promote eternal life. Logically, those who opposed the gospel would reap the opposite end of eternal life—the second death:

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power." The death that is spoken of here is the death that is opposite to the eternal life the Saviour spoke of. If you dishonour that body—transgress the natural laws pertaining to it, you are not worthy. . . . to possess this body in an immortal state. What will become of it? It will return to its native element. That is the death that never dies. That is endless death. In this Jesus had no allusion to the changing or putting off of this mortality" (JD 8:28).

"To choose life is to choose an eternal existence in an organized capacity; to refuse life and choose death is to refuse an eternal existence in an organized capacity, and to be contented to become decomposed, and to return again to native element. . . . The one leads to endless increase and progression, the other to the destruction of the organized being, ending in its entire decomposition into the particles that compose the native elements" (JD 1:349, 352).

Since Brigham did not believe humans have intelligent, self-existing identities separate from their spirits, those so decomposed would cease to exist as conscious entities. He often stated that the purpose of the gospel was to teach us how to preserve our identities for eternity:

"Can the wicked be brought forth to endure? No; they will be destroyed. . . . Will this intelligence cease to be? There are but very few, if any, who really believe this. And the thought of being annihilated—of being blotted out of existence—is most horrid, even to the class called infidels. The intelligence that is in me to cease to exist is a horrid thought; it is past enduring. This intelligence must exist; it must dwell somewhere. If I take the right course and preserve it in its organization, I will preserve to myself eternal life. This is the greatest gift that ever was bestowed on mankind, to know how to preserve their identity. . . . The principles of life and salvation are the only principles of freedom; for every principle that is opposed to God—that is opposed to the principles of eternal life, whether it is in heaven, on the earth, or in hell, the time will be when it will cease to exist, cease to preserve, manifest, and exhibit its identity; for it will be returned to its native element" (JD 5:53-54).

"Clay has so little intelligence that it is often so full of lumps that it will mar; but it is not to blame for that: but the Lord says, 'You intelligent Israel, are to blame, if you do not obey my voice; and if you are disobedient, I will serve you as the potter serves the clay that has very little intelligence. . . . if you do not obey my voice, it will prove that you are not worthy of intelligence, any more than the clay upon the potter's wheel; consequently, the intelligence that you are endowed with will be taken from you, and you will have to go into the mill and be ground over again'" (JD 5:341; see also 4:31-32; 6:333, 347; 7:57, 193, 203, 287).

An individual who returned to this eternal spiritual matter would cease to exist. But because of the eternal nature of matter, Brigham did not regard this as equivalent to annihilation:

"It is a curious idea, but one in favor of which there is much testimony, that when people take the downward road, one that is calculated to destroy them, they will actually in every sense of the word be destroyed. Will they be what is termed annihilated? No, there is no such thing as annihilation, for you cannot destroy the elements of which things are made" (JD 2:302; see also 1:116-118).

Traditionally, we think of rebelling and choosing the downward path as a choice we make in this earthly probation. But Brigham implied, as did Joseph, that this rebellion could conceivably take place at any stage of one's progression: during the pre-existence, during mortality, or even following the resurrection. Brigham referred to this possibility in the following statement:

"The Lord Jesus Christ works upon a plan of eternal increase, of wisdom, intelligence, honor, excellence, power, glory, might, and dominion, and the attributes that fill eternity. . . . But Satan works upon the opposite principle; he seeks to destroy, would annihilate if he could, but only decomposes, disorganizes. Permit me to inquire what was his curse? It was, that he should not increase any more but come to an end. . . . Suppose that our Father in heaven, our elder brother, the risen Redeemer, . . . or any of the Gods of eternity should [abuse their power]. . . . to torment the people of the earth, exercise sovereignty over them, and make them miserable at their pleasure; they would cease to be Gods; and as fast as they adopted and acted upon such principles, they would become devils, and be thrust down in the twinkling of an eye; the extension of their kingdom would cease, and their God-head come to an end" (JD

1:116-117).

Other statements of Brigham's imply that before Satan rebelled in heaven, he could have been a resurrected son of perdition from a previous world. Brigham believed that prior to eternal dissolution, sons of perdition resurrected from this earth would be used by the Lord as devils from future worlds, which implies that Satan had a similar origin:

"President Young remarked that he did not want to give endowments, only to old people, as they would not be likely to apostatize, but then if we were to carry out that rule, we would not ordain any one, only those who would not apostatize. And to carry the thing still further, we expect all who are faithful to take the place of Adams in the worlds to be created; then if there were no apostates, what would we do for Devils? As we have to get our devils from this earth, for the worlds that are to be created? (Historian's Office Journal: Vol. 23:27, Aug. 1859; JD 4:363-364, 372; 8:179, 204, 279).

Referring specifically to Satan's rebellion in heaven, he connected the idea with the sons of perdition, and hinted at their future role as devils:

"Brother Kimball asked whether there were liars and thieves in heaven. It is recorded that the Devil is somewhere there, accusing the brethren and finding fault with them. Men in the flesh are clothed with the Priesthood with its blessings, the apostatizing from which and turning away from the Lord prepares them to become sons of perdition. There was a Devil in heaven, and he strove to possess the birthright of the Saviour. He was a liar from the beginning, and loves those who live and make lies, as do his imps and followers here on earth. How many devils there are in heaven, or where it is, is not for me to say" (JD 8:279-280).

The temple scenario written by Brigham Young also provides incidental evidence from Satan at one time having a physical body. The endowment ceremony depicts Satan as Adam's peer, who lived with him on a previous world which had provided the pattern for the creation of this earth. The fact that Brigham Young believed that Adam had been resurrected prior to his coming to this earth implies the same for Satan. In Genesis, the serpent's curse in the Garden of Eden was to lose his arms and legs and crawl upon his belly in the dust. Could Brigham have interpreted this as a metaphor for Satan's loss of his physical body as part of the process of decomposition? We can only conjecture, but he definitely taught that part of his curse was not to possess a physical body, and to be eventually decomposed even spiritually, and return to the eternal spirit element from which he had been created, becoming as if he were not.

Although Joseph Smith offered hope of redemption for sons of perdition, Brigham taught the matter of such disorganized individuals might eventually be reorganized, and begin again on the pathway to life and progression:

"The rebellious will be thrown back into their native element, there to remain myriads of years before their dust will again be revived, before they will be re-organized" (JD 1:118).

"The Lord said to Jeremiah the Prophet, 'Arise, and go down to the

potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hands of the potter; so he made it again in another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.' The clay that marred in the potter's hands was thrown back into the unprepared portion, to be prepared over again. So it will be with every wicked man and woman . . . sooner or later; they will be thrown back into the native element from which they originated, to be worked over again and be prepared to enjoy some sort of kingdom" (JD 5:124; see also 8:197).

It is doubtful whether Brigham would have regarded such a reorganized individual as having the same intelligence and identity as his previous identity, which would have ceased to exist. Such a concept therefore holds little comfort for those who might feel the wicked will have a second chance.

Just as Joseph's more radical philosophies caused discomfort to some who accepted his earlier, more conservative views, Brigham's additions to those radical ideas have for the most part been coldly received. Orson Pratt publicly and privately opposed him on many of these doctrines. Regarding the second death, he specifically took issue with the idea that it meant dissolution of the body and spirit:

"The penalty of the first transgression was an eternal separation of body and spirit, and eternal banishment from the presence of Jehovah; while the penalty of our own transgressions does not involve a disunion of body and spirit, but only eternal banishment . . . (the) second death (is) not a dissolution of body and spirit like that of the first death, but a banishment from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power" (JD 1:329-330; see also 7:255, 258).

In a sermon devoted almost entirely to the second death, Brigham Young referred negatively to Orson Pratt's philosophies:

'Suppose I asked the learned when was the beginning of eternity? Can they think of it? No! And I should very much doubt some of the sayings of one of the best philosophers and writers of the age, that we call brother, with regard to the character of the Lord whom we serve. I very much doubt whether it has ever entered into his heart to comprehend eternity" (JD 1:352; see also 1:276).

However, several other Church authorities upheld and promoted Brigham's point of view, including Heber C. Kimball (JD 2:151-152; 4:363-364; 5:95, 249, 271, 273-274; 6:67; 8:240; 9:372), Erastus Snow (JD 7:352-354, 358-359; 8:216; 13:9), Daniel H. Wells (JD 9:43-44, 65, 83, 358; 12:132, 135), and Wilford Woodruff (JD 9:163). But following Brigham's death many of his ideas were apologized for, reinterpreted, or simply denied to have ever been taught. Much of this happened at the turn of the century when the Church was polishing its public image and refining its diverse doctrinal heritage into a more concise, harmonious package. The only view of the second death which the Church has retained was the Book of Mormon's description of it as spiritual separation from God. The following statements of President Joseph F. Smith made in 1895 typify this position:

" . . . all men will be raised from the dead ; and, as I understand it,

In Brigham's view Satan, like Adam, was a resurrected being.

For the most part, Brigham's theological innovations have been coldly received.

when they are raised from the dead they become immortal beings, and they will no more suffer the dissolution of the spirit and the body . . . the first death which came into the world is also the last death which shall be pronounced upon the sons of perdition. What is it? Banishment from the presence of God . . . Banishment from all progress. Banishment into outer darkness. Banishment into hell, which is a lake of fire and brimstone, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, because the soul lives and is bound to live on, suffering the damnation of hell. This is what I understand spiritual death is. I do not understand it to be the separation of the body and spirit again. I do not understand it to be the dissolution of the spirit into its native element. I understand the second death to be the same as the first death—spiritual death . . . [The idea of annihilation, to no longer exist as souls, would be] a glorious prospect for the sinner! Then he could say, 'Let us eat drink and be merry for tomorrow we die, and the next day we shall be annihilated, and that will be the end to our sorrow and of God's judgement upon us.' Do not flatter yourselves that you are going to get out of it so easy. This Book of Mormon is replete, all the way through, with the testimonies of the servants of God, that men are born to be immortal; that after the resurrection, their bodies are to live as long as their spirits, and their spirits cannot die. They are immortal beings, and they are destined, if they commit the unpardonable sin, to be banished from the presence of God, and endure the punishment of the devil and his angels throughout all eternity. I think that the wicked would prefer annihilation to the sufferings of such punishment—an end to being. This view cannot be reconciled to the word of God" (Improvement Era, vol. 19 no. 5, pp. 386-391).

President Smith rejects Brigham's second death doctrine with three major arguments: first, it contradicts the scriptural description of the second death as being a separation from God; second, it conflicts with the perception of the bodily resurrection as a final, immutable condition; and third, it somehow violates the demands of justice, which require prolonged or even eternal suffering and punishment for the wicked. All of these arguments seem to stem back to the more conservative, Protestant-influenced theology canonized in Joseph Smith's earlier days. But as I have already observed, Joseph himself departed radically from his own teachings, giving precedent for Brigham's additional innovations. Scriptural harmony certainly was not one of Joseph's criteria for determining the validity of new ideas. For example, Joseph Smith's doctrine that God was once a man, part of an eternal patriarchal hierarchy who progressed to Godhood, conflicts with and cannot be found in any Mormon scriptures. Joseph only grudgingly gave some unique, propitious Biblical interpretations (even contradicting his own prior revision of Revelation 1:6 in his New Translation) in order to substantiate the idea for his hearers who required scriptural precedent. In fact, Joseph considered his new revelations to be superior to the scriptures, and provided even further evidence of his prophetic calling (*Words of Joseph Smith*, 344, 349-350, 378-383; Van Hale, "Doctrinal Impact of the King Follett Discourse," *BYU Studies*, Winter 1978, p. 222). I seriously doubt, however, that Joseph Smith would have accepted Brigham's second death doctrine. His reasons would not be necessarily be those later elucidated by Joseph F. Smith; instead, he would probably have

felt that it contradicted his view of the unbegotten, eternal nature of the spirit, which he believed co-exists eternally with God. On this point the Church has rejected Joseph's idea, and accepted Brigham Young's teachings concerning the birth of the spirit (Van Hale, "The Origins of Man's Spirit in Early Mormon Thought," op.cit.).

Like Joseph Smith, Brigham Young did not feel the need to justify his doctrines scripturally, and he responded to scriptural objections raised by Orson Pratt not by offering any means of reconciliation, but by advising him to humble himself to obtain further revelation from the Lord (*Wilford Woodruff Journal*, 17 September 1854). Once Brigham died, however, many of his ideas failed to find a strong vocal advocate among the leaders of the church, and thus are mostly unknown to the church at large today. His second death doctrine was referred to negatively by Joseph E. Taylor in 1912 (*Liahona, the Elders Journal*, 27 February 1912, pp. 561-563), by Joseph Fielding Smith in 1954 ("Your Question," *The Improvement Era*, January 1954, pp. 16-17), and by Bruce R. McConkie ("Spiritual Death," *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 756). John A. Widtsoe is the only General Authority of the Church from this century I have found who somewhat endorsed the doctrine (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, Bookcraft: Salt Lake City, 1960, p. 214).

Personally, I find many of Brigham Young's ideas of eternal progression appealing if only for their own internal logic and cosmological consistency, and for their unabashedly innovative character. Although they are not always totally harmonious with Joseph Smith's views, they at least continue the inventive doctrinal trend begun by Joseph in Nauvoo. But ultimately, I have problems with many of the ideas taught by both men on these topics because of the findings of modern science, with its bio-physics, quantum mechanics, astronomy, theories of reality, organic evolution, the Big Bang, et cetera. All of these disciplines cast considerable doubt upon Joseph's and Brigham's materialistic view of the nature of the universe, and their explanations for the propagation and diversity of life. They obviously were influenced and limited by nineteenth century scientific views, as well as by scriptural traditions grounded in mythology centuries old. But right or wrong, their willingness to strike out into uncharted theological waters gave us intriguing and unique responses to the ageless quest for life's meaning. In thinking new thoughts, one always runs the risk of thinking wrong thoughts. This, however, should not deter us from thinking at all. Sailing upon the open seas of theological speculation obviously has some risks, but no ship ever discovered new ports while anchored in the harbor.

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Sunswath

First Place Winner in the D.K. Brown Fiction Contest

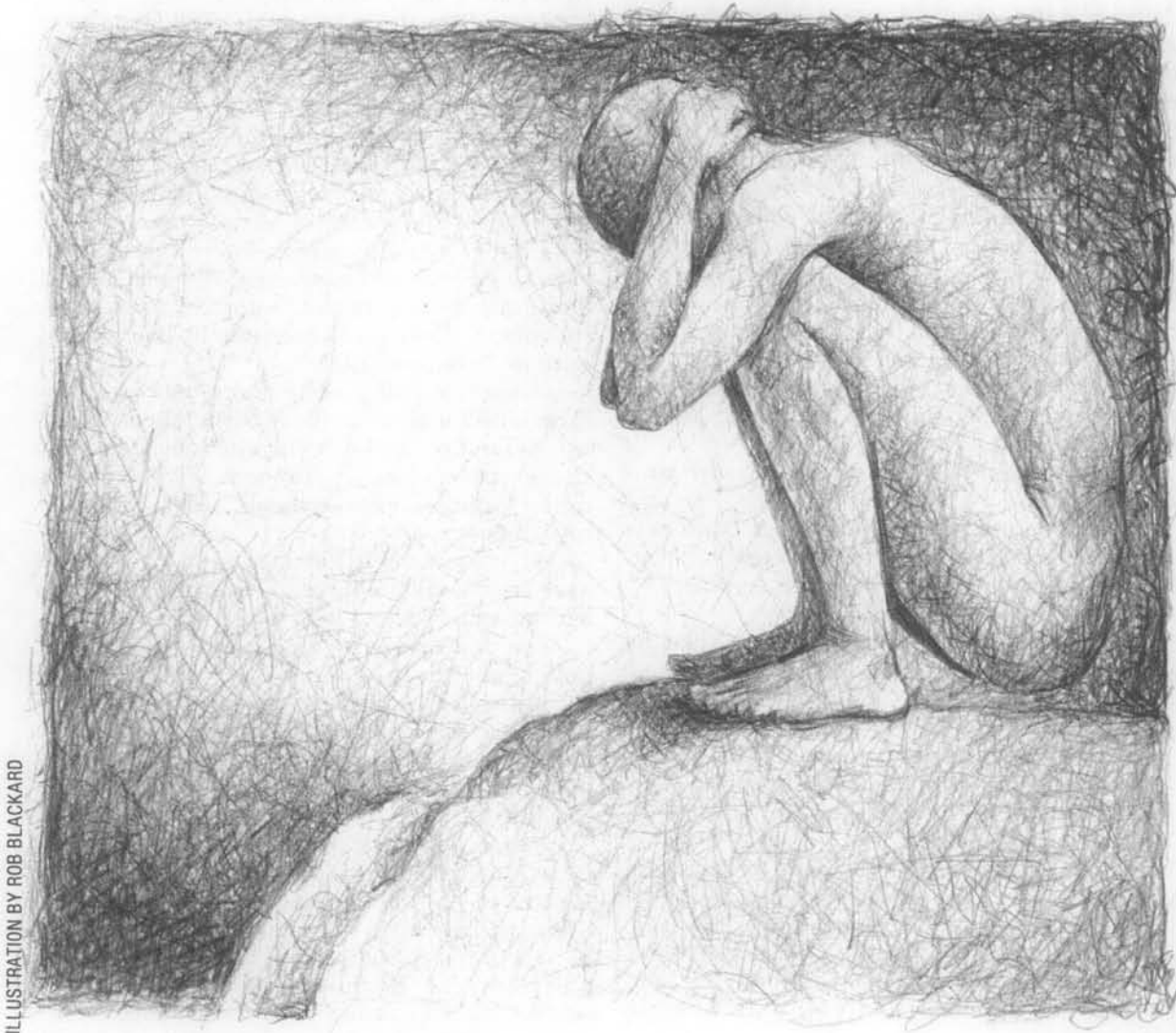


ILLUSTRATION BY ROB BLACKARD

By Levi S. Peterson

Mid-summer we visited Harlan's sister and brother-in-law in Logan, who had raised Harlan. It was the first time I'd ever met them face to face. Harlan was suspicious about going, but when they promised they'd stay off the topic of our unmarried, amoral, and irreligious, he said okay. You'd have a hard time finding more tolerant and liberal Mormons, Winifred being a professor of nutrition at Utah State and Milton being an ear, nose, and throat specialist. They bought Carter (our little boy) and Harlan and me swimming suits, mine at a maternity shop, and we went waterskiing and sunbathing at Bear Lake, staying overnight in their motorhome, which is almost

as big as a Greyhound bus. Winifred drove on the way through Logan Canyon so that Milton could play Old Maid with Carter. The canyon slopes were layered with great grey limestone cliffs.

Harlan raised his voice over the rumble of the motorhome: "Rocks have essence of a sort. If you try you can communicate with them. A rock won't let you down. Lately Bill Thorden and I have been working on a fence for the BLM out the other side of Hanksville. Suppose at lunchtime I'm sitting with my back to a boulder, I can feel it and it can feel me. There's a current between us."

Winifred said, "That's a pretty way to put it. Mormons believe the earth has a soul so maybe

we also believe rocks have souls.”

“Not seriously, you don’t,” Harlan said.

“Don’t we believe the earth has a soul?” she called back to Milton.

“Yes, that’s certainly true. Yes, I think so, I think we do.”

“You never spoke politely to a rock in your life,” Harlan said.

“Well, I certainly respect rocks,” she said.

The lake was utterly blue: bright sun and drifting puffs of cloud; powerboats churning among listing sails. Winifred sat on a little throne of sand, a beautiful woman of fifty-five—legs muscled and tan, belly flat, silver hair cut square. She talked about Harlan as a child. Once he had climbed a tree and couldn’t get down, his tennis shoes wedged in a crotch. The fire department came with flashing lights and wailing sirens. They sent for a saw, thinking they’d have to cut off a limb. Then somebody thought of untying his shoe laces and lifting him out. A wind was coming in directly from the lake, bringing a slow surf. Milton steered his powerboat past us, Harlan in tow on a pair of skis, crisscrossing the wake. Carter sat by Milton. They waved, and we waved in return.

“When he was little, did he get along with your kids?” I said.

“It would surprise you how he let Edith persecute him, considering she was two years younger. But he and Keith didn’t have much conflict.”

“Was he broody and black?”

“Well, no. Serious minded, however. Has he got broody and black?”

“Quite often.”

“That’s just too bad.”

“I apologize for us not being married,” I said.

“I’m not saying a word about it. We promised.”

“I am very bitter toward the Church.”

“I supposed you were.”

“Even if I come back in, I’ll pray to Heavenly Mother. No more prayers to Heavenly Father.”

She rubbed a wrist and looked over the lake, very uneasy. Mormons think God is married—Father and Mother God. Our Mother in Heaven isn’t active. We aren’t permitted to pray to her, so I do.

I was excommunicated the spring before I met Harlan. When I got home after my trial the lights were off, and I had to let myself in. When Mom came I wasn’t surprised to see Dad wasn’t with her. She said he had gone out to the ranch. Of course she was crying; had been for several days.

“The informer, it turns out, was Dad,” I said. “And who told Dad? You did.”

She couldn’t deny it. She had a gaunt, barren face, a cotton print dress, flat heels, bare legs: a religious anorectic; a conscientious alien to self esteem; a perpetually violated virgin. Her cheeks were grooved—shadowy little runnels carrying tears to her chin. One summer night I confessed

to her that during a during a dismal year at Weber State I had managed to have sex with five guys. I hoped telling her would help me quit; maybe help me not be so angry.

When we left Logan and started home for Boulder Harlan drove by a back road over a mountain named Monte Cristo. “What have you got against your sister?” I asked him. “She and Milton both seem like wonderful people. You’ve been hiding them from me.”

“They disgust me,” he said. “Talk about conspicuous consumption. Like hogs at a trough, they use up a hundred times their fair share of the world’s resources.”

“Winifred’s doing research on cholesterol. Venison is much better for you than beef.”

“Very bright, very professional, isn’t she? And she believes in the Book of Mormon. Good God!”

Coming out of a canyon into Huntsville we saw a sign that said *monastery*. “My gosh,” I said. “It’s not very smart to let a bunch of monks get a toehold in Zion; monkhood might be catching, with no cure, like AIDS.”

I made him pull in. The monastery was a big farm with Quonset huts for barns, sheds, dormitories, and so on. Over the one they used for a chapel rose a cross. In another they had a retail outlet for bread, eggs, and milk; also for rosaries, medallions, and books.

“What happens if a pagan buys a rosary?” I asked the monk in charge of the store. He wore a black scapular over a long white robe.

“You don’t look like a pagan to me,” he said, pulling out a tray of beads.

I also selected three medallions. One was in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe. “When you convert,” the monk said, weighing the enameled pendant in his palm, “you will have to make a trip to Mexico to visit her shrine.”

I wandered among the book stands collecting a little armload—*The Autobiography of St. Therese of Lisieux*; *The Rule of St. Benedict*; *Of the Imitation of Christ*; some others. The monk was happy. He patted the sack into which he had slipped the rosary and medallions and books, saying, “Now you have been warned. Remember that.”

“Yes, thank you for reminding me,” I said. “Something like that is pretty easy to forget.”

“What in hell are you doing?” Harlan whispered as we left.

“There aren’t a lot of bookstores in Boulder,” I said. There aren’t any, of course.

“Yeah, but those books!” he said

A month later, Winifred and Milton phoned asking if they could visit us. In the middle of the night before they came I got up to take Carter to the toilet. Harlan had been in camp with Bill Thorden all week. After I had put Carter back in bed, I went into my room and lit two candles on a little table covered with a white cloth. Midnight is when nuns and monks say matins. I wanted to pray for Harlan in a way that would do him some good. The rosary was on the table but didn’t

touch it. You're supposed to say prayers while you finger the beads—ten Hail Mary's for each Our Father. I had an idea Catholic prayers would be easier to say than Mormon prayers: if God listens to Catholics, who are in the wrong, why wouldn't God listen to me? My wanting to say some Hail Mary's was actually very irrational. You have to understand our Heavenly Mother isn't Mary; she's truly half of God, not just the foremost of the Saints. No matter. I couldn't get past that rosary coiled on the table. Who ever heard of a Mormon lighting candles on an altar?

It being a hot night I slipped off my robe so I was naked. I would like to know somebody's true opinion about God and a naked body. I have thin cheeks and a long jaw and a broken nose (a gift from my father in my twelfth year). I'm not tall, and my legs are toothpicks, and I have hardly enough bottom to make a decent cushion for sitting. So imagine a pumpkin bulging below my corrugated ribs, gleaming orange-white in the candle flame, reflections of Eve and the commencement.

How do women who have quintuplets survive all the umbilicals tied into their womb like so many IV's draining, draining, draining? I don't think I have a gift for mothering. When I first get pregnant and vomit all day I think about abortions. Speaking of umbilicals: there's one between me and Harlan. He has a lump of coal inside, bigger than his two fists, pure poison. His blood circulates around it, soaking its surface; some of the blood dies, turns yellow. It trickles through to me for dialysis. My body cleans it, takes out the particles of coal, and sends it back. I have worried for a long time about his sediment building up inside me. Calcification of the will, so to speak; depression. I've got enough of my own; I don't need his.

After breakfast I went frantically to work cleaning up our little house, not too much, just the living room, which is also our dining room and kitchen. The linoleum was littered: plastic blocks, bread crusts, dried mud, and in a corner, for God's sake, a cereal bowl full of chicken droppings which Carter had harvested. He played they were eggs.

Early afternoon Winifred and Milton pulled up in their motorhome; flowers emerged, he in a yellow jump suit, she in a pink dress, maroon sandals, a thin maroon belt. They had brought a gift for Carter, a truck with batteries and a remote control. Milton got down on his hands and knees and showed Carter how to operate the truck. Looking up, he said he wanted to put on a gala dinner that night in the motorhome. They both marveled over the view we have through the plate glass window—across the road, the Thorden's weathered frame house with Virginia Creeper climbing the rock chimney; beyond that an orchard and a couple of alfalfa fields; then red

slopes dotted by solitary pines; beyond that, Boulder Mountain, smoke-blue with timber.

Later Milton and Carter went for a walk and Winifred began leafing through one of my Catholic books. Her voice was a murmuring alto, very comforting: "I'm supervising this graduate student who's a Catholic. She's researching what happens to proteins in microwave cooking."

"Catholics aren't so bad," I said; "It wouldn't be much stranger being a Catholic than being an elephant trainer."

"Oh, no. Mabel is a very, very fine person."

"Do you think God listens to Catholic prayers?"

"Oh, I would certainly think so."

"Probably not, however, if it was a Mormon saying them," I said.

Her laugh was all nerves. "Are these Harlan's?"

"Mine."

"Have you been saying Catholic prayers?"

"I've been thinking about it. When I try, I can't make enough spit to swallow."

"I wish I knew about Harlan," she said. "I would feel so much better if I knew he lived by some little shred or scrap of the gospel. Does he ever pray?"

I shook my head.

"I thought of him as my own," she said after a while. "Though not exactly. I tried to raise him in stewardship for Mother and Father. We told him to go on calling us Winifred and Milton, we didn't want him to forget.

"That was probably for the best."

"I have strange feelings, seeing your smock," she said. "I had two babies of my own. Maybe I should have had more. Though you can't go on forever."

"Nuns don't have any babies," I said. "They're married to Jesus and they call him the Spouse of Virgins."

She looked at our bookshelves. "You have such weighty books. You are both very intelligent. He was very gifted. He used to debate. Also he used to sing and paint. One of his paintings took a prize in the Utah State Fair. I can't believe what has happened to him. He finished the course work for a master's in computer science, and then he quit. You tell me he drives steel posts with a jackhammer. It makes me dizzy thinking about it. I had a testimony, at least I thought I had a testimony, that he would magnify himself through painting or music."

Mormons have an optical way of putting things. Does magnifying yourself mean that you use a lens to make yourself appear bigger than you really are? Or that you are bigger to start with than you appear?

After Harlan had got home and showered, we crowded into the motorhome and watched the production. Winifred set paper plates and plastic glasses on a blue tablecloth. Milton, wearing an apron, chopped salad, stirred sauce, and sliced French bread. Carter climbed into Harlan's lap and settled into the crook of his arm. I would be

grateful if Carter didn't look so much like me: emaciated ribs, a frail chin, bulging eyes, an unhealthy skin. Milton was expounding on motor-homes, chiefly to Harlan, who smiled a little, nodded slightly, not listening, his eyes gone elsewhere. Harlan has sandy hair, somewhat receded; a wispy beard, tiny ears, a delicate mouth; very handsome in a mournful way.

Our dog whined at the screen door. "Guess old dog wants some supper too," Carter said.

"I imagine," Harlan said.

"I want to hear the song about Fido."

"Not now."

"Yeah, now."

Harlan winced, hummed a pitch, sang: "Oh, I have a dog, his name is Fido, I raised him from a pup; he can sit on his back legs if I hold his front legs up."

Milton applauded. Carter said, "Jesus, that's funny."

Milton said a long blessing on the food—pork chops, white grape juice that looked like wine, a chocolate cake. Carter stood on his cushion and pointed at the cake. "I want some of that."

"Just shut up," I said. "He's saying the blessing."

Milton said amen and things were terribly silent. I could smell dead ants.

"There's this corporation trying to put together a golf course deal out in Smithfield," Milton said, serving Carter a chop.

"We are against it," Winifred added. "We want to see Cache Valley made into a rural monument, something like the Lake District in England—the farmers and the enlightened public working together to keep Cache Valley worth visiting and living in."

"Tell me something funny," Carter commanded.

Harlan said, "I saw a flying mule the other morning. A levitated mule, an ass drifting above the earth."

"Oh, no, you never."

"One of our mules had got himself onto a laid down trunk of a juniper, a big old one. From where I lay in my bedroll I couldn't see anything but his neck and ears above a little tree that was in between. He looked like a floating donkey in a painting by Chagall."

"Who's he?"

"Don't bother to find out."

"I certainly have no taste for Chagall," Winifred said. "A child could paint better than he did."

While Milton sliced the cake, Winifred said, "Is there something nice we can do for you two? Something you'd let us do?" A large black fly butted and buzzed in a lamp. "Wouldn't you like to go to San Francisco for a week? And let us pay for it?"

Squinting, Harlan followed the fly to another lamp.

"You could go in September or October. Or whenever you like. We'd pay for airfare and lodging and meals. Everything. And we'd love to

keep Carter while you're gone. Between the two of us and the next door neighbor we could manage very fine."

He said, "We couldn't do that."

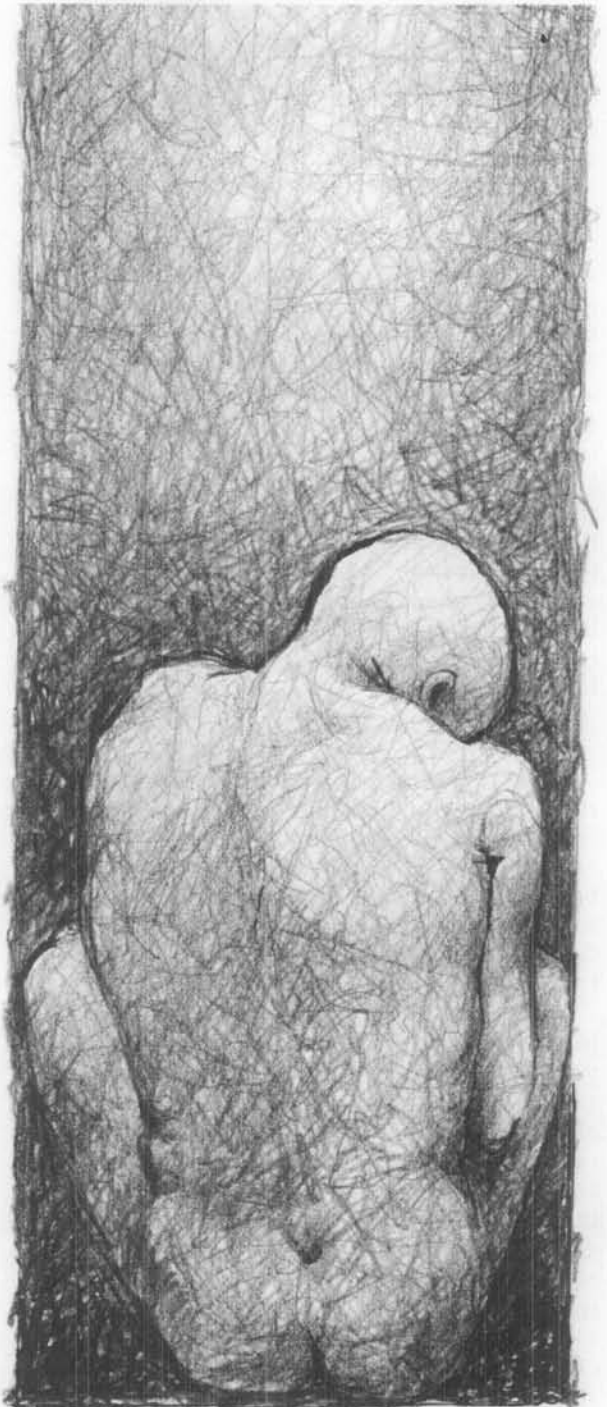
"But wouldn't you love it? It would be so good for you. Or somewhere else if you don't want to go to San Francisco."

He turned to me for help. "We couldn't do that, could we?"

"No," I said, "it wouldn't be right."

"So what are you making of yourself up here driving fence stakes with a jackhammer? Just what are you coming to?"

"I'm civilizing myself. So's Lora."



"Oh, fiddle," she said. "You're thirty years old and you're already senile. You really are."

"We consider it an act of civilization to stay away from places like San Francisco."

"Not me," I said. "I'd just as soon go. It'd do us good to break out of here once in a while."

"To San Francisco?"

"Well, somewhere."

"We just had a trip to Logan last month," he said. "But, all right, say we raise some money and take a trip somewhere."

"We wish there was something we could do for you, some way we could help you," Winifred said.

"Don't cast us off," Milton said.

"We don't mean to cast anybody off," Harlan said. He turned back to me. "Go ahead, think up a little trip. Think of a place we ought to visit." start here

"We don't need a trip," I said. "What we need is to get out of here. To move."

"I thought you liked it here."

"Sure, I liked it. That was when I thought you liked it. I want to move where there aren't any cliffs."

When I went into the bathroom after tucking Carter in bed, Harlan was on the toilet. The room was so small I had to climb over his legs to get to the shower. "That was nice of Winifred and Milton, offering us a paid vacation," I said. "But I guess it's a nefarious plot to rehabilitate us."

"You're damned right it is," he said.

We lay side by side on our bed, no clothes, no sheet. "I see you've been worshipping false gods again," he said. I hadn't removed the candles and white cloth from the little table.

"I'll put it away in the morning."

"Hell, let it stand. What do I care?"

"We need something," I said.

"We've got something."

"You talking about dying, that's what we've got."

Later I said, "Shall we make love?"

He scratched his beard, a grainy rasping. "Do you want to?"

"No, but if you want to I don't mind."

"I guess not," he said.

The first time we ever went into Buller's Gulch and saw the tiny ruin, Harlan was ecstatic: "In this place you can hear the past; eternity is tangible here." Crosslegged in the clean bright sand, he folded his arms and closed his eyes. Carter lolled asleep in a packapoose on his back. I sat on a boulder and listened, hearing, as he said, many things in the summer silence, audible inaudibilities.

I said, "Maybe it's God."

"Sure. You can call anything God."

"I mean God the Father. And God the Mother. Also God the Son and God the Holy Ghost."

"The Holy Christian Quadrumvirate. You are anthropomorphizing. The evidence for Christianity exists in human fantasy, not in the material world."

"So where is the evidence for anything else?"

"It's scientifically proven that all matter is unified through the laws of physics. I can hear the electrons. They exist; they buzz like bees in a blooming tree. That's God. But I can guarantee you it isn't personal."

He disappeared through the tiny door of the ruin, which stood beneath an overhanging cliff. After I had nursed Carter, I peered in. My irises expanded, slowly shaping images: creviced walls of stacked stone, bark shredding from roof poles, Harlan kneeling before a hole in the floor, in one hand a digging stick, in the other an ear of corn no more than four inches long. "It's at least eight hundred years old," he said.

After lunch, he shelled the tiny kernels and ground them on a flat rock. He carefully shook the meal into my open palm, saying, "First the meal, then the batter. A little grit makes no difference; that's how the Anasazi ate it. Every adult skull they find has severely worn molars." Taking his aluminum cup, he climbed the narrow slickrock defile we had come down, knelt at a tiny catchpool, and dipped water. Returned, he splashed a little into my palm and stirred the paste with twig.

"Just a taste for each of us, washed down by water from a natural cistern. This way we'll know authentically how it was for the Anasazi." he dipped his finger into the paste, licked it, sipped from the cup.

He said, "Do this in remembrance of my body."

"Lord, don't say that. That's from the Sacrament prayer."

"This is a sacrament. So that we can have the grace of the Old Ones."

"That's not how the Anasazi would have done it," I said. "They would have scattered the cornmeal to the four winds, with some pollen added."

He pushed my hand upward. "Go on, lick it clean."

"That's nothing to make fun about," I said, scraping my palm across the rock.

Toward morning when I came back from the bathroom Harlan was awake. "Lord, I wish they were gone," he said.

"They try to be nice. They love you an awful lot."

"I'm just getting goddamned frantic."

I reasoned it would be good for him to make love. If you make love you are still alive, aren't you? Of course I was just a big torpid snail in the purple dark. Where were my lace panties, my see-through nightie?

On the day of her consecration St. Therese of Lisieux had a vision of a mantle of snow upon a statue of the Child Jesus. Because she loved snow she knew Jesus had been thinking kindly of her. Life wasn't easy in the convent, but Therese took each hardship as a special blessing. A sloppy nun splashed dirty water on her in the washroom; she didn't try to avoid the splashes. A fidgety nun disturbed her during meditation and prayer; she

didn't protest, didn't move elsewhere. As she lay dying she was haunted by an unbelieving voice that seemed to say, Dream on, you poor deluded nun, till the night of the annihilation overtake you. How kind of God! How wonderful, how merciful! Every hardship was a gift that helped mortify the flesh, helped her know this world was unreal.

So I was somewhat sorry for what I was about to do. I took Harlan's hand and kissed his fingers. I stroked his shoulder, walked my fingers across his breast and over his belly, slid my hand down the outside of his leg, brought it slowly up inside his thighs. When we had finished, we lay tangled, my leg over his, his arm under my neck, his fingers in my hair. A breeze sifted cool through the screen.

Very softly, voice wavering, he sang a fragment: "Where the evening primroses are blooming, out on White Mesa so fair." He said, "You're so fine." Then, hoarsely: "Three days ago I saw a primrose growing in a sandstone crevice. I lay down by it and looked close at its white petals and at its pistils dusty with golden pollen. I named it Lora."

Had he actually done that? My God, I didn't care. Mother in Heaven, I said, don't let me let him die; I can't accept that much mortification of the flesh.

After lunch we headed over the Burr Trail in our Datsun pickup, Winifred and I in the front. Every time I slowed for a dip or curve, dust caught up with us. I was happy to see the manful grimaces in the rearview mirror, though of course I felt guilty. I said to Winifred, "There's something to be said for polygamy. I can see some advantages in sharing a man with other women. A man can get to be quite a burden."

"Oh, I don't think so. I'm personally very thankful for the Manifesto." Later she said, "Is it quite different living with a man you aren't married to?"

"No, I don't think it's very different at all."

"Do you think it would be nice to be married?"

"Yes, it would be nice," I said. "However, I don't think we really fit. Somebody cut me out with pinking shears; my edges don't match his."

"My word. I was afraid there was something."

"He wants mothering, and I'm not a motherly person."

"Of course you are," she said.

"Well, I wish you could take him back."

"Take him back?"

"You can't, but I wish you could."

"You have your little boy," she said, "and of course another on the way. Please don't get discouraged. Milton and I, our edges didn't match up so perfectly either; we just overlapped the torn edges and sewed ourselves together." The tires rumbled and pounded on the corderoy road; gravel clattered against the fenders. "Of course, when you do that you lose some material, don't you? A bit of your self disappears."

We parked at the head of Buller's Gulch and set the ice chest in the shade of a pinyon. Then we hiked into the gulch, using ancient footholds to clamber down the defile. Milton and Winifred were astonished by the tiny ruin.

"Obviously a five foot man would have been extraordinarily tall," Milton said, his eye glued to his camera, his finger triggering the shutter. "There, honey, that ought to justify the science of nutrition. It just shows what good foods have done for modern man."

We followed a trail along the side of the gulch. Pausing at the base of a gigantic boulder we saw petroglyphs—spirals, zigzags, circles; creatures with stick-like bodies: bears, deer, men, women, eerie humanoid beetles. Milton jerked into action, kneeling, craning, snapping, advancing, happily muttering, "Holy Moses, get a load of that!"

"These figures are quite rudimentary," Winifred said, "like something four and five year olds do in the nursery school."

But aren't they marvelous? Doesn't that look like an ear right there?"

"Oh, darling, not an ear! Now look at this strange creature." She pointed toward a beetle-man with flaring shoulders. "I do admit you could almost imagine the stirrings of civilization."

"I hope not," Harlan said.

"Where's an ear?" Carter said.

"It isn't an ear," I said. "It's a spiral."

"The ear is a funnel," Milton said. "You can transcribe a spiral onto a funnel very easily."

"What do you mean, you hope not?" Winifred said to Harlan.

"The hydrogen bomb wasn't known to the Anasazi. Neither was direct mail advertising."

"I don't think those are things you should judge civilization by."

"You think civilization is a wheel; you think every time it goes down it comes up again. Actually civilization is a ski jump, and we're racing toward a catastrophe."

Carter was tugging on Harlan's pants. "I wanna drink, Daddy."

"Everyone, is entitled to their own opinion," Winifred said.

"You're a Christian, aren't you? You believe in Armageddon, don't you?"

"No, not exactly, I don't."

"Well, I'm not a Christian, and I do believe in it, and it can't come any too soon to suit me."

He gave Carter a drink and took his hand, continuing along the trail with Milton and the dog close behind. Winifred remained, staring after them. "That was certainly an aggressive gesture," she said. "I'm not sure what I did to deserve it."

"You don't need to take it personally. He's very cranky about the end of civilization. He'll be disappointed if it doesn't come soon."

"What on earth does he believe in then?"

"Simplicity. That's why we moved out here, so that we could simplify. This was Walden for us."

Hiking in Calf Creek one day we found a dying ewe in a little hollow. She lay on her side, neck outstretched, flanks panting; the iris of her unblinking eye was large and yellow, its pupil bottomless. From her vagina protruded the hind-quarters of a dead lamb. Nearby a living first born lamb stood on trembling legs. Our dog advanced to the ewe, sniffed suspiciously, jumped back when her legs thrashed. Her spasmic hooves had cut two arcs in the soil.

"What's the matter with her, Daddy?" Carter said.

"She's going to die. Which is the fate of all living matter. But she's going to die now."

Carter stared, his lips pouted, his little red tongue sliding in and out.

"Shall we pull the lamb?" I said.

"Not me," Harlan said. "It won't do any good anyhow. She's done for."

I tried. The ewe kicked with a fresh surge, emitting strange coughing grunts. I gave up and stood back, rubbing grit and crusted from my palms, saying, "It's so pitiful."

"Death is a chemical condition," Harlan said. "It has no emotion. It's a fallacy, so to speak. Think about your knees. I've had some luck with that lately. Knees are hinges, very mechanical like the hinges on a screen door. When people begin to think about cruelty and pain and suffering and death, when they begin to make something out of them, that's when they go wrong. A rock doesn't wring its hands and wail and lament."

Somewhere in my esophagus a thistle had stuck. There's a zoologist who has devised a mathematical measurement of parental attrition for the benefit of offspring; he has figured out units for measuring the increased probability of death for a parent with each altruistic gesture toward an offspring.

"I'm going to puke," Harlan said. He got onto his hands and knees and vomited; he remained so, whimpering and drooling.

"Is he going to have a baby?" Carter said.

"No, you can vomit for lots of reasons besides being pregnant," I told him.

I squatted by Harlan, hugging him, patting his back, rubbing his shoulders. "Let's be Christians again," I said.

Harlan, Carter, and Milton had left the trail and angled upward toward a high crest. Winifred and I took our time, skirting certain boulders, climbing over others, coming at last to a jagged sandstone top which fell away in a sheer drop. The land was open in all directions, scooped, carved, wrinkled: canyons, valleys, slickrock pavilions, forests of juniper and pinyon, ridges, buttes, and peaks. A cloudbank mounted in the westward sky, through which sunswaths broke.

"Unbelievable! Magnificent!" Milton was saying, hastily reloading his camera.

Harlan and Carter sat on the cliff, their feet dangling into the void.

"Please bring Carter away from the edge," I called to Harlan.

"He's all right."

"Please, I would like him back here."

"I don't wanna come, Mama," he shouted.

"Harlan!"

"Get back there, son," he said, taking his arm.

"I don't wanna," he wailed.

Harlan helped him up, and I seized his arm and pulled him away. He kicked me, and I shook him. Harlan remained on the verge, hunched, feet dangling, hands flat on the rock.

Winifred took a seat close behind him, curling her legs and propping herself with an arm. She squinted against the wind and grasped at her flying hair, vexed. "Windy places seem to have their own rules," she said. "I suppose we have to submit to them without complaining." A tiny spider wandered on Harlan's shoulder. "Gracious," she said, "you're being invaded." She flicked the spider into the wind, then brushed his shoulder half a dozen times.

"Let me go," Carter said, still twisting in my grasp.

"Will you stay away from the edge?"

"No." So I clamped his neck harder and missed something Winifred said to Harlan which made him heave up his legs and pivot about to face her. I heard her say, "I can't go home and leave you like you are. What will Mother and Father say to me?"

"You expect a big confrontation with them, I suppose."

"Don't make fun of me. You know I can't believe anything else."

"No," he said, "you couldn't."

"When you first came to us, one Sunday you were impossible in Sacrament Meeting, wiggling and whining and picking quarrels with Edith, and I took you into the foyer, Milton staying with Keith and Edith, and I whipped you. You said, 'You aren't my mother, and I cried as hard as you did and said, I have to be.'"

"Well, my God," Harlan said, "don't bring up sad old things like that. Think about something objective. Think about the fact that satellite orbits are in the form of a wobbling ellipsis."

"Will you come away from here, Harlan, away from Boulder, away from fence building? Will you get into something with a future. Will you marry poor Lora?"

He stared at a nearby rock, then gave it a backhanded shove. It disappeared over the edge. "What do you think?" he said to me. "Should we get married?"

I said, "I think we ought to get off this cliff."

"Why don't you go back to school?" Winifred said. "We'd help you all the way. It's no disgrace for you to accept a little help."

"Certainly not," Milton said. "You could go right on with that master's degree."

"And Lora too," Winifred added. "She could go on with her schooling if she'd like to."

"Absolutely!" Milton said.

"Where would we go?" Harlan asked me.

"Maybe Colorado State. They have a good school of environmental studies."

"Please," Winifred said.

"We'll see," he said. He swung around again, legs dangling, head bent as if he was studying the jumbled terraces far below. From the west a minor squall advanced in a canopy of clouds, stirring dust and trailing veils of mist, new sunswaths appearing in its wake. "It's very grand, isn't it?" Winifred said. "A person can feel very religious in a place like this."

He said, "There's no reason other than the peculiarities of the Earth's chemical composition why a person couldn't walk up one of those sunladders."

"Yes, like Lancelot crossing a chasm on the edge of a magical sword."

"No fantasy to it; really, authentically, if we knew how to transpose our atoms, if we knew how to suspend the electro-magnetism of our bodies, we could climb a beam of light."

She knelt very close behind him. "This wide, wonderful wilderness means everything to you, doesn't it?"

"I would like to wink out of it. Turn the light off, that's what I'd like to do. After all the stir and frenzy of the Big Bang, all this absurd, senseless, chaotic careening of particles through the universe, I wish somebody could reverse it, could send it back, return it to the original purity of the First Great Black Hole. By God, that'd be a Second Coming worth talking about."

"That's very quaint, very poetical."

"Except he means it," I said. "Come on," I said to Carter, "let's go hunt for lizards."

"Hot dog," my little boy said, starting to forgive me.

I got up at dawn the next morning, gave Carter bread and jam, and took him out to feed the chickens and the lamb. When I had settled down to milk, Harlan came from the house, chest bare, feet bare, hair mussed. He picked his way carefully through the corral and sat on an upturned bucket. I went on squeezing the cow's teats, spurting milk into the rising foam.

"I didn't sleep very well," he said. "I couldn't get my mind off what Winifred and Milton want us to do. Which is go back to living on their money and learn how to be decent people again."

"You slept some," I said. "Your snoring sounded like a hay baler."

"Anyhow, I have a plan. I see a way to go. My mind is made up."

"So what's your plan?"

"We'll tell them we've been touched; they've

got through to us; we want to repent, want to change our lives, want to give ourselves a total overhaul—getting married, getting back into the Church and everything. Furthermore, we want to move up to Logan and enroll in Utah State, which has a good wildlife resources college, so we can be close to home and all its wonderful influences and not be deceived and misled by the philosophies of men."

I said, "They'll know you're lying."

"We won't overdo it. We'll act confused and uncertain about it all so they'll think it's for real."

"So why do it if it isn't for real?"

"I want them to be taking care of you," he said. "I've worried an enormous amount over what will become of you and Carter and the new baby. But Winifred and Milton, they're good people; they're absolutely the salt of the earth. They'll help you till you can get on your feet."

"So where are you going to be?" I asked. Suddenly I knew. "No," I said frantically, "that isn't a way out."

"That's what I want to do," he said. "It would be a great relief."

"No, I don't agree to it. Not at all. Not one little bit."

"You'll be a lot better off," he said. "You'll be a whole lot happier."

My landscape was the underside of a cow; pungent uric odor; silky Jersey hairs, swimming and snaking like waterweeds through tears.

"I want you to let me go," he pleaded. A blackbird warbled from a fencepost down the road. It said, If a person is beyond repair, it isn't a mercy to keep him on life support machines; sometimes pulling the plug is the right thing to do.

We had corn flakes and orange juice in the motorhome with Winifred and Milton, who were overjoyed. She hugged Harlan and held Carter on her lap, kissing his cheek over and over, saying finally, "Phone us the day and we'll come back down for the wedding."

"Given the time of the year," said Milton, "perhaps we should act immediately to rent you an apartment. Later, if it doesn't suit you, you can move to something else."

Winifred marveled: "This couldn't have come about by natural means. I feel so holy in this place. You might say, what poor circumstances for such a momentous event, this cramped dining nook, nothing better than orange juice for making our celebration. But, no, what a beautiful sunshiny morning, what dew on your hollyhocks, what high blue mountains, what a tranquil rural village—what a place for a memory! I won't ever forget." She was weeping.

"The Boulder ward holds Sacrament Meeting at eleven," Milton said. "We thought we'd attend before heading for home. Would you like to come along?"

"No," Harlan said, "not yet; later on we sure should get into that again." He looked at me.



"Maybe you'd like to go. Maybe you ought to dress up Carter and go."

"I wanna go," Carter said.

"Take him," I said, "but me, I couldn't do it just yet."

At twenty to eleven they drove away in the motorhome. Seated on our steps, Harlan tossed a cobblerock from one hand to another; then he strolled across the road to the Thordens'. Although I was still in shock, an idea had come to me. I got into the Datsun and headed for Escalante, where there's a tiny Catholic church visited once a week by a priest who drives from Cedar City.

An hour later I knocked on the door of a small, battered trailer. I was in luck; the priest answered. He was in shirtsleeves, his stiff collar unbuttoned and a little askew like the bumper on our pickup; he was bald, somewhat portly, sad. He held a small frying pan and a can of hash.

"Do you mind coming back?" he asked.

I said, "I need to talk to you. You can go ahead with your lunch. It won't bother me any."

He let me in and turned to a tiny gas stove. I sat down and swept crumbs from the tablecloth. He was frowning, holding his head aloof from the sputtering, smoking pan. "Do you have a problem?" he said.

"What I need to know is what happens to suicides on the Other Side."

"Are you quite depressed?" He looked very lonely; at least I couldn't help feeling lonely for him.

"It isn't for me. It's for somebody else."

"You ought to get in touch with the authorities," he said. "I mean, with a counselor or a psychiatrist."

"There's none of that kind of people around here. Besides I don't think it would do any good. He has wanted to die for a long time."

"There's a psychiatrist who flies down to Cedar City every Wednesday for public health services. If you don't have money the state pays."

"Do you think you can keep a person alive by praying for him?" I said.

He spooned hash onto his plate and set the pan to soak in the sink. He uncorked a wine bottle and poured a glass. He sat and spread a paper napkin over his lap. Prayer is always useful," he said. Then he crossed himself and began to eat.

"So will he go to hell if he kills himself?"

"That depends on his state of mind. When a distraught person commits suicide it isn't necessarily a mortal sin. In the opinion of the theologians most sinners of any kind don't possess enough knowledge to be damned; they go to purgatory instead. However, only God really knows."

"He wants to walk off a cliff, onto a bridge of air. He wants to feel his atoms shucking off as he falls, like sparks off a space shuttle when it re-enters. He wants to dwindle and diminish till he's light as a feather and will never hit the ground but will blow away on the breeze."

He stared at me, solemnly chewing. "Do you have your own minister somewhere you might talk to?"

"No, sir. I used to be a Mormon but they excommunicated me."

"We have a mission if you're interested."

"I couldn't be anything but a Mormon, thanks just the same. Someday I'll go back."

"Is this person devout?"

"He's very undevout."

"I'll give you the mental health service number. You'd better give them a call."

"The truth is, I want him to die. I'm tired of it all."

He divided the remaining hash with his knife.

"We're not married," I said, looking down at my belly. "We've got a boy who is three. I've stood all I can. Harlan and our little boy and now this new one inside me—I'm very, very tired. I think maybe it would be the right thing to let him go. He suffers a great deal. I don't know why. Even if you say, Look, stupid, quit suffering, he still can't do anything about it. He just goes on hurting, month in and month out."

"If you can forestall him and don't, that would be very bad," the priest said. He got up, found a pencil, and scratched a Salt Lake phone number on a card. "Call them long distance first thing in the morning. They'll help you work something out."

I took it but didn't bother looking at it.

"I'll say special prayers for both of you. Also for your little boy."

"What will God think of me if I let him go?"

"Suffering is no excuse for anybody," he said.

I stood in the street thinking, unable to go home. It's no fun watching a dead man move, hearing him talk; it's easier to walk away, to let him die of simple neglect like the deformed babies the Spartans exposed on hillsides. I drove up New Canyon, west of Escalante. The road curved and dipped, gradually rising in the trough

of the canyon. At a beautiful bend of the creek I parked and got out. I was lightheaded and dizzy: sun and midday heat; odor of willows and aspen; slopes textured with outcroppings, cliffs, ravines, and timber.

My eyes hunted for gnarled old trees, oddly shaped boulders, patches of blue lupine. Oddly, they found a sheep. Across the creek stood a deserted sheepcamp, a wagon domed with aluminum sheeting, stove pipe protruding. Beyond, a solitary ewe traversed a barren ridge, a stray from a herd driven to lower pasture. She ambled, meandered, paused to nibble and once to stare; yet before I was ready to give her up she disappeared over the ridge, leaving me with a vacancy, a palpable absence; a sense, perhaps, of the miraculous; also of doubt that I had seen anything at all.

A burdock plant at my feet said, Go back to your lost sheep; feed him supper.

From Thomas a Kempis are these words, these units for measuring the altruism by which parents die for their offspring, or a brother for his siblings: Thanks be to Thee, O Thou Creator and Redeemer of men, who to manifest Thy love to the whole world hast prepared a great supper, wherein Thou hast set before us to be eaten, not the typical lamb, but Thy most Holy Body and Blood, rejoicing all the faithful with this sacred banquet and inebriating them with the chalice of our salvation.

It was mid-afternoon when I got home. Winifred and Milton were still there, restless and worried, unwilling to leave till I showed up. We exchanged smiles, kisses, hugs, gratitudes, talk about our wedding. They climbed into the motor-home, too quickly sober; they waved from the windows, scarcely recognizing how their hope had dwindled.

Harlan was packing for his return to camp—folding fresh sheets into his bedroll, placing flour, coffee, and canned peaches into his grubbox. I helped a little, waiting for a chance. He was melancholy and lethargic, entirely gone inside himself. Carter and I went out and gathered eggs, then gave hay to the cow and pellets to the lamb. The lamb, half grown and thick woolled, had a docked, nervous tail. When we carried it home from Calf Creek we tried to find an owner. None of the sheepmen claimed it so it was ours.

Harlan came out to milk, still moody, scarcely glancing at me as he passed through the corral gate. Carter followed him and, as he settled into milking, leaned against his shoulder and peered into the bucket.

"People learn by watching," I said. "There's hardly anything you can't learn by standing close and watching carefully. That's why in the old days they used to apprentice boys to shoemakers. They watched, then they made shoes."

"That's likely true," Harlan said.

"For example," I said, "women could bless the

Sacrament if somebody would let them. They've been watching for centuries and they know how."

Carter said, "I don't wanna go to Logan; I wanna stay here with the animals."

"Well, you've got to go," Harlan said.

"No," I said, "we aren't going to Logan."

"Yes, you have to."

"No matter what you do I've decided to stay here," I said.

Did you ever try to hold water in your cupped hands? Harlan could see it dribbling out and didn't know how to stop it.

"Please don't do it," I said.

"My mind is made up."

"He needs a daddy," I said. "I need a husband."

He frowned and mulled, white cheeked, close to shock, I'm sure.

"You're outvoted," I said. "If you do it, it's on your own. As for me, I will pray for you seven times a day, starting at midnight. And I will think about you every minute I'm awake. Please don't do it."

Carter and I went into the house. I put a white cloth on the kitchen table. I brought my candles from the bedroom and lit them. I took a loaf of bread from the breadcase. I set out glasses and a decanter of water. I set out the Doctrine and Covenants, open to the sacramental prayers.

Harlan stood in the door, the milkbucket in hand, the dog peering between his legs. "What does that mean?"

"We can at least try it," I said.

I seated myself on the bench behind the table. He crossed the room, strained the milk at the sink, put the bottle of new milk into the refrigerator. He rinsed the bucket and the straining cloth, all the while giving me oblique glances.

He went into the bathroom, Carter following. "Will you eat with me?" I called.

He came back, drying his hands. He took in the table, the burning candles, the bread, the water, the holy book. "It violates me," he said. "It's grotesque. It's unreasonable. It's wrong."

"We don't have anything to lose."

He sat down. Carter climbed onto the chair next to him. I tore bread and gave each of us a crust. From the Doctrine and Covenants I said the blessing of the bread. I poured each a glass of water and said the blessing of the water.

"Is this all we get for supper?" Carter asked.

"It's enough," I said. He took a mouthful and chewed, then lifted his glass with both hands and gulped.

Harlan stared without seeing; he was on a faraway cliff, yearning for a sunswath. I tore a morsel from my crust. This is for him, I said to Heavenly Mother; he suffers so much; help us both to bear it.

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The Mormon Documents' Day in Court

Seeking the Whole Truth in the Hofmann Case



By Linda Sillitoe

In 1985, four controversial, major document finds preoccupied the Mormon historical community and intrigued the general public. That spring the Church made public the Martin Harris or "salamander" letter. This document was donated by Steven F. Christensen, who purchased it from document dealer Mark

Hofmann and his associate Lyn Jacobs in 1984 for \$40,000. About a week after the announcement, the 1825 "money-digging" letter from Joseph Smith to Josiah Stowell finally was made public after an initial denial that the Church had it. President Gordon B. Hinckley had bought the letter from Hofmann 11 January, 1983, with a

\$15,000 check. Together, the two letters solidified information once deemed anti-Mormon regarding folk religion and magic at the roots of Mormonism.

By June 1985, it was rumored that still another important historical document existed which would, reportedly, substantiate the view of the two letters. The Oliver Cowdery history, a first-person account by Joseph Smith written in Cowdery's hand, was reportedly in the Church's possession. As rumors became media stories, the Church denied knowledge or possession, but the rumors continued. In fact, word spread of still another find, an extensive collection of journals, revelations, papyri and correspondence of William E. McLellin, and 1800's renegade apostle. In July, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that this collection had been sold in Texas and the LDS Church was presumed to be its destination.

As the 1985 Symposium approached, the momentum of document finds or reports of finds and Church silence and/or denials helped to create a certain excitement. Evidently, the nitty-gritty of Mormon history was indeed at hand, if historians could only lay *their* hands on it. And the Church, it appeared, was: 1. voraciously seeking documents, and 2. consistently suppressing them.

The 1985 Sunstone Symposium featured many papers on these documents and their implications, as well as vigorous hallway debates. Also, last year, during the usually solemn "Pillars of My Faith" panel, Steve Christensen was also a featured speaker; he amused the audience with an impromptu and irreverent portrayal of himself as bishop of his Centerville, Utah ward. When he settled down and gave his talk, Christensen disappointed some by never once mentioning the salamander letter he had bought from Hofmann and given to the church. In retrospect, we know that by August Steve was involved in a far more complex document deal with Mark. It was extremely confidential, involving high church leaders and a bank loan more than four times the cost of the salamander letter—\$185,000 for a find most people in the know thought had already been sold—the McLellin collection.

In October 1985, the year of documents became the year of the Salt Lake bombings, when pipe bombs murdered Christensen and Kathleen Webb Sheets, the wife of Steve's former business partner, friend, and fellow bishop Gary Sheets, and injured Hofmann. By February, the Church and a handful of collectors, investors, or dealers were named as financial victims of an alleged \$2 million in document fraud and forgery. In early May, Mark Hofmann was bound over to Third District Court on 30 felonies, including two counts of first degree murder with aggravating circumstances.

The murder case, which includes three other bomb charges and seven first and second degree fraud charges involving the McLellin collection, is set for trial in early March 1987. Four separate cases involving document fraud will be tried later. The case involving 11 handwritten documents is now scheduled for trial 2 September 1987.

Because of the sensitivity of the legal issues at this time, this article is based entirely on my courtroom notes and 41 tapes of the preliminary hearing. It does not include research or interviews. All of this material is public information that has been reported on before. I hope to do so in greater depth than has been possible in the media, given the volume of information versus time and space restraints. I emphasize that the material presented here is evidence, not proof and not judgement. It represents the prosecution's case, with the defense's cross-examination; however, since the defense declined to call witnesses its case has yet to be heard.

The documents provide a fascinating mystery, a paper chase extraordinaire. The bombing murders were anything but abstract; they were cold-blooded, cowardly, and brutal. As we examine these academic technicalities, it is important to remember that lives have been lost and others irrevocably changed.

This article's emphasis is not on the provenance or historicity of the documents. Historians who have studied the documents have already noted how snugly the documents generally fit their context. Rather, it presents the forensic evidence on the handwritten documents pronounced forgeries by William Flynn, the questioned documents analyst for the State of Arizona, and his Utah counterpart, George Throckmorton of the State Attorney General's office.

In addition to his government job, Flynn is president of a private company, Affiliated Forensic Laboratories, and a member of the executive board of the Southwestern Association of Forensic Document Examiners. He has testified in many courtrooms and tested documents of diverse sizes and implications, from a name on a credit card to the Hitler Diaries.

Flynn first saw the Mormon documents 17 December 1985 at Church Headquarters in Salt Lake City. He and Throckmorton were given a pile of questioned documents—documents that came through Mark Hofmann—from a list provided to the County Attorney's office by LDS historian Dean Jessee. They also requested a stack of known documents from the Church Director of Libraries and Archives, Glenn Rowe.

The two brought powerful microscopes, infrared and ultraviolet lights, and other technical equipment. As they proceeded to examine the

documents, they discovered a curious phenomenon. Under the microscope, one after another of the questioned documents displayed ink with plating or cracking on the surface. They continued their search and found cracked ink on a known document—a promissory note to Isaac Galland. The face of the document showed no cracking. Only the few lines on the back that obligated Joseph Smith did. Further checking showed that the promissory note had come from Hofmann.

Sighting that cracking phenomenon on one document—or even three or four—might not have caused alarm, the experts said. After all, the phenomenon was totally unfamiliar, not a known sign of forgery. The curious thing was that among the 461 19th century documents that Flynn eventually examined, not all the documents linked to Mark Hofmann showed cracked ink—but all the documents with cracked ink came from Mark Hofmann.

Other phenomena appeared under ultraviolet light. There was a bluish hazing, and on some documents the ink line showed uni-directional running. This, like cracking, was invisible to the naked eye. What could cause some portion of the ink to bleed in one direction rather than haloing around the ink line as the document aged?

About that time, the experts began to realize the extent, complexity, and significance of the case. Flynn returned to Arizona, and the two agreed to meet after the first year to compare research and continue their examination.

“There were two problems that I attacked,” Flynn testified. “One was whether or not ink could be artificially aged so that it would not be detectable under normal laboratory procedures, and the other was whether that would crack the ink. My research showed that was indeed the case.”

Flynn began by cutting turkey feathers into “broad tip, medium tip, and fine tip” quills. He mixed up old recipes for iron gallatannic ink from Charles Hamilton’s *Great Forgers and Famous Fakes* and other sources. He heat-aged the modern paper and he purchased blank 19th century cover letters. These were typically oversized sheets that were folded in half, written on, the ends folded up to conceal the contents, and then folded into an envelope shape, addressed and sealed.

When it came to applying ink to paper, Flynn decided he might as well try early Mormon clerk Thomas Bullock’s distinctive bookhand script. Since it is discontinuous, like printing, he found it easier to forge than the flowing hand. Next, Flynn tried a variety of chemicals on the ink, but under the microscope, the ink remained intact.

After considerable research and experimentation, he found a reference in an old text to ammonia as a forger’s tool. He began with modern paper, took iron gallatannic inks he made at the kitchen sink, and exposed them to both ammonia and sodium hydroxide.

“I found that they [the chemicals] did, indeed, artificially age the inks,” Flynn said. “As a matter of fact, the reaction was immediate. The sodium hydroxide, in particular, will immediately take the iron gallatannic inks and turn them a deep rust color on the paper. It won’t crack the inks, however.”

The inks Flynn made were extremely acidic, capable of burning right through the paper. Flynn stabilized the inks by adding sugars or gum arabic, as was done in the 19th century, to give the ink body and act as a preservative.

“When I mixed the iron gallatannic inks and added either the sugars or the gum arabic, and then artificially aged them with sodium hydroxide, I got exactly the same phenomena that I described in the examination of the questioned documents’ ink—both artificially aged and cracked.”

Flynn explained the chemistry. Simply put, as the liquid in the chemical evaporates, the ink turns dark brown under the microscope. It loses its viscosity, cracking the surface. If the document is held vertically while still wet with ammonia, an unknown constituent of the ink bleeds in one direction.

After experimenting with modern paper, Flynn tried cover letters. “When iron gallatannic ink is utilized on old paper and artificially aged, as far as I could determine, there would be no way to ascertain it was not as old as it purported to be. The paper would have been genuine paper, the apparent chemical reaction of the inks would be, as far as could be determined, identical to a natural aging process. So to answer your question, the modern ink, artificially aged on the old paper, cracks just like the questioned writing and is indistinguishable from these documents.”

Meanwhile, in Salt Lake City, George Throckmorton, a questioned documents analyst for the Attorney General’s office who also runs a private laboratory, experimented with deacidification, bleaching and washing procedures. Perhaps the ink had been affected after the documents were purchased. Like Flynn, he worked on a variety of samples—examining 688 19th century documents in all—finally deacidifying actual documents such as a letter from Joseph Smith to Maria and Sarah Lawrence. He found that these procedures sometimes removed part of the ink surface, but they did not cause microscopic cracking or uni-directional running.

In court, Flynn identified ink or other anomalies on the following documents: the Anthon

Transcript; the Samuel Smith Bible, which housed the Anthon Transcript; the Joseph Smith III blessing; four White Notes; the Lucy Mack Smith letter; the Josiah Stowell letter; the E.B. Grandin contract; the Martin Harris letter; the General Dunham letter; the Whitmer to Conrad letter; the Betsy Ross letter; the Spaulding/Rigdon contract; the Thomas Bullock to Brigham Young letter; a promissory note to Isaac Galland; the Lawrence sisters letter; the Whitmer to Todd letter; and various types of currency.

The Anthon Transcript was purchased by the Church from Hofmann 3 October 1980 in return for a first edition of the Book of Mormon, a \$5 gold coin minted in 1850; a set of Deseret Currency in \$1 through \$50 denominations; a \$5 countersigned Kirtland note; a \$10 countersigned Kirtland note, and five Nauvoo notes, for a value of \$20,000. It purports to contain hieroglyphs Smith copied from the gold plates, as well as a statement by Smith on the back.

The ink on the Anthon Transcript showed no microscopic cracking or running, a fact which interested both Judge Paul Grant and defense attorneys. (Ironically, former LDS archivist Donald Schmidt testified that this document—Hofmann's first major find—had been viewed under infrared light before purchase by BYU anthropology professor John Sorenson, a procedure that was not repeated with further purchases.) The ink on the Anthon Transcript was extremely acidic, Flynn testified, because it had no sugar or gum added. The handwriting had burned through both ways on the paper. Also, the transcript clearly showed uneven brown marks, produced by manual heating to age the paper, Flynn said. Throckmorton testified he had reproduced the phenomenon several times.

The transcript was reportedly found between two pages of a Bible that apparently came from Samuel Smith, brother of the prophet. Eight handwritten pages had been inserted into the Bible, and the insert was signed 'Samuel Smith.' The fact that the pages bore an 1819 watermark was not necessarily a problem, but other factors were. Both experts testified that if the transcript had been housed in the Bible for decades, the hieroglyphs on the document would have burned through onto the Bible's pages.

What's more, Flynn testified that the Samuel Smith signature was not genuine, that another signature had been eradicated before the Samuel Smith was signed, the ink in the signature differed from the ink in the text,—and the ink in the signature showed microscopic cracking, linking the Anthon Transcript to the other documents.

The Joseph Smith III blessing, given by Smith to his son promising him succession, was pur-

chased by the Church from Hofmann on 2 March 1981, for a first edition of the Book of Mormon and printed White Notes (the first currency used in the Salt Lake valley) for a value of \$20,000. Amid RLDS accusations of Hofmann double dealing the document, the Church traded the blessing to the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for their Book of Commandments. Hofmann told Schmidt the blessing was part of the Bullock collection obtained from an Allen Bullock in Coalville. In court, coin dealer Al Rust testified that he had invested \$10,000 to help Hofmann purchase the blessing.

The blessing showed extensively cracked ink under the microscope, as well as one-directional running. The blessing's format differed from Bullock's usual indentation format, Flynn testified, but he could render no judgement on the handwriting, since Bullock had several styles. (Flynn was quite satisfied with his own forgeries of Bullock's hand, although he classified himself as "not a very good writer".) A Bullock letter to Brigham Young, which followed the blessing to the Church Archives and strengthened the blessing's provenance, also had cracked ink, Flynn said.

The next major purchase the Church made from Hofmann came shortly thereafter when Hofmann came up with handwritten White Notes, four of which he sold to the Church. These and several other articles were also from the Bullock collection. It was known that handwritten notes preceded the printed notes like the Church had traded Hofmann for the blessing, but none were extant. This time the Church gave Hofmann \$20,000 of printed Mormon money, mostly Kirtland Safety Society notes, in exchange for the handwritten White Notes.

The White Notes were engraved with the Seal of the Twelve Apostles, a handstamp known only by its impression. Last November, the handstamp turned up in a box of materials being catalogued in the Church museum, according to testimony from Schmidt and Rowe.

Two different inks were used to sign the White Notes, Flynn testified, one of which showed plating under the microscope. Heber Kimball's signature showed extensive cracking.

On 29 July 1982, Utah County collector and attorney Brent Ashworth bought the Lucy Mack Smith letter, which describes Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon. He gave Hofmann a Benjamin Franklin letter; a rare John Brown letter of 1857; the 13th amendment to the Constitution signed by 151 members of Congress; an Andrew Jackson letter of 1820, a Solomon Mack book, and a Lorenzo Snow inscribed history, for a \$30,000 value. Ashworth

testified that he understood that Hofmann got the Lucy letter from a cover letter dealer in upstate New York for \$25. Al Rust testified that he invested \$15,000 in the letter. As with the Joseph Smith III investment, he was repaid.

The three-page letter showed extensive ink cracking under the microscope, Flynn testified, and, on the last page, one-directional running under ultraviolet light.

The David Whitmer to Walter Conrad letter was purchased by the Church from Hofmann 20 October 1982 for \$10,000 in check. The letter reaffirmed Whitmer's testimony of the Book of Mormon, Schmidt testified, and had been purchased by Hofmann from a stamp collector.

The letter had evidently been washed and fixed so that much of the ink surface was removed. What remained, Flynn testified, was cracked.

The Josiah Stowell letter discussing money-digging, purchased 11 January 1983 by the Church for \$15,000, replaced the Anthon Transcript as the earliest Joseph Smith holograph. The ink showed both cracking and running when examined, and Flynn believed the handwriting was too neat for Joseph Smith, particularly in 1825. Throckmorton testified that the right-hand side of the letter had been cut.

The E.B. Grandin contract to print the Book of Mormon was purchased from Hofmann, again by Hinckley, 3 March 1983 for \$25,000. Schmidt was told that Hofmann had found materials with a Grandin family member, he testified, and so was not surprised when Hofmann came up with the contract.

The entire document had extensively cracked ink, Flynn testified, and one-directional running. He was unable to reach a conclusion regarding the Joseph Smith and Martin Harris signatures.

The Martin Harris letter was sold by Mark Hofmann in association with Lyn Jacobs to Steven Christensen in January 1984. Eastern collector Kenneth Rendell testified that Hofmann told him of the letter in November 1983. Hofmann said the letter belonged to Lyn Jacobs, and he asked Rendell to authenticate it. Jacobs testified that Hofmann told him that he bought the letter from a stamp collector, and asked Jacobs to become its legal owner. Jacobs agreed, taking the letter to the Church in December. After the opportunity to purchase it was declined by Hinckley and later by Ashworth, Jacobs testified, Hofmann arranged a sale to Christensen, with Hofmann receiving the lion's share of the profit.

The letter's confused provenance was strengthened after the bombings by a Book of Common

Prayer Hofmann purchased in September 1985 from Deseret Book and traded to the Church 3 October for about \$1,500 in Mormon currency. The book, which once belonged to Nathan Harris, Martin's father, contained family signatures. In the back was a verse, apparently in the same handwriting as the Martin Harris or salamander letter—up to that point the only extensive sample of Martin Harris' script.

Flynn testified that the handwriting on the back of the prayer book and that in the Martin Harris letter do, in fact, match. Throckmorton testified that the poem in the back has ink different than the other handwriting in the book, and that the page appears to have been inserted. Frances Magee, a Californian who married a Harris descendant, testified that she owned the prayer book until 1973 when it was mistakenly sold to Deseret Book with a collector's estate. When she had the book, she testified, there was no verse in the back.

The Harris letter had extensive cracking on the ink surface, Flynn testified, one edge had been cut with scissors, and the ink did not feather away from the ink line normally. Throckmorton objected to the way the cover letter had been cut, apparently in half, so that even when folded the letter's contents could be read. That also left the seal off-center. Both experts believed the paper to be genuine, and possibly the postmark and address.

The David and Peter Whitmer letter to Bithell Todd had also been cut, and showed the cracking and bleeding problems in the ink. It was purchased by the Church 16 April 1985 for \$1,500, along with another letter.

Throckmorton demonstrated how a quarto sheet cover letter can be cut in half, then new content forged in the half that contains the genuine postmark and address. This method is described, he said, in Hamilton's book. Detective Jim Bell, Salt Lake City Police Department, testified that a copy of the book was removed from Hofmann's home.

The letter from Joseph Smith to General Dunham, written from Carthage Jail on the day of the martyrdom, was purchased by Brent Ashworth 29 July 1985. He gave Hofmann \$18,500 in check and three valuable letters, one from Brigham Young to George A. Smith.

Testimony revealed that Hofmann had originally sold the Dunham letter to collector Richard Marks for \$20,000. He later sold it to Deseret Book for \$90,000. Hofmann bought it back for \$110,000 and sold it the same day to Ashworth for \$60,000.

The letter was compared to other Carthage

letters owned by the RLDS. The RLDS letters, were written on identical paper. The paper in the General Dunham letter differed which was curious since Smith was imprisoned. Also, the General Dunham letter had microscopic cracking on the ink surface that had survived extensive washing. He reached no conclusion on the Joseph Smith signatures.

Also named a forgery, and related to fraud charges is a contract signed by Solomon Spaulding and Sidney Rigdon, among others. Since Rigdon was Smith's counselor, and Spaulding had long been viewed by some as a source for Smith, such a document, proving the two knew each other, would be controversial and valuable. Elder Hugh Pinnock of the First Council of Seventy testified that Hofmann showed him this document as part of the McLellin collection. Hofmann later sold it to Steve Barnett of Cosmic Aeroplane, a Salt Lake City bookstore. This was at a reduced price, Barnett testified, since Barnett discovered the date made the signature of *the* Spaulding impossible.

Flynn said the document was apparently genuine, but it had been altered. The Spaulding and Rigdon signatures had been written by the same hand in a different ink than the text or other signatures. The date had been changed from 1722 to 1822. Throckmorton's testimony elaborated in several cuts in the document. Similar alterations were described on the Betsy Ross letter charged in a separate fraud case. In that letter the date was purportedly changed and "Ross" added to the signature "Betsy," the experts said, resulting in an anachronism concerning the postmaster.

Printed documents, charged in three separate cases, include Deseret Currency, the Emma Smith hymnal, and Spanish Fork notes. The Deseret Currency and Spanish Fork notes were known to have been issued, but were not extant in the denominations that Mark Hofmann sold. Working by serial number, Throckmorton identified a note that he said was an original from which a negative was made, which was used to make an engraving plate that printed several other notes in evidence. The Spanish Fork notes, Throckmorton said, were identical to impressions from wood-mounted stamps, and the blue, red and green inks matched Carter's inks.

The Emma Smith hymnal was traded to Lyn Jacobs by Donald Schmidt several years ago. Hofmann sold it to Brent Ashworth 30 November 1984 for a \$5,000 check and a Brigham Young to Emmeline Free Young letter. The final page in the book contains a modern printing on what once was the book's flysheet, Flynn and Throckmorton testified, after identifying a negative for a printing plate. Ashworth testified that

when he bought the hymn book, Hofmann told him that Lyn Jacobs had previously owned it, and that it had come from the McLellin collection.

Throckmorton explained the photographic process from original artwork to negative to plate to product: "What this means is after this is touched up and photographed, this negative is unique among all other negatives any place. And it's slightly different than the original documents . . ."

The microscopic flaws or "trash marks" are not touched up as are the visible flaws, he said. They transfer from the negative to the finished product. Thus, by tracking the trash marks, the negative and finished product can be positively identified.

Prosecutors linked the alleged forgeries to the handwritten documents with Jim Bridger notes, which were sold for around \$5,000 each. They introduced into evidence a negative for an unsigned note, a positive taken from Hofmann's possession, and four notes signed by Bridger's X with several co-signatures. All four notes were printed by the plate made from the negative, Throckmorton testified. Flynn testified that the signatures on three of the four notes showed ink cracking and running under the microscope, and declared the three forgeries.

The strength of the forensic testimony lay in its comprehensive nature, from the cracked ink in the Smith Bible—the document that put Hofmann in business—to the more recent salamander letter. Obviously, it was important that the defense disrupt that impression of historically interesting documents written on old paper with homemade ink, which was then chemically aged.

Defense attorney Bradley Rich stressed the differences between documents—some had little ink surface left, some had broad strokes with cracking around the edges of the ink line, the Anthon Transcript had no cracking at all. Under cross-examination, Flynn maintained that the phenomena of microscopic cracking and unidirectional running were consistent, only the extent differed.

Through "two simple tests" involving ink, Rich accused, you have come to court and pronounced all these document forgeries—even though some exhibited no other peculiarities. "Cracked ink—bogus document, simple as that," Rich said.

Understandably, the apparent novelty of the ink phenomena, the pioneering research, and the record-setting nature of the testimony did not score points for the defense.

"Has anyone ever testified in court, so far as you know, about the ink-cracking phenomenon?"

Rich asked Flynn.

"I've found no reference in the literature to the ink-cracking phenomenon in the thousands of pages—literally thousands of pages—I've read, nor have any of the modern forensic experts that I've discussed the ink cracking phenomenon."

"All right. I take it it has never been used as a test for legitimacy or illegitimacy of a document before."

"As far as I know, it has not. Remember that the research on iron gallatannic ink came to a screeching halt in the forties because most modern forensic documents are not written with iron gallatannic ink. And so a lot of the modern analytical techniques that could have been applied . . . have never been used."

"I take it you're the first expert to use this test in a courtroom, so far as you know, to claim a particular document to be a forgery," Rich challenged.

"Yes, I may well be the only expert that has ever seen artificially-aged iron gallatannic ink."

David Hewett, representing the *Maine Antique Digest* came to Salt Lake City for the lengthy preliminary hearing and has since written several extensive articles. In an editorial note midway through the hearing, he advised his audience, "We think this is an important story for all those interested in antiques. If the prosecution's charges are true, we may have witnessed the birth of a new and ominous facet of document fraud in America. The implications of that event are staggering. The immensity of the fraud is huge."

If Hewett was stunned by the implications the case bears for the national document market, the case's local implications for this culture and its politics are truly overwhelming. In Mormon country and consciousness, history is the turf upon which faith is declared, authority is revered, questioned or criticized, and change is justified or resisted. From evangelical critics to church leaders to research historians, what happened 150 years ago is anything but dead. Undeniably, two people connected to those documents are.

When the hearing began, many—press included—felt that the forgery charges were superfluous to the state's case and might represent a kind of prosecutorial overkill. The weeks of testimony, however, revealed that the fraud and murder charges are tightly interwoven, with documents at the very core.

Conversely it would seem that the defense might effectively damage the state's entire case by cutting out that core through producing provenance and expert evidence, or introducing into evidence such unseen finds as the McLellin

collection. Thus far that has not happened, and Judge Paul Grant ruled there was probable cause to believe that the theft-by-deceptions charged on these documents were committed and that the defendant committed them.

Last year these important, new finds were discussed in an atmosphere of discovery and controversy. This year the discussion centers on whether the Hofmann documents are genuine, or—more defensively than rationally—whether the documents are historically important. This is the other side of the looking glass. Much that was familiar, accepted, believed, stands challenged. Now papers that only a year ago inspired research, publications, investments, secrecy and collegial trust, are despaired of, defended or discounted.

Last year only a few Hofmann documents were widely known. This year, scores of others are publicly known, along with date of purchase, price and purchaser for some. Those fragile papers with the oxidized ink, seen only by a few, privileged researchers, came to court in a gray archival box marked, examined and discussed. They were entered into evidence along with parts of killer bombs.

The Mormon historical community has long taken pride in asking the tough questions. Courage is also necessary to confront answers. By the time the Sunstone Symposium convenes next year, the documents may be about to return to court. Kenneth Rendell testified that if forgery exists the evidence must be in the ink. Microscopically damaged ink is important to the state's case. Its appearance asks of this community many difficult questions about friendship, scholarship, money, religious belief, secrecy and trust, as the legal system labors to decide whether these documents became a matter of life and death.

(EDITOR'S NOTE:

"*The Mormon Documents' Day in Court*" was originally presented as a paper at the August 1986 Sunstone Theological Symposium in Salt Lake City, Utah. Portions of this article also appeared in a slightly different form, in "Documents of Death," an article Linda Sillitoe wrote for the September 1986 issue of *Utah Holiday* magazine.)

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Perceptions Of Life

Comedy, Tragedy, Irony or Romance

By Louis A. Moench

Two sources of inspiration have prompted this essay. The first source is the masterful paper presented by Carlisle Hunsaker at the Sunstone Symposium two years ago titled "Mormonism and a Tragic Sense of Life" (SUNSTONE, vol. 8 no. 3). In it he proposes that our viewing ourselves as tragic heroes, struggling through the uncertainties and vicissitude of this life with only limited power to determine whether we will find its fullness. This view regards God as a tragic hero as well, realizing his purpose, the enhancement of the quality of our existence, may also meet with failure, suffering, powerlessness, and loss. That God is a tragic hero is a radical proposition. My interest is in comparing the tragic view of life with contrasting views Hunsaker only alluded to.

The second source of inspiration has been my kids and their friends while I have watched them playing. Though more than 30 years separate us, their play is just like mine was at their age. I and my cowboy friends galloped over prairies and through passes recreating with appropriate vocal da-da-dat da-da-dat, da-da-dat-dah's a symphony orchestra of our own, playing the William Tell Overture. This was the background accompanying cowboys everywhere, we knew, because we heard it on TV. We didn't even need to see the action. As soon as we heard the music we knew what sort of adventure was taking place. For my kids the set, the mode of transportation, and the symphony have changed. Now it is starships blasting into hyperspace toward the nether galaxies to the accompaniment of "Thus Spoke Zarathustra." The game, however, is essentially the same. So is the function of the music. The music defines for us the kind of world we pretend we are in.

At a higher level of sophistication than the cowboy creations of kids, consider Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. A musical theme describes each character, telling us not only of his entry into the scene but also describing for us the way he sees the world and how he will act within it. The foreboding accompaniment to Grandfather tells us he is an entirely different sort of person from Peter, whose thematic measures are bright and adventurous.

Yet more sophisticated is the leitmotif—a musical theme developed to its fullest by Richard Wagner in the *Ring of the Nibelungs*, all 16 hours of



a series of four operas so grandiose and complex that one can't tell the players without the program music. A leitmotif not only describes each character according to his role in the opera and the world, but also just what circumstance he is in at any of his world's given moments. Siegfried racing down the Rhine, resplendent in armor astride a gallant horse, sounds quite different from Siegfried cold on the funeral pyre though the theme is the same. In either case, the music tells us he is a hero.

Were we to remove a person from the prairie or the palace and put him in a totally neutral setting, say walking down the street, we would know virtually nothing of him. If his accompanying theme were Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, we would suddenly know a great deal. Either the man is sinister, or he is about to encounter something sinister. Even our *Sesame Street*-watching kids know when they hear this music that they are about to encounter a black caped, beady-eyed count. Were we, instead, to accompany his walk with the bright bounciness of a Scott Joplin rag, we would transform the setting immediately from tragedy to comedy. Our vision of reality functions in the same way as the background music, transforming our existence in an otherwise indifferent universe into a comedy, a tragedy, an irony, or a romance, according to which vision we see or which music accompanies our thoughts, feelings, and acts.

Vision suggests something not completely real. It involves looking at things from certain angles and not from others, distorting reality in a particular way. A vision of reality has its psychological equivalent in a personality structure. By personality we mean those fixed, predictable ways in which a person thinks, feels, and behaves which evolve as his style of living or his way of being in the world. Knowing one's personality style, we can almost predict one's activities and experiences, his symptoms and the background against which he will play them out. Freud taught us that even the strangest symptoms and the most bizarre behavior make sense when we understand their background—that person's vision of reality.

David Shapiro in his book *Neurotic Styles* offers the example of an Indian, performing a strange dance with great intensity. As we watch, we may notice that he comes from an agrarian culture, and further, that there is a drought. We surmise that this could be a rain dance, and if we look carefully at the Indian's facial contortions, an expression of apprehension as well. If we are correct, we have achieved considerable understanding. But note that nearby there is a farmer whose crops are equally stricken by the drought, yet he is not dancing. To dance does not occur to him. Instead, looking at his dry furrows, he furrows his brow and goes home to worry. The Indian dances not only because there is a drought but because he is an Indian. His dancing is a product of a frame of mind, a way of seeing

things which is likely to be long-standing and stable—and very unlike the farmer's way. His behavior makes perfect sense if we can see the rain gods from his point of view. A person behaves as he does not only because of certain modes of response which he has acquired but also because of certain modes of perceiving the impulse or stimulus. We can compare this unique perception to that of a color-blind person. His response to red is different from ours not because he is unaware of the communist threat, calloused toward Christmas, insensitive to the sight of blood, or never in debt, but because he does not perceive red as something vivid or worthy of emotionality.

Shapiro further gives us the example of the masochistic person. Not only is he predictably angry and guarded, easily humiliated and victimized, but he is also predictably alert for opportunities to be so. He sometimes goes far out of his way to seize a chance to be victimized. His behavior becomes understandable when we realize that, for him, each new injustice scores a moral point against the enemy. Most of us have some interest in injustice and wariness of enemies, but we are not compelled to seek them out. Why are some so compelled? Often because they feel embattled continuously and with a superior foe. Against such an enemy the only weapon is moral protest. From a position of weakness, they are highly aware of power and status, and of who treats whom with how much respect. Becoming militantly principled against personal injustice, the possibility of an affront, remote for most of us, stares them in the face at every turn, and only a fool would not recognize it. Given a frame of mind alert to the possibilities of humiliation and mistreatment, the search for evidence of mistreatment, recognition of it, and reacting with indignation will appear as the only plausible next thing to do.

Our vision of reality tells us what we can expect in this world. With it we weigh the costs and dangers of different kinds of gratification we may seek, the consequences of error we may risk, and of protest we may register. It is our guide to prospects for success or failure, for reward or punishment, for pleasure or pain. Consider what expectations from the world result from the vision of these two people from a vignette by Samuel Taylor: Janice is a beautiful and talented girl who takes drama at B.Y.U. and yearns to be a great actress. But her boyfriend, Claude, wants her to stay home, marry him and have babies. Claude, however, runs a dairy farm and Janice wants fame and glamor, not manure on her shoes. Well, Janice is in a roadshow and by an outstanding coincidence a great Hollywood producer is in the audience. The producer flips over Janice's talent and beauty. He's got to have her for the starring role in his next \$50,000,000

Laughter is less necessary to the comic vision than security and gratification.

movie. So Janice's fondest dreams have come true. Everybody thinks it's a wonderful thing, and she is packing her bags when in comes Claude with hay in his hair and manure on his shoes (he heard the news while milking), and he says he's just come to say goodbye and gosh, honey, I'm going to miss you something terrible because gee-whiz, I love you. At this moment Janice comes to realize that she doesn't want the tinsel and glitter of Hollywood; what she really wants is to be with Claude and have manure on her shoes, bear his babies, and use her great talent as ward drama director.

The world of Janice and Claude is a remarkable one—one in which the choices are clear or will soon become so, right and wrong are readily discernible, doing the right thing always fulfills and rewards, and problems are eminently solvable. This is the comic vision of reality. Comic, not because it is funny—humor is not an essential element of the comic—but comic because things work out.

The Comus was an ancient Greek ritual procession, a fertility ritual honoring the fertility god of the same name. Comus was a symbol of perpetual rebirth, of eternal life. Comedy arises whenever people are gathered to celebrate life, spring festivals, triumphs, birthdays, weddings, initiations. It provides an image of human vitality holding forth in the world, the delight man takes in his mental gifts making him the Lord of creation. Comedy celebrates life's capacity to renew itself.

In comic drama this capacity is underscored usually by the presence of lovers, embodying the elation of life and the ability to overcome every obstacle—intrusive parents, mistaken identities, petty jealousies, temporary rivals, and enforced separations. There may be nothing but trouble along the way, but in the end the lovers are happily united. The comic vision does not exclude hardships and struggles, but they take place in a protected realm. Life has its shortcomings, but in the end there is always a reward. Evil exists, but there is always the possibility of change. No dilemma is too great to be resolved. No obstacle is too firm to stand against effort and good intentions. No suffering is so great it can't be relieved or used as a nidus for growth. No loss is so final that it can't be made up for.

Protagonists in the comic realm are seen as locked in the pursuit of their goals by elements in society over which they can ultimately triumph and become the center of a new and better society. In Mormonism the obstructive elements are subsumed under the term "the world," and the new society is the celestial kingdom. Antagonists are apt to be seen as ridiculous, certainly a comic element, rather than truly evil or truly dangerous. After all, in Mormonism the worst of them can be dispatched with a handshake to identify, and an authoritative command to

depart. Conformity and pragmatism are guiding values. Pragmatism includes saving souls temporarily as well as spiritually, and conformity sometimes leads us to expect collective salvation as a Tenth Ward Relief Society or our chapter of Lambda Delta Sigma. We tend to be fiercely protective of our image as if we all had the same one, and the same destiny—to be clones of God.

In the comic vision the past can be redone. In fact, pastness is cancelled out as if the world were timeless and new beginnings could occur again and again. (Repentance is the mechanism whereby an evil heart can become pure as the driven snow.) In this realm life is under control. We make of it what we will, despite undesirable genetic loading, adverse rearing, bad luck, or conniving persons. If things go well, it is because we recognized the requirements correctly and obeyed the right laws or pushed the right buttons. They brought us a job promotion, protection on our recent airplane flight, or just the right spouse (chosen, of course, in the premortal existence). Adherence to true principles promises us kids without birth defects, who say please and thank you and put their toys away.

Depression can be overcome by praying and reading the scriptures, presumably selected at random since we are seldom told just what chapters and verses have antidepressant effect. The process of scripture reading rather than the content of what is read seems for some a panacea, especially if read with a modest dose of aloe vera. One version of the comic view says that a person living with his religion will never have to see a psychiatrist. Putting on a happy face will suffice, and there is ample reason to do so, for life is a pleasure. Even drudgery is pleasure. Witness the aids for the simple drudgery of washing dishes: Fab for fabulous, Vel for marvelous, Lux, Joy and Cheer.

One of the oldest versions of the comic vision is found in the frame story around the book of Job. In the last chapter, all is restored to Job as if his suffering were thereby nullified. Even the number of children he lost was matched by an equal number of new children, leaving him with no quantitative cause to mourn. The writer of the frame clearly could face none of the tragedy and irony in the book of Job and, therefore, made the task unnecessary by adding the comic ending. Dr. Hunsaker draws our attention to a modern version of the comic, the success seminar, wherein greatness of character can be achieved by the power of positive thinking and daring to leverage one's income. The formula is that the will inevitably creates the deed.

We have scriptural support for the comic vision: "There is a law irrevocably decreed, in Heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which our blessings are predicated—and when we obtain a blessing from God it is by

obedience to that law upon which it is predicated" (D&C 130:20-21) and "I, the Lord, am bound when you do what I say . . ." (D&C 82:10).

What advantages does the comic vision provide?

1. One is spared the agony of choice. Right exists and is made known through the Spirit.

2. One is assured of exaltation—"passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being able to give them the key words, the signs and tokens . . ." (Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 416) if one is willing to do what is required to learn them.

3. One is comforted by the assurance that there is a divine purpose in every event. Whatever happens will ultimately be for the good. Our task is to make it so. The prime example is, of course, the funeral message from someone taken by death too early. We make sense of the unexpected death of a young mother by saying, "God had greater need of her than her children did." And, after all, the parting is only temporary.

What are its disadvantages?

1. To be spared the agony of choice is not the divine purpose. It leaves us vulnerable to one who has all the answers. The first one who wanted to spare us from choice was banished from God's presence and his second estate. Reliance on the Spirit to choose the right for us may lead to rather breezy conceptions of both the Spirit and the right. I am aware of one man who knew by the Spirit whether on any given trip to the grocery store, Cheerios or Corn Flakes were right.

2. Exaltation can easily become a reward for cumulative points, placing those who seek it at Kohlberg's stage II of moral development, on par with young children. At stage II, motivation is pleasure of reward or fear of punishment. Contrast working to earn a great reward with C.S. Lewis' observation that "every time you make a choice you are turning a central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different than what it was before, and taking your life as a whole with all your innumerable choices all your life long you are slowly turning the central thing either into a heavenly creature or a hellish creature; either into a creature that is in harmony with God, and with other creatures, and with itself, or else one that is in a state of war and hatred with God, and with his fellow-creatures, and with itself . . . Each of us at each moment is progressing to the one state or the other" (*Mere Christianity*, p.86).

3. To say that all events have a divine purpose, that things happen because it is the will of God, requires that we redefine good in order to avoid the conclusion that our God is a monster-god. To say that his ways are not our ways and, therefore, what sounds bad or evil now will ultimately be recognized as for the good, eliminates the

distinction between good and evil. It holds no more persuasion than its converse, that what appears to be good to us now will ultimately turn out to be evil. To say that what God does is, by definition, good, merely says that He is what He is and that He wills what He wills. The same can be said for any other creature in the universe.

4. To adopt the notion of a timeless world in which there are always second chances trivializes our behavior. It undermines the very idea the comic vision wants to promote—that what we do makes a difference.

In summary, laughter and merriment are not essential to the comic vision. Security and gratification are. The comic vision seeks a happy ending.

Defining the romantic vision is a more elusive task than that of clarifying any of the other mythic views of reality. Here are some of the words writers have used: Attractive, unselfish, exuberant, ornamental, unreal, realistic, irrational, materialistic, feudal, heroic, mysterious, soulful, noteworthy, revolutionary, bombastic, picturesque, nordic, informal, formalistic, emotional, fanciful and stupid. And here are a few definitions:

A desire to find the infinite within the finite, to affect the synthesis of the real and the unreal, the expression in art of what in theology would be called pantheistic enthusiasm (Fairchild).

An effort to escape from actuality (Waterhouse).

The renaissance of wonder (Watts-Dunton).

In general a thing is romantic when, as Aristotle would say, it is wonderful rather than probable; in other words when it violates the normal sequence of cause and effect in favor of adventure. The whole movement is filled with the praise of ignorance, and of those who still enjoy its appreciable advantages—the savage, the peasant, and above all, the child (Babbett).

A movement to honor whatever Classicism rejected. Classicism is the regularity of good sense—perfection in moderation; Romanticism is disorder in the imagination—the range of incorrectness, a blind wave of . . . egotism (Brunetiere).

Romanticism is, at any time, the art of the day; Classicism is the art of the day before (Stendahl).

Romanticism is the art of offering people the literary works likely to give them the greatest possible pleasure, having due regard to the habits and beliefs of the time. Classicism, on the other hand, offers them the literature that gave the greatest possible pleasure to their great-grandparents.

In the early Middle Ages, "romance" denoted the new vernacular languages in distinction to the learned Latin. So "enromancier" meant to transplant or compose books in the vernacular.

The word "romantic" came to mean "captivating to the imagination."

The romantic vision looks toward the moral transformation of humanity.

Such a book was called “romanze,” “roman,” or “romance.” These popular stories were usually tales of love, adventure, and the vagaries of the imagination. Their characteristics came to be associated with the word itself. Romance implied chivalry, high-flown sentiment, improbability, exaggeration, unreality—elements opposed to a sober, rational view of life. During the Age of Reason in the 18th century, in a world ruled by order and absolute truth, the word “romantic” was used pejoratively to denote false, fictitious, imaginary, or absurd in a climate that prized correctness above imagination.

It wasn't until the end of the century, when the old romances were rehabilitated along with an interest in the Middle Ages, that the word began to recover status and acquire new meaning. Romantic could then mean “captivating to the imagination,” and an appeal to feeling. It denoted a turn of mind to look favorably on things of an imaginative and emotional kind. “Romantic” and its associated words, “originality”, “creativity”, and “genius” represented a basic reorientation of the total view of man and nature. It espoused a subjective philosophy where heretofore there had been Newtonian physics. Fichte, for example, asserted that the very existence and shape of the world depended entirely upon the vision of the individual imagination. The table or the tree is *because* and *as* we see it. When William Blake was asked “when the sun rises, do you not see a round disk of fire somewhat like a guinea?” He replied, “Oh no, no. I see an Innumerable company of the Heavenly hosts crying ‘Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty’ ”. The historical center of gravity of the romantic movement—the romantic rebellion, in fact— was the period from 1790 to 1830, a time that included the French Revolution and, in western New York, a religious revolution. The search in both of these revolutions and the object of the romantic vision is an ideal society. It anticipates mankind morally transformed to a state of total political and economic equality. It offers an intoxicating sense that now everything is possible in the new society of virtue and happiness. The wolf will dwell with the lamb and the leopard with the kid. Isaiah's peaceable kingdom may give way, though, to the apocalyptic violence of the book of Revelations.

Restoration through revelation and angelic visitation, the Messianic kingdom in Missouri, the elevation of free agency above all ideals, the doctrine of the deific potential in man, prayer and faith as a more sure way of knowing than reason are all things that required a romantic epoch to come about. The romantic vision is one of life as a quest or series of quests, a perilous, individualistic, heroic journey. The goal combines qualities such as mystery, grandeur, sacredness, love, and fusion with a higher power or principle such as virtue, honor, or beauty. The quest ends, after crucial struggle, with individual exaltation. The quest is like a wish-fulfilling daydream. Ideals are

represented by virtuous heroes and heroines. The threats to reaching these goals are embodied in villains. The standard American cowboy movie is a fine example. Individuality is idealized. The American dream is available to all. Self expression is equated with triumph. Impulsive behavior is considered natural or “with it”. The motto may be “do your own thing”. (These traits may have had more acceptance in the 19th Century Mormonism than the 20th, especially 60's and 70's Mormonism where such individuality as growing a beard made one suspect.)

What are the advantages of the romantic vision?

1. One works out one's salvation with fear and trembling. It is truly possible to be the master of one's fate; the captain of one's soul.
2. Altruism is fostered. Truly Christian behavior rather than perfunctory religiosity may be the result.
3. New thoughts and ideas that challenge tradition are not only allowed but desired.
4. A whole realm of experience, subjective and emotional, for which objective science has no use, is accepted as valid. The burning of the bosom rather than Central American archeology is likely to be the source of one's testimony.

What are its dangers?

1. Challenging the existing order to usher in a millennial reign gives religious sanction to a plethora of crackpot ideas, especially adolescent defiance in the guise of freedom, ranging from a tax protest to the horror of the Lafferty's. Romanticism is the view of, among others, the lunatic fringe.
2. Where the world is comprised of heroes and villains, too many of life's miscues and misdeeds can be projected onto villains. Satan or his secular equivalent, the socialist, is under every bed and behind every tree. A life free to feel in full range may feel mainly the tension of suspicion.
3. With emphasis on the validity of feeling, fact may be given short shrift, discounted as the arm of the flesh or the mere learning of men. Salvation through divine acceptance may be expected, but salvation through understanding cannot be.
4. As one seeks enlightenment, the seeking may displace the light. We are reminded of the Anglican bishop in C.S. Lewis' allegory of a bus ride to the outskirts of Heaven. Offered the opportunity to enter the presence of God, the bishop declines for lack of time and interest. What he must do, you see, is be home Friday to lead a discussion on what God must be like. Experiential therapy groups and Sonia Johnson's crusade strike me as modern-day situations in which the quest may have become holier than the grail. Experience sooner or later becomes a

failed quest as we discover the goals were ambiguous, elusive, and costly. The search may go on, but it becomes a search for meaning, understanding and insight rather than the ideal. The dragons may become recognizable as internal rather than "out there" i.e. one's memories, fears and weaknesses are the real obstacles to our personal striving for Utopia.

How must reality seem to the characters of this brief interchange? A pedant who beheld Solon weeping for the death of a son said to him, "Why do you weep thus, if weeping avails nothing?" and the sage answered him, "Precisely for that reason—because it does not avail." This is the tragic vision of reality. Most who espouse this view more readily give lip service to it than feel deeply imbued with it. And tragedy is more readily felt than defined. Horace Walpole said, "Life is a comedy for those who think and a tragedy for those who feel." Those imbued with a tragic sense are imbued with wisdom rather than knowledge. Those who put reason above faith die comically, while those die tragically who put faith above reason. Tragedy implies disaster without prospect for recovery. The word conveys a nobility lacking in such similar words as "sadness," "wretchedness," or "misery." Its minimal requirement is a persistent awareness that human destiny is affected by uncontrollable factors. Awareness of a tragic fate and apathy and despair accompanying that awareness rest on the violent contrast between an individual's aspirations and his possibilities of fulfilling them, the unbridgeable gap between desire and achievement.

The tragic vision involves a deep responsiveness to the great dilemmas, paradoxes, ambiguities, and uncertainties pervading human existence. It manifests itself in alertness to the inescapable dangers, terrors, mysteries and absurdities. It requires one to recognize the elements of defeat in victory and of victory in defeat; the pain in pleasure and the pleasure in pain; the guilt in apparently justified action; the loss of opportunity entailed by every choice; the inevitable clashes between passion and duty; the necessity for acting on insufficient evidence; the burden of unanswerable questions and incomprehensible suffering while learning and changing.

The tragic sense of time is linear, a concept contributed by the ancient Hebrews in contrast to their Canaanite neighbors whose circular view of time is seen, even today, in such Eastern religious doctrines as reincarnation. Linear time is continuous and irreversible. Choices once made are made forever; a second chance can never be the same as the first; life is progression toward death. The protagonist finds his match not in the obstructing forces of society as in the comic vision, nor in the villains and dragons of

the romantic vision, but within himself. He is divided within himself, some of his rights, values, duties, and opportunities inevitably clashing with others, his choices always entailing sacrifice, ambivalence, and remorse. Seeing oneself as a tragic hero is not to idealize oneself. We are all caught up in tragic situations simply by being alive, growing up in the world, and trying to make our way in it.

Contrary to popular usage, tragic does not necessarily imply unhappy or disastrous outcomes. Much of one's suffering is neither inevitable or necessary. The miseries of everyday life do not ordinarily impinge on us simply with their own force. Permanent, unconscious conflicts from our past, fixed in a linear concept of time, render us vulnerable to the advance of age, disharmonies in marriage, the death of loved ones, and the limits of a career. Recognizing how unresolved and unconsciously stored feelings about our past sabotage our daily activity transforms us from passive victims to active contributors to our pain and struggle in a given situation. However, the realization that we have participated decisively in our fate should heighten our sense both of choice and of responsibility.

Considering religion from a tragic view, let us review the tradition of the Corn King, a primitive fertility rite. A king is appointed for a fixed term to oversee the growth of the crops which sustain his community. He is given the honor of his standing. At the end of his term he is ceremonially slaughtered and his blood sprinkled on the fields as an offering to the mysterious forces which control new growth and quality of crops. A new king is chosen to be honored and then sacrificed in his turn. In cultures which do not live by bread alone, the king will represent the best the community has to offer—physically vigorous and hence of value for labor and war, but also personifying the power and aspirations of the community, a hero who is an outstanding specimen to propitiate the gods by dying for his people. The more he suffers the more acceptable the offering. A token of abasement of the highest in the community to a still higher power, he is intended to buy freedom from suffering for the whole community through compensation.

The suffering of the community may be deserved. The gods may be offended by transgression of some moral law (a new quality for gods since most gods of ancient people lack the morals of the people themselves). Humans experience the guilt of their offense and desire to be discharged from it. The transgressions of the community are symbolically transferred to the sacrificial king. He goes to his death with his excellence and their sin, the shame of the community as well as with their pride, to expiate as well as propitiate. The king is hero and scapegoat, the essence of tragic ambivalence. Most tragedies culminate in the end of an order (in this case the corn king's reign) and the birth of

People with a tragic vision are imbued with wisdom rather than knowledge.

The failure of attempts to lead a Christian life provides the opening for tragedy.

a new one.

The Crucifixion is the focal point of Western religion, the act of atonement for the sins of humanity. The incarnation of all of the finest qualities of mankind, raised to divine attributes, can be found in Christ the King, the supreme happening for which the Corn King tradition can have served as a type and symbol. Jesus, however, was not a tragic figure nor crucifixion a tragic event, because death wasn't the end. Resurrection to a new order follows. Even the corn king's community was redeemed for another year. Therefore the event is not a disaster but a triumph. Every Christian martyrdom has its promise of a happy ending. If not so, death and suffering would be final and expiation futile. Crucifixion could be tragic only if it were ineffectual. Tragedy would exist in the community's recognition that the act would not save them, and now they were defenseless. The protagonist would say, "My God, my God, why has Thou forsaken me?" If Christ's true last words were these—his mission would have failed, and he would be a tragic hero. It is the same with the corn kings. If they were reluctant victims or lost their convictions their reign would be tragedy. To qualify as tragic, the corn king had to move against the beliefs of the community—had to rebel or be weak or not worthy to be king, had to be imperfect.

The imperfect Christian's life is where tragedy enters in. He is aware of the virtues but cannot bring himself to practice them. For the traditional Christian, Original Sin is the taint. His dilemma is the impossible choice between his sinful nature and morality. Aware of divine law but unable to obey it, he is in the position of the fox—knowing that according to human law his activities are pernicious but unable to live any other way. The fox's choices are these: 1) He can continue as is and be neither moral or tragic. 2) He can continue the way he lives but despair of his sinfulness, a highly tragic situation. 3) He can try to change his diet to vegetarian—the secular thing to do but with the tragic potential in his high risk of backsliding. 4) He can throw himself on the mercy of the farmer and hope to become adopted to his household. If his plan fails, it is tragic. If it succeeds, there is a happy ending and no tragedy. Christianity wouldn't regard the fox as incurably pernicious but rather that he couldn't rise above his carnivorous habits, himself. Optimistic Christianity could say help is available even to the foxes among us. Pessimistic Christianity would say the farmer's response is uncertain, based on principles the fox doesn't understand. Some foxes are saved without effort of their own, it seems, and some are not. The doctrine of grace exists to meet these pessimistic qualifications.

The tragic element of religion is based on uncertainty of human destiny and uncertainty of

divine response. The final disaster isn't death but the permanent banishment from life and happiness. The tragedy in this possibility must involve not only the unpredictable but also people who command respect and sympathy. The hardened sinner's or villain's destruction can be considered deserved and even desirable. The tragic character is the man who has a chance for exaltation but fails to make it good. We have an ineradicable taint not by virtue of foxhood or manhood but because that is the nature of the world and our lives in it.

At the 1980 Sunstone Symposium, Janice Allred outlined what taints Mormons, who see themselves as free from the taint of the original sin. First, Adam discovered for all of us that commandments conflict, for example, when one in authority requires something of us which, to us, seems wrong. Second, man is egocentric, thinking of himself foremost. Who would injure a fellow human being if we inevitably felt the pain of that injury ourselves? Third, man's lack of power causes sin either in his grasping for more or in limiting his acting on his good intentions. Fourth, lack of knowledge leads to sin as we fall short of knowing how best to reach a goal, or of recognizing which form of help is best for another, or realizing which other we should help, given our limited time and resources. Fifth, the interdependence of mankind is such that responsibility for misdeeds is impossible to apportion. How can we avoid, for example, the sin of feeding our kids milk and honey while kids half a world away are starving? The Mormon view is a tragic one without regard for original sin if it postulates the weakness of man and difficulty in understanding and obeying a divine law. Yet, we should speak not of man's tragic destiny, but of the tragic potential in man's destiny.

What advantages are there to the tragic view of reality?

1. A higher level of moral motivation is fostered—and required. Exaltation is not something earned and given as a reward. It is something learned, into which we gradually evolve.

2. Questions don't always require answers, nor does our faith. We don't have to rationalize for God or for ourselves, that is, we don't have to find good reasons rather than real reasons for what was done. Everything does not have to make sense. At the funeral of our previously mentioned young mother we may find there is no comfort in the explanation that God had greater need of her and took her home. We may find great comfort in the knowledge that, because she died, she went home.

3. The danger of losing our faith is less because neither we nor God are fully responsible for whatever takes place.

4. This second estate is as important as the third.

What are its disadvantages?

1. Demoralization and despair are a greater risk. Momentous problems don't have easy—and sometimes—any solutions. Sometimes there is nowhere to turn. Good times in the sweet by and by don't satisfy.

2. Happiness, fulfillment, success and conviction are all apt to be seen as suspect. The fear of being deceived may lead to the fate of being denied each of these.

3. The danger of losing our faith is less because neither we nor God are fully responsible for whatever takes place.

4. This second estate is as important as the third.

The ironic vision of reality has ancient Greek origins. Eironeia is an abstraction from a character in the earliest comedy. The comedy dealt with a conflict (agon) between two characters, the Alazon and the Eiron. The Alazon is the braggart, the pretender to be more than he is, the pompous fool; the Eiron, his antagonist, is the shy, shrewd dissimulator who poses to be less than he is. The conflict ends with the pricking of Alazon's bubble, the triumph of the Eiron. Irony begins in conflict between pretense and reality, perceiving the distance between them. It is, of course, not confined to Greek drama. Charlie Chaplin is an excellent example of an Eiron, a little, flat-footed nobody at the mercy of any power that came along, but in the end, the unwitting victor over everyone. For a modern day Alazon, consider Donald Duck, pompous and impressed with himself, subject to humiliating defeat agains and again, but always ready to puff himself up once more.

Yet irony involved more serious stuff than surprising changes of fortune by slipping on a banana peel. The ironic vision seeks some way to comprehend such incomprehensibles as the Old Testament deviations from the high form of ethical monotheism we usually find therein. Yahweh punishes innocent men who touch his ark or look into it. He killed 70,000 Israelites because David, who offended by numbering them, prefers that course to three months of exile under pursuit by his enemies. Because of the past sin of Saul against the Gibeonites, He sent a severe famine of three years, and his wrath was appeased only by hanging seven innocent descendants of the offender (bear in mind that the Old Testament treats the family as a moral unit, all accountable for the guilt of one and, therefore, all punishable to punish one). God hardened the heart of Pharaoh and then punished the Egyptians for that hardness. He sent a lying spirit to induce King Ahab to wage war in which thousands of Jews were destroyed. His power is presumably what allowed Elisha to

curse 42 small boys by having two she-bears tear them up for taunting the prophet with an epithet the equivalent of, "Hey, baldy!"

The story of David, the Warrior King, is replete with irony. "In the spring of the year, the time when kings go forth to war, David sent Joab and his retainers and all Israel. And they despoiled the Ammonites and laid siege to Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem" (II Samuel 11:1). A warrior king like David, while his army is out to war, stays home to lust after Bathsheba, whose husband is off to war to serve his king. He then becomes so concerned with the appearance of right, the connecting of Bathsheba's ensuing pregnancy to her husband, that he does all manner of wrong to get Uriah home to lie with his wife. Uriah, whom we expect would much rather be home with his wife than off to war, destroys himself with his fierce loyalty to the right and to David who has caused the ultimate in disloyalty in Bathsheba. David arranges Uriah's death on the battlefield, takes the confirming news casually, and rationalizes his own guilt with a statement, "Do not let this matter trouble you, for the sword devours now this one, now that one" (verse 25). Now David's respect for custom is in marked contrast to his previous disrespect for it. He lets Bathsheba finish her mourning before making her an honest woman. Appearances are fine and everyone is happy—except Yahweh. He denounces David through his oracle, Nathan, with the story of the rich man with the whole flocks taking the poor man's single ewe. The incongruity between what is and what ought to be is perceptible to any reader, but not to the great king who must be told outright and bluntly he is the rich man. His indignation against the rich man just prior to Nathan's denunciation is an ironic contrast to his lack of indignation toward himself. He manages to stay one jump ahead of his conscience throughout. The story presents one more ironic touch. The child of this illicit union dies. David, upon hearing the news, immediately puts off his penitence. His servants are amazed. He justifies himself. He fasted, wept, and prayed while the child was alive on the chance that Yahweh would change his mind. "But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again?" (verse 23). With the illegitimate child, David did all he could to keep him alive. With the illegitimate union, he did all he could short of using his own weapon to see Uriah dead. Instead, he used the enemy's weapon for his purpose, the sword of the Ammonite. With injustice, David succeeded, with mercy he failed. And he is the leader of the people who, while the Greeks were giving the world its science, gave the world its conscience.

Irony, then, is the detached awareness of the chasm between what "is" and what "ought". We find it is the social order in this sketch by Sarah Cleghorn:

He remembered turning the pages of a great book, with the secret of life on the last page.

It is serious business to challenge comfortable beliefs and established traditions.

*The golf links lie so near the mill
That almost every day
The laboring children can look out
And see the men at play.*

We find it in the devotions of a married couple in O. Henry's *The Gift of The Magi*. A young man sells his watch to buy combs for his wife's long hair which she has sold to buy him a watch chain. We find it in the complexities of the age of technology: "When all else fails, read the directions". We find it in the ethics of our neighbors, "Kill a commie for Christ". We find it in the tragic awareness of our religious past: Frye calls the archetype of the incongruously ironic the exclusion of Christ, the perfect innocent victim, from society. We find it in the comic awareness of our religious history: Houseman opines:

*Malt does more than Milton can
To justify God's ways to man.*

The ironic vision of reality is the readiness to seek out internal contradictions, ambiguities, and paradoxes. It resembles the tragic vision in this respect. The difference is in their aims. The tragic vision seeks the momentous implications of events and people, valuing deep involvement and great crises. The ironic vision aims at detachment to keep things in perspective, taking nothing for granted, readily spotting the anti-thesis to any thesis. It challenges the largeness, urgency and meaningfulness the tragic vision tries to find, and challenges even more the pretension of the romantic and the paradisaical focus of the comic. It seems to be in the service of standing completely apart from experience where it can take nothing too seriously. Yet it is serious business to challenge comfortably held beliefs, established traditions, and cherished delusions. One recalls here the fate of Socrates and of Joseph Smith.

The ironic vision may be turned inward on oneself. It is self-deprecatory and self-ridiculing so as not to take any particular aspect of oneself too seriously for one's own good. Irony says that things are neither so bad or so good as we would like to have them, and questions whether we even know what is meant by bad and good. Like the tragic vision, the ironic one emphasizes reflective thought and identification of feeling. The comic and romantic visions, by contrast, emphasize action in the world, losing one's self in a cause or a conquest. In the ironic view, every advance is only half as great as it appeared to be, but the same may be said for every defeat. Through the ironic vision, we discover ourselves to be more moral and less moral than we ever thought.

What are its advantages?

There are none because each could be disadvantages as well.

What are its dangers?

There are none because each is also an

advantage.

In summary, the comic vision emphasizes optimism, progress and amelioration of difficulties. The romantic vision is an adventurous quest. The tragic vision stresses deep involvement, inescapable and costly conflict, terror, demonic forces, waste, and uncertainty. The ironic vision stresses detached alertness to the ambiguities, paradoxes and the arbitrariness of absolutes. Christian religion tends to promote the comic and romantic view, though what it really seems to be is about our tragic potential, which is, in itself ironic. Perhaps we could say the spirit of comedy celebrates our capacity to endure our tragic fate, and to acknowledge our good fortune as an active force on our lives every bit as much as our limitations.

Christopher Frye tells of a dream that a friend experienced when under the influence of ether. He dreamed he was turning the pages of a great book, in which he knew he would find, on the last page, the meaning of life. The pages of the book were alternately tragic and comic, and he turned page after page, his excitement growing, not only because he was approaching the answer but because he couldn't know, until he arrived, on which side of the book the final page would be. At last it came: The universe opened up to him in a hundred words; and they were uproariously funny. He came back to consciousness crying with laughter, remembering everything. He opened his lips to speak. It was then that the great and comic answer (tragically) plunged back out of his reach.

I have not, at least intentionally, argued for the primacy of any one of these four mythic visions of reality over the others. Each are legitimate views around which one can construct one's life. Each serves one of us better, the other not so well. Consider the concluding story by Somerset Maugham, representing three of the four mythic visions, which serves its character the best:

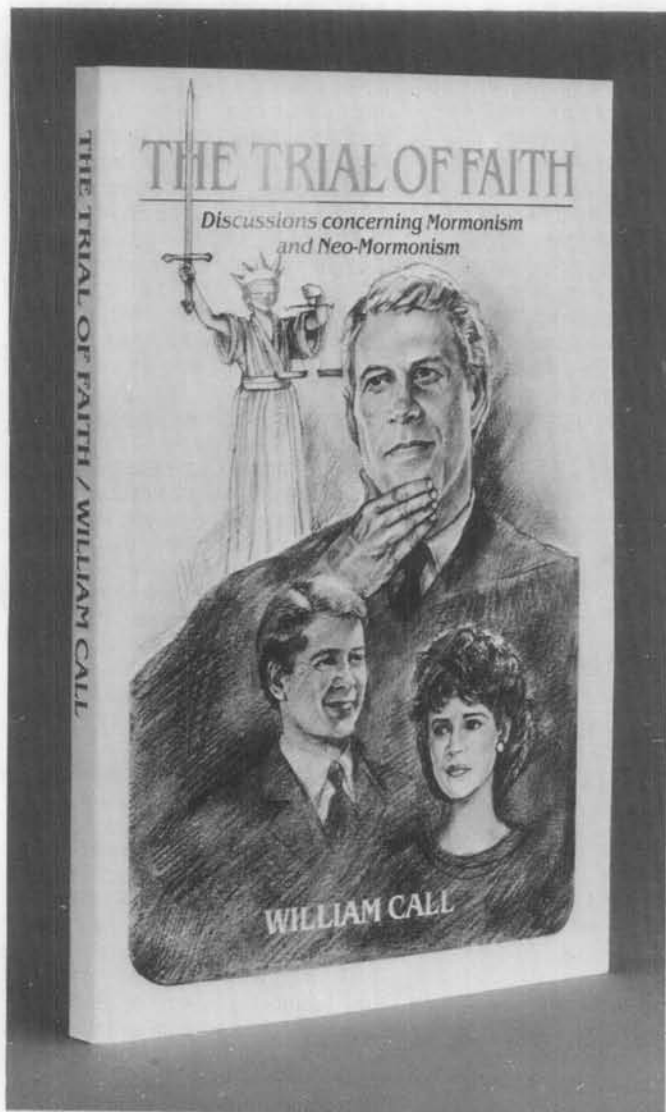
There was a merchant in Baghdad who sent his servant to market to buy provisions, and in a little while the servant came back, white and trembling, and said, "Master, just now when I was in the market place I was jostled by a woman in the crowd, and when I turned I saw it was Death that jostled me. She looked at me and made a threatening gesture; now, lend me your horse and I will ride away from this city and avoid my fate. I will go to Sammarra and there Death will not find me." The merchant lent him his horse, and the servant mounted it and he dug his spurs in its flank and as fast as the horse could gallop he went. Then the merchant went down to the market place and he saw Death standing in the crowd and he came to her and said, "Why did you make a threatening gesture to my servant when you saw him this morning?" "That was not a threatening gesture," Death said, "it was only a start of surprise. I was astonished to see him in Baghdad, for I had an appointment with him tonight in Sammarra."

LOUIS MOENCH is a psychiatrist in private practice and an assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of Utah.

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Prior to the court a family friend, who has come to "set John straight" concerning his religious views, joins the Johnsons in a series of theological discussions where John presents the doctrinal basis upon which he believes Mormonism's revolutionary advance should be continued. In the end, the friend helps defend John at the Church trial and the stake president must then struggle with the question of John's revolutionary doctrines.

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NEWS AND

NEWS

Record Turnout at Symposium Eight

The eighth annual Sunstone Theological Symposium, held last August at the Salt Lake Sheraton, attracted a crowd of about 1500 people, who came to hear discussions on topics as varied as the place of polygamy in Mormon doctrine, the significance of the Book of Mormon, and the place of homosexuals in the contemporary Church.

At the opening session a panel addressed the question of the historical accuracy of the Book of Mormon. Salt Lake attorney Blake Ostler described the book as "an ancient document mediated through the mind of a modern prophet," arguing that Joseph's own background and experiences had played a significant role in the process of translating the plates.

Richard Sherlock, an assistant professor of philosophy at Utah State University, said that the Book of Mormon's historical accuracy was

not the main point at issue. The real question, he said, is whether the Book of Mormon is the revealed word of God. "If it is the word of God," asserted Sherlock, "then questions of historical setting and accuracy are superfluous."

High Nibley, BYU professor emeritus of ancient studies, spoke on the Book of Mormon and its apocalyptic message for 20th-century America. "There are nations that were old when Lehi left Jerusalem and still survive today," he said. "But this is not so in the New World, where no high civilization has survived." He then reviewed the book's continual message to repent or be destroyed, and concluded by outlining ten steps its people took toward destruction, beginning with leaving the law of consecration and becoming privatized, continuing through becoming polarized and ending, as Professor Nibley put it, by being "pulverized."

Nibley noted that "the most significant thing about polarization is that it puts an end to any thought of repentance in which lies any hope for survival and peace, and leads in the end to the Book of Mormon phenomenon which until recently I thought was quite fantastically impossible, namely the destruction of both contestants in war."

Another aspect of Joseph Smith's prophetic calling was addressed by Dr. C. Jess Groesbeck in his paper "Joseph Smith and His Individuation." At one of the symposium's best attended sessions, Groesbeck explored the ways that Joseph's attitudes toward women and marriage might have been colored by his childhood experiences. According to Groesbeck, Joseph might have regarded the commandment to practice plural marriage as an Abrahamic testing of his spiritual commitment. Joseph, he said, was "confronted with a command to do what he feared most. At the same time he had desires toward multiple relationships, complicated by a wife who opposed it all." Groesbeck felt that his research reconciled some apparently contradictory aspects of Joseph Smith's complex personality. "RLDS Church members believe Joseph Smith was a monogamist," said Groesbeck, "while the LDS insist he was a polygamist. In a historical sense I believe they are both right." He concluded that although Joseph felt torn over his practice of plural marriage until the day he died, he triumphed in the sense that he remained steadfast in his commitment to God.

The difficult topic of homosexuality was addressed at two sessions of this year's symposium. Several perspectives on the issue were presented at a panel discussion which included two doctors who had counseled homosexuals, the mother of a gay son, and two representatives from Affirmation, a support group for gay Latter-day Saints. Dr. Robert Card, who had worked with many gay Mormons in an attempt to change their orientation, gave an honest account of his experience. "I



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REVIEWS

can't say that I've met with much success," he said bluntly. He said that at present he tries to help his gay patients to achieve goals they set for themselves, whether that be changing their orientation or coming to terms with their homosexuality. Dr. Jan Stout concurred, and described the ways that his own perceptions of homosexuality had changed over the past fifteen years. He outlined the growing evidence suggesting that an individual's sexual orientation is not a matter of conscious choice. Other panelists included Margot Cheney, who gave a moving account of coming to terms with her son's homosexuality, and Gary Booher and Ron Kershaw, two members of Affirmation who described their experiences growing up as gay Mormons and their struggle to reconcile these two facets of their lives.

Another perspective on homosexuality in the Church was presented by Carol Lynn Pearson who related her experience of marrying a homosexual, having a family, divorcing her husband and then later caring for him until his death from AIDS. Pearson urged greater compassion for gay church members. "We must recognize that these strange people doing these strange things are not just someone over there," she said. "They are ours, they are our sons, our brothers, and once in a while our husbands."

The closing banquet on Saturday night featured a talk by Edward Kimball, a professor at the J. Reuben Clark Law School at BYU, on the administration of his father Spencer W. Kimball. The most interesting aspects of Kimball's talk dealt with the more personal side of his father's term of office. His account of President Kimball's last few years was particularly moving. Following his last round of surgery to relieve pressure on the brain, President Kimball never fully recovered his earlier vigor. "He became blind," reported Kimball, "and somewhat discouraged at being so little able to carry out his responsibilities." Kimball noted that although some people have wondered why his father

continued to serve after he could no longer offer active leadership, by doing so he set an example of humility, faith, and perseverance to the end.

Kimball concluded by recalling that when his father had been president for five years, he once said: "I still wonder what the Lord had in mind, making a little country boy like me [President of the Church], unless He knew I didn't have any sense and

would keep on working." Kimball's mother, Camilla Eyring Kimball, was also able to attend and hear this tribute to her late husband.

The general experience of the Symposium participants was highly positive. The program offered many opportunities to affirm one's faith and to challenge the intellect, and left most of those who attended looking forward to Symposium Nine in August 1987.

UPDATE

By Maxine Hanks

New Director For Smith Institute

"I don't know who makes those decisions, I just know they did me a favor and I'm very happy about the situation," remarked Leonard Arrington, about his recent release as director of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History at Brigham Young University. Arrington was replaced 31 July

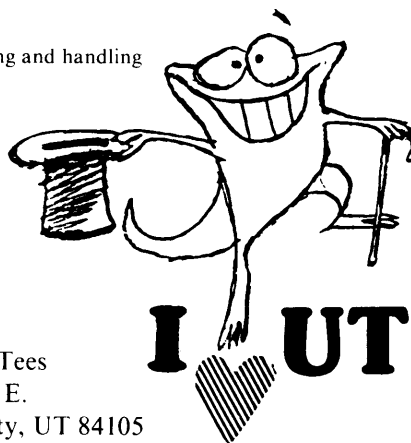
1986 by Ronald K. Esplin, a fellow institute research historian. Esplin has worked at the institute along with Arrington and six other research historians since it was created out of the Church Historian's office in 1980.

"Any one of us could have done the job," said Esplin, "but I'm glad

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to do it for a time. I'm glad the transition was a smooth one; there has always been talk about the future of the Institute, and we're all happy to be able to continue."

Esplin has a bachelor's degree from the University of Utah, a master's from the University of Virginia, and a doctorate from BYU. From 1972 to 1980 he worked for the LDS Historical Department. Esplin's publications deal with 19th-century Mormon history, with emphasis on Kirtland, Nauvoo, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young.

The change was made for a number of reasons. "I requested the change for months," said Arrington. "Now I'm relieved of the administrative side of my job—ordering supplies, paying the bills. I don't enjoy doing that at all. It's too bureaucratic—I just write books."

"BYU has a policy of rotating department chairs, deans and institution directors. Our staff had been aware that a change was coming," said Esplin.

"Leonard was an exception to the University retirement policy," explained Stan L. Albrecht, dean of the College of Family, Home and Social Sciences. "He was one of only two BYU professors over the age of 65 who were in administrative positions. Leonard is scheduled to retire next July, so we felt it would be best for the institute if we had a year of transition wherein we could still have Leonard's input."

"I'm not retired!" assured Arrington. "I'm still faculty and I'm working full-time on six projects. Retirement is what happens to old people. I'm young—I'm only 45 or so."

According to Albrecht, who recommended Ron Esplin to BYU president Jeffrey Holland, Esplin was the logical choice for the position. "The position of director is actually a half-time position. We lacked the full-time position and the resources necessary to offer this job to an outsider. Ron had already been helping manage administrative affairs for the institute for two or three years. There was strong support among the group for Ron."

Regarding the future of the institute, Esplin said, "I don't expect major changes; we will develop as time goes on—We're democratic here. We all feel strongly about what we can accomplish here, and we feel we can continue best in our present structure."

The current major projects of the institute historians include: Leonard Arrington, history of Mormon historians and two biographies; Ronald Esplin, the 1840 mission of the twelve apostles to England; Ronald Walker, Heber J. Grant biography; Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Eliza R. Snow diaries, poetry and biography; Carol Cornwall Madsen, Emmeline Wells biography; William Hartley, 1861 immigration to Utah; Richard Jensen, emigration from Europe.

LDS Poet Meg Munk Dead at 42

Margaret Rampton Munk, scholar, writer, musician, teacher and friend, died of cancer 7 July 1986 at her home in Silver Spring, Maryland.

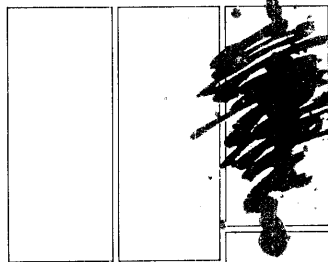
Daughter of former Utah governor Calvin L. Rampton and Lucy Beth Cardon, Meg was a gifted storyteller, a high school journalist and editor of the University of Utah's *Daily Utah Chronicle*. Valedictorian at both her high school and college graduations, Meg received more nominations and honors than any student in her class. She went on to work on a kibbutz in Israel.

Later, while earning her master's and doctorate degrees in government from Harvard University, she developed a strong interest in international issues. At Harvard she also met her husband, Russell Munk.

After graduating from Harvard, Meg taught political science at Sophia University in Tokyo, Japan, the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines and American University in Washington D.C.

A devoutly religious person, active in the Mormon church and mother to three children, Meg never abandoned her writing which revealed a belief that, in every aspect of life, questions are essential. Essayist, poet and short story writer, Meg's work was published in *Dialogue*, *Exponent II* and *Sunstone*. In 1984 she won an honorable mention in *Sunstone's* 1985 D.K. Brown Memorial Fiction Contest; her winning story, "A Proposal" appeared in 1986. She also participated in several *Sunstone* Symposia. A quote from her recent book of poetry *So Far*, illustrates her empathy for humans and love for God:

*"Let me speak
To Thy lost sheep
As one who,
Understanding how
they went astray
Still loves the shepherd."*



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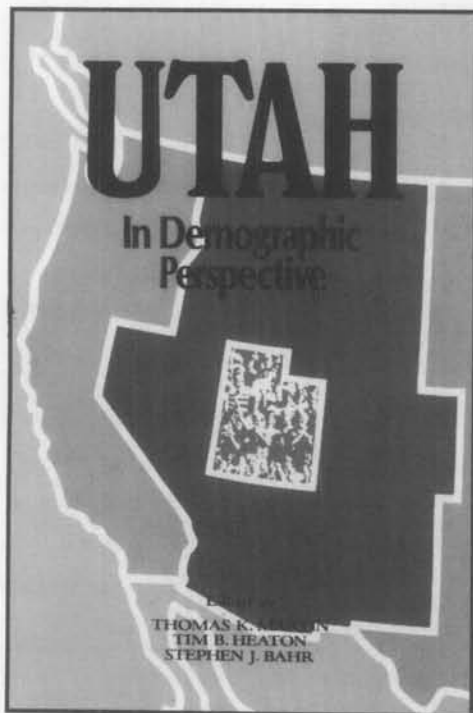
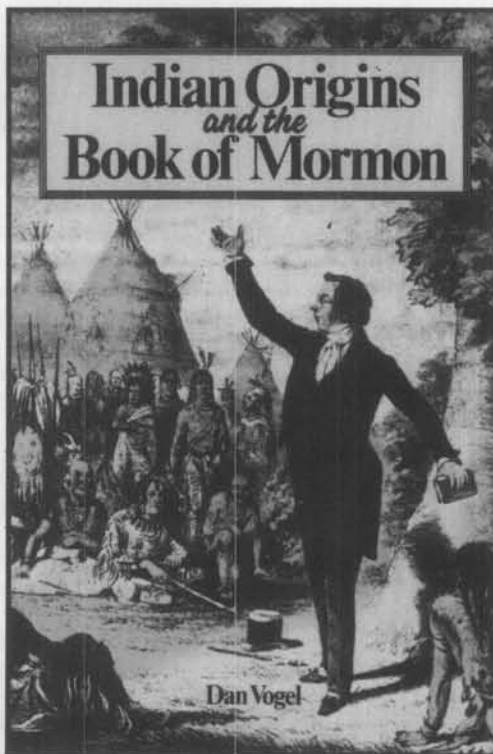
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Prophet in the Promised Land

BRIGHAM YOUNG, AMERICAN MOSES

BY LEONARD J. ARRINGTON

ALFRED A. KNOPF, NEW YORK, 1985, \$24.95

Reviewed by Richard W. Sadler

For more than a century, Brigham Young has waited for a biographer, and finally in Leonard Arrington he has found one. As Arrington notes in his preface (p. xiv), "previous attempts have suffered most frequently from inadequate documentation and the author's preformed bias—either for or against the Mormon leader." *American Moses* paints Brother Brigham with generally favorable brush strokes in large measure from primary source materials which have been recently catalogued. Arrington notes that there are sufficient primary documents to merit several book-length studies of the several facets of Young's career including his career as husband and father, his three decades as church president, his six years as governor of the Utah territory, his six years as superintendent of Indian Affairs, his efforts in colonizing the Great Basin, his business and economic interests, and his theological beliefs and assertions.

This volume stands as Arrington's portrait of the "Essential Brigham" — an enigmatic, complex, strongwilled, practical, hardworking, nineteenth century American religious leader who shaped the destiny of his people only slightly less than did his intimate friend Joseph Smith, Jr., the founding prophet and president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Like Smith, Young's roots were grounded in the soil of Vermont and nurtured in the small towns along the Erie Canal. His upbringing in poor circumstances in the "burned-over district" gave him in part an intense interest in religion. He apprenticed as a carpenter, as a painter, and as a glazier, and later noted that a long day's work was worth "three or four bits" (37½

cents to 50 cents). At age 23 he became a Methodist, and his interest in Mormonism was aroused in 1830 by the Book of Mormon. He was baptized a Mormon in 1832 in his own millpond at Mendon, and immediately ordained an Elder.

For the next twelve years he proved his dedication to Mormonism and Joseph Smith as a missionary and an Apostle. He proved to be one of Joseph's most loyal supporters, and was among the first to participate in the endowment ceremony, plural marriage, and the "Holy Order." When Joseph died in June 1844, Brigham was President of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. He became the new leader of the Nauvoo Saints, but his leadership was not unopposed. Arrington notes Brigham's difficulties with Emma Smith and others who determined to follow other leaders.

Young is remembered best for his efforts as a pioneer—leading the Saints from Illinois across Iowa and eventually to the Great Basin. Then for more than three decades, he encouraged missionary work, the gathering to Zion, and colonization of the Great Basin. Ordained as President and Prophet of the church in December of 1847, Brigham remained outspoken in outlining his relationship with the Quorum of the Twelve, "If this body [the Twelve] is the head of the Church and I am the head of the Quorum [then] I am the mouthpiece and you are the belly." He noted on another occasion, "I do not mean that my tongue shall not offend my brethren. I shall and do want to grow with you. I feel towards the Twelve [the] same as I do my pet young ones, that I could put you in my pockets same as my wives and children. I mean to act according to the Holy Ghost. I want to put you in my pockets so that when I want to

talk with you, I put my hand in my pocket, take you out and talk with you. (Arrington, 155). After his second overland journey to the Great Basin in 1848, Brigham did not leave the west until his death in 1877.

Approximately two-thirds of *American Moses* details Young's activities as church president, Indian agent, territorial governor, father and husband, colonizer, and spokesman for the Kingdom. His commonsense, practical approach touched most aspects of life in the territory. He gave more than 800 speeches and sermons - usually without notes. As he once stated, "I opened my mouth and the Lord filled it." (*Journal of Discourses* 13:211). He stressed hard work, the payment of an honest tithe and the need to go when called as a missionary or to colonize a new community. Some 500 Mormon communities were founded during his lifetime—most at his

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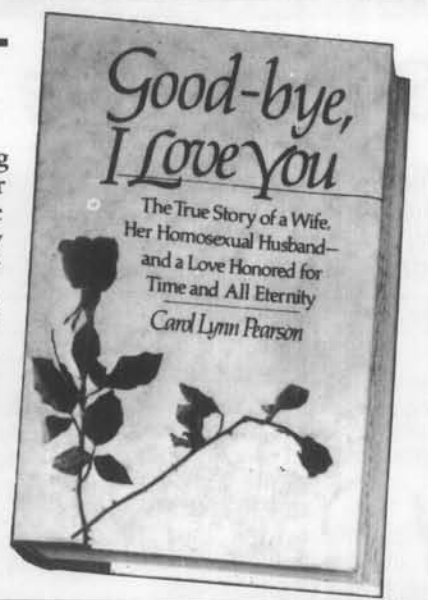
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suggestion and/or with his approval.

Arrington's descriptions of Brigham as a family man are delightful. With 27 wives and 57 children (the first born in 1825 and the last in 1870), family life was an ongoing challenge. Brigham's daily routine as well as his concern about teaching the gospel to his family are illustrated. He constantly urged his family toward good works and chided them when they were not in attendance for evening family prayer. He played with them, swam with them (in modest bathing costume), and attended the theater with them. His many speeches on family relations reflected his own philosophy, "I endeavor to govern my family with kindness. I tell them what is right and I get them to obey without whipping them. If I cannot get my family to do as I wish without quarreling with them, I will not say a word about it" (Arrington, 335).

In a summary chapter titled "The legacy of Brigham Young", Arrington notes that Young's obvious achievements came about as a result of his ever-present and practical decision making. Through his leadership, Brigham reminded his followers that they were the Saints of the Most High, the Chosen of God, and the Camp of Israel. He stressed cooperative ventures among the Saints including the Perpetual Emigrating Company, all of the tasks of pioneering and colonization, and economic cooperatives. He urged day by day work for both temporal and

spiritual salvation. He believed that Mormonism was synonymous with all truth, no matter where it was found. He stated,

Were you to ask me how it was that I embraced "Mormonism", I should answer, for the simple reason that it embraces all truth in heaven and on earth, in the earth, under the earth, and in hell, if there be any truth there. There is not truth outside of it; there is not virtue outside of it; there is nothing holy and honorable outside of it; for, wherever these principles are found among all the creations of God, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and his order and Priesthood embrace them." (Arrington, 405)

He left the indelible stamp of his powerful personality on his followers and their descendants, and this personality which is reflected in his letters, diaries and sermons, continues to perplex historians. Arrington notes Young was sometimes harsh and outspoken, and at times he indulged in exaggeration and hyperbole. He was kindly and benevolent, and yet sarcastic, anti-intellectual, and not averse to the threat of violence. He was a strong leader, but clearly did not rule his people with an iron hand. He chastised church leaders as easily as he did the rank and file, sometimes using direct and offensive language. To Bishops and tithing clerks he wrote of problems such as

When a good, handsome cow has been turned in on tithing, she has been smuggled, and an old three-titted cow—one that would kick the tobacco out of the mouth of a man who went to milk her—

would be turned in to the General Tithing Office, instead of the good cow. (Arrington, 181)

And to a man seeking advice on marriage Brigham wrote,

But you are naturally inclined to be a little wild, and to draw away from settlements to places unpleasant and unsafe. I understand that you have lately been expressing a wish to settle in the Uinta Valley, and until you can tame your thoughts and actions so far as to be willing to live where a family can be safe and have a reasonable opportunity for social enjoyment and improvement, I am of the opinion that it will be altogether best for you to continue to live the life of a hermit for I know of no woman worth a goat who would be willing to agree with your wild unsocial ways for any length of time. (Arrington, 316)

The text, the footnotes, the appendices, and the bibliography are all woven together with mastery to present a Brigham Young made of whole cloth. Such a Brigham has really never appeared before in print. Yet this reader hoped for even a bit more of Brother Brigham. Brigham the colonizer's successes are outlined but little is said about the failures. The Orson Pratt/Brigham Young theological difficulties and the "Adam-God" doctrine are both treated with brevity. Overall, however, the book is finely crafted and interesting to both the scholar and the general reader.

RICHARD W. SADLER is Dean of the College of Social Sciences at Weber State College.

Sin or Bore?

MORMON POLYGAMY: A HISTORY

RICHARD VAN WAGONER
SIGNATURE BOOKS, 1986
307 pp., \$19.95.

By Kerry William Bate

*But what's favour amongst four?
Polygamy may well be held in dread
Not only as a sin, but as a bore*
Byron, "Don Juan," canto VI, xii.

It was a part of Byron's ostentatious affectation to be indifferent to sin and find everything a bore. However, neither his contemporaries nor successors were so charitable toward sin nor apathetic about the exotic. Polygamy is a subject which will never lose its interest, so long as human beings refrain from reproducing asexually and two-parent families remain the norm.

Interest in polygamy made 19th century Utah the empire of the muckraker and the capitol of the pious public confession. Fanny Stenhouse's fascinating but sometimes superficial memoirs spoke for a genre: *Tell It All*. The Victorians, not able to read letters in *Penthouse* promoting exotic sex practices, could at least peruse titillating condemnations of those practices in the pulp magazines of the day.

Unfortunately when the literature surrounding a subject is either sanctimoniously hostile or submissively supportive it becomes difficult to wade through the polemics and come up with a reasonable concept of reality. Witness the present emotional debate over South Africa and Nicaragua.

Despite the reams of paper devoted to Mormon polygamy, the hordes of self-righteous lecturers, authors and defenders—all contaminated by hypocritical and unctuous political posturing—despite all this, until Van Wagoner's book almost nothing had been written about the subject that was comprehensive, objective, and scholarly. Only Kimball Young's hopelessly outdated book, *Isn't One Wife Enough?* came near the mark.

Graced with a cover picture of Joseph F. Smith's enormous family, Van Wagoner's book reminds us that polygamy makes human reproduction seem as simple and pointless as the multiplication of polliwogs, and we know that Van Wagoner could easily have sunk into yet another of the semi-sensuous and superficial hack jobs we have seen in the romance magazines of today or the twaddle of an earlier era. Alex Joseph was invented to pander to that audience.

Instead, Van Wagoner treats the subject dispassionately, and his chapters on pre-Utah polygamy are especially superb. We learn of Joseph Smith's situational morality ("That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another"), and the fact that Smith often married—or attempted to marry—women already wed, is treated matter-of-factly. The polyandrous menage of Zina Huntington-Jacobs-Smith-Young is explained: "Zina was resealed [in 1846] by proxy to the murdered Joseph Smith and in the same session was 'sealed for time' to Brigham Young. Faithful Henry B. Jacobs [her husband] stood as an official witness to both ceremonies."

"Oh how happy I could be if I only could see you and the little children, bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh," Jacobs as late as 1852, "Oh Zina, can I will I ever get you again, answer the question please."

But generally it was the woman who felt like the victim. Orson Pratt, a one-time polygamy opponent, discovered that while women had the right to refuse to give consent to a husband's multiple marriages, those who did so would lose "the privilege of enjoying the society of a husband in eternity. You forfeit your right to an endless increase of immortal lives. And even the children with

which you may be favored in this life will not be entrusted to your charge for eternity; but you will be left in that world without a husband, without a family, without a kingdom."

Polygamy under Joseph Smith was furtive, duplicitous and clearly sensual. Brigham Young, adhering closely to his New England origins, was determined to fulfill Byron's promise that it be a bore. He seemed to personally enjoy the companionship of men, and his attitudes toward women were unapologetically chauvinistic. He counselled John D. Lee to "Get good young Women when you Get them that can be controld," and abhorred the idea of having to engage in courtship. Young "said that the Gentile custom of Sparkification was done away so that the passions may not be aroused and undue advantage taken of the chastity of the Daughters of Zion by these pernicious habits &c.," reported Lee's wife Rachel.

"All their council & wisdom (although there are many good women) don't weigh as much with me as the weight of a Fly Tird," he had informed his brethren even before polygamy was officially admitted and publicly promulgated.

The most fascinating part of the book is Chapter Nine, where the attitudes of women are explored. The conflicts between public support and private anguish are handled with sensitivity and honesty. While Emmeline B. Wells and Martha H. Cannon signed editorials in the *Women's Exponent* arguing that plural marriage "gives women the highest opportunities for self-development, exercise of judgment, and arouses latent faculties," their private lives were far from satisfactory.

"O, if my husband could only love me even a little," lamented Wells, and Cannon wrote to her husband crying, "Oh for a home! A husband of my own . . . A father for my children whom they know . . ." One can't help but wonder if a good many other marriages, unencumbered by polygamy, don't suffer from the same disillusionment. Perhaps our society is realistic in recognizing that, and it explains today's high divorce rate and "serial polygamy."

Other aspects not explored by

Van Wagoner are more problematical but intriguing. What happens to a generation of embittered women? What attitudes do they convey to their children—especially female offspring? I have a thoughtful friend who traces her own mother's bitterness and anger through a multi-generational reaction to polygamy, with the original angry woman having been married at an early age to a very old and doddering man, consequently exploited and ever after disgusted. Her self-loathing was passed on to her daughters and for generations thereafter women in the family viewed themselves as exploited and inferior, hated each other and

despised the men they were forced to accept as their superiors.

Later chapters detail the eventual Mormon surrender of polygamy, contrasting the public and private positions of such leaders as Joseph F. Smith and clearly demonstrating how difficult and problematic the surrender was. Perhaps without the Reed Smoot investigation, polygamy today would be taken no more seriously by the Mormon church than spelunking. Modern polygamy is a jumbled, disorganized movement, ranging from the insanity of Ervil LeBaron to the frank sensuality of Alex Joseph. The information on today's polygamy seems superficial, uninteresting and

pointless: we wonder if the "fundamentalists" exist only to insure that Mormons can not as readily repudiate their sexual past as they have buried their socialism.

Van Wagoner's book is a capable and comprehensive work that will find a welcome—if lonely—place on the bookshelves of scholars. But it won't compete with romance magazines, *Penthouse* fantasies, or reprints of 19th century exposes. Readers interested in sin will find Van Wagoner's book a bore.

Kerry William Bate is the Utah state housing specialist for the Division of Community Development.

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