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FRUITFUL TREASURES OF FAITH

WISDOM FROM PATRIARCHS AND MOTHERS ALIKE

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THE WORLD BEYOND THE VALLEY

ESTHER PETERSON



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MORMON EXPERIENCE, SCHOLARSHIP, ISSUES, AND ART

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READERS' FORUM



NOTE: Most of the following letters about the articles on "The War and Baseball Stories of Elder Paul H. Dunn" (SUNSTONE 15:3) were written before Elder Dunn published his apology in the 26 October 1991 LDS Church News (see Update story in this issue).

DUNN GOOD

I HAVE BEEN a subscriber for a long time; nevertheless, SUNSTONE was of marginal value. The majority of the doctrinal articles have been incorrect, and a significant minority oppose revealed truth. My opinion began to change with the material regarding Elder George P. Lee ("The Lee Letters," SUNSTONE 13:4). The transformation was completed with the September 1991 issue on Elder Paul H. Dunn. This material was well documented, balanced, accurate, and allowed the reader to form his or her own opinions based on the facts along with an assortment of clearly identified and enlightening opinions.

The value of SUNSTONE has "skyrocketed." The information reported is not available through any other source, at least not to a member residing outside Utah.

MARK A. SMITH
Lake Forest, CA

ALL DUNN

I AM ONE of those who listened raptly to Paul Dunn's stories as a teenager. I am one of surely many who felt betrayed when I realized that I had trustingly fed from a hand that had given me, not bread, but a stone. And then I felt doubly betrayed to hear not an apology but excuses, explanations, evermore tortuous sidesteppings of responsibility, both from Elder Dunn and from the Church's Public Affairs Department.

It's not a question of wishing to humiliate or punish Elder Dunn. I accept that his motives were good. I want to forgive him, and that forgiveness would come more easily if he admitted that he had done something wrong. His insistence on "explaining" that he didn't makes two things, instead of one, to forgive. I greeted his belated but very welcome statement in the *Church News* with relief and intense gratitude. I feel that now we can move on, sadder, wiser, and together.

Thank you for the many-sided examinations of this problem. As Juanita Brooks taught us forty years ago, we must first understand what happened before we can make

moral sense of it. You've helped do that. The thoughts of others struggling with the same painful issue, particularly Elbert Peck's compassionate and clarifying editorial, "Casting Out the Spell," have been important to me. Thank you for having the courage to face facts, the compassion to deal gently with them, and the humor that lifts the heart.

But then, SUNSTONE has performed this healing role many, many times before.

LAVINA FIELDING ANDERSON
Salt Lake City

DUNN IN

THE FACTS IN the Paul H. Dunn exposé were extremely disheartening. I have witnessed several cases where they have disrupted the faith of good people. It saddens me that a Church official would resort to deception in relating to people who have unquestioning trust in him. It saddens me further that Church leaders would resort to censorship and then rationalization to preserve credibility. How much stronger could we be as a religious community if we could confront such matters openly and directly?

SUNSTONE treated the matter commendably. Most of the articles acknowledged the very human tendency of storytellers to blend fact with fiction. Where should a credible storyteller draw the line? One should never defraud his or her audience. A religious audience is particularly susceptible to unquestioning believability, so the line between fact and fiction must be clear. To argue that incredible storytelling is a reasonable literary method justified by a higher, more noble end is to forsake the ethical imperative at the core of our religious identity. In the Dunn case, the values promoted by the end become incongruous with the values underlying the means. As the folly of the apologists' arguments becomes transparent, they quickly remind us that we are all human and need to extend a measure of empathy, not judgment, to Dunn. That seems like a fair request, but it isn't, largely because of the extent of his misrepresentations and subsequent rationalizations. In view of this exposé, I hope that people will be less naive consumers of stories from the pulpit and that Church leaders will distinguish fiction from fact. Otherwise, we may see an emerging credibility gap between leaders and members.

STEVE MAYER
Eugene, OR

DUNN WITH

YOUR SEPTEMBER ISSUE left me cold and with a vastly diminished image of what I conceived SUNSTONE'S goals to be. As I turned page after page of the Paul Dunn issue, I became convinced that the *National Enquirer* with its sleazy stories was masquerading under your banner. I am truly sorry that apparently SUNSTONE'S high ideals and scholarly approach has been laid to rest along with all Christian charity and personal decency, as you belabored point after point of rather dull (and old) reading; a column or two perhaps, but a whole edition on Paul Dunn? Ridiculous. Since your copy ranks with yesterday's newspapers, it is fitting that it ends up in the trash can.

Granted, Elder Dunn's reasoning is at best unique and not in the best of taste and maybe even totally unacceptable to some, but whom did he harm? Does he not have even one redeeming virtue? Did his faith-promoting stories make him any less of a great man? I think not. To illustrate: years ago, as a bishop, I accompanied a young prospective elder with serious problems to an interview with Elder Dunn. The young man came away from his interview with renewed hope; he filled an honorable mission, and is today a stalwart Saint. Decency, understanding, and mercy filled Elder Dunn's heart; I suspect a faith-promoting story and a fatherly hug did the trick. Does Elder Dunn deserve any less? Let him among us who has not exaggerated a bit throw the first stone.

If I am offended to the point that I am on the verge of jumping ship, there must be others. Put that in your scholarly pipe and smoke it.

MAX H. RAMMELL
Rexburg, ID

DUNN TO LEE

ELDER DUNN'S liberties with historical facts are consistent with Church practice for the past 160 years. Historically, whenever the Church has had to make a choice between open, candid truthfulness or protective lying, it seems the truth has nearly always suffered.

George P. Lee was candid but abrasive, and was excommunicated. Paul Dunn was deceitful but loyal, and was given emeritus general authority status. Since open candor in the Church has always been punished and repressed, and loyalty, even if deceitful, is rewarded, we can look forward to more Hofmann/Dunn episodes.

This is not a condemnation, just a realization that we all have many miles to travel yet

on the pathway to perfection—Church leaders included.

L. G. MORGAN
Nampa, ID

EXECUTIVE PRIVILEGE

THE ATTEMPTED COVER-UP of Paul Dunn's "exaggerated" war and baseball stories is Mormonism's small-scale Watergate, including stonewalling by the powers that be and the eventual toppling of a gifted but flawed leader by persistent—and independent—individuals.

When will we adopt openness as a necessary value to hierarchical Church leadership?

The Brethren are displeased at those who revealed Dunn's *public* mistakes, just as they are uncomfortable with SUNSTONE'S ongoing debate of contemporary Mormonism, including its policies and leaders. They seem to think that open discussion of their Church-related actions are off limits for Saints.

But Jesus did just the opposite. The skeptical but inquisitive followers of John the Baptist were invited to Jesus' house to see how he lived and not just to believe that he was the Prophet. "Come and see," he invited, and afterwards told his visitors to report back the "things which ye do hear and see." To Philip he said, "Follow me." Philip, now converted, then said to the suspicious Nathaniel,



Grendahl

"Come and see." (John 1:35-43; Matthew 11:2-6.) Although "follow me" was a call to live the life of Jesus, in some ways his invitation was as literal as Gary Hart's challenge to the media to follow him. Those who followed Christ saw miracles, but the Brethren seem upset when those who follow them report back that they are devoted but very human leaders. What do they expect?

Just as political leaders must act in the open, Church leaders must permit—and invite—public inquiry into their religious administrations. At the same time, we must revise our infallible expectations of our mortal leaders and check their mistakes with the fresh air of openness and charity.

STAN WICK
Los Angeles

DUNN MY TERM

ELBERT PECK's use of the late Frank Capra's populist explorations vis à vis Paul Dunn was on target. In *Meet John Doe*, Gary Cooper in the title role naively assumes the non-factual role of a hero that inspires the nation to achieve unprecedented Christian neighborliness. But when Doe's true past is revealed, the people turn against him and abandon the highly effective John Doe clubs, even though "the message is still true," leaving the public disillusioned and cynical and John Doe suicidal. Dunn, Mormonism's Elmer Gantry (another relevant movie), has reminded us that you can't totally separate the message from the messenger.

But since all leaders are flawed humans, how can we sustain a prophetic vision that will transcend even the prophet's level of goodness and in doing so show his or her imperfections and perhaps tarnish the vision. Clearly, our prophetic exhortations should be from a humble perspective, not putting too much trust in any one "arm of flesh." This implies a democracy among *all* Saints, where everyone's spiritual messages are evaluated and consented to by the congregation, and where no one is raised very far above another. Christ, after all, is the head of the body, and *everyone* else is but an equal member of the body. High office tempts both the officeholder and the public to demagoguery. We are all beggars, and our social processes should reflect that fact while calling and inspiring us to be more than we are. Perhaps we should rotate members through general authority callings just as they are through every other calling. Perhaps we should require a "downward" calling in hierarchy between every "upward" calling.

JEFF SMITH
Providence, RI

DUNN FOR MONEY

PERHAPS THE TRAGIC story of Elder Dunn is best viewed as symptomatic of the equally tragic commercialization of my beloved theology. Surely his culpability is greater due to his position and the fact that he presented those stories as true. However, I noticed the irony in the criticisms that his

conduct was blameworthy because he profited personally from royalties (e.g., Kent Frogley's "Salting the Truth" and Paul Toscano's "Is Paul Dunn Any Good in the Church Today"). Surely Elder Dunn is not the first member to reap royalties largely on the basis of a Church or BYU position. Is it more justifiable for *any* of the Brethren to benefit financially from their callings, albeit indirectly? What is the difference between selling a book on gospel doctrines that "represents the opinions of the author" and a cartoon videotape of the Book of Mormon?

Kent Frogley's legitimate concerns about allowing apocrypha to enter into the belief system might just as well be said about the many fictional books for young Mormons which consistently top Deseret Book's best seller lists. The Church's youth may develop a warped understanding of the "still small voice" which can be easily confused with the emotional tugs sparked by a tragic story or motivational speaker.

The most important lesson we can learn from all of this is that truth is best gleaned from the holy scriptures, and to place our faith elsewhere is to build upon the sand.

MARK W. PUGSLEY
Durham, NC

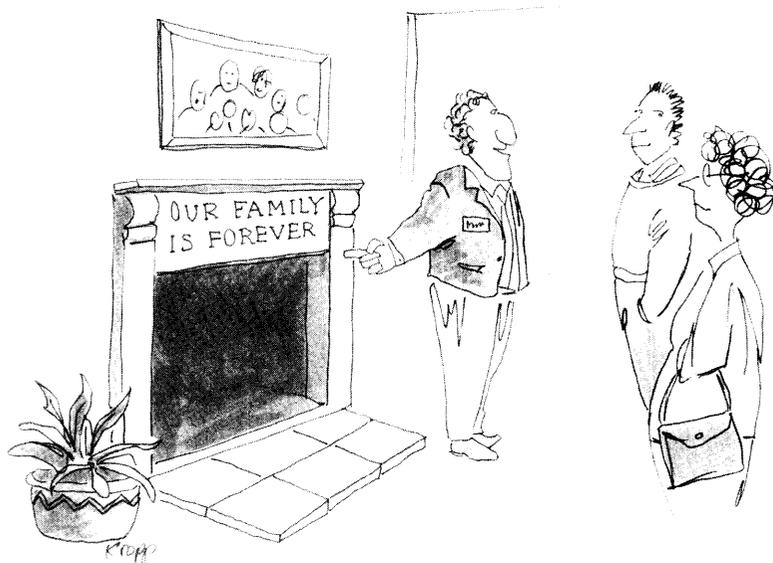
DUNN FUN

PLEASE BE informed of my disappointment with your last issue. I find the cartoons, the revised song, and comments throughout the magazine to be very offensive and in poor taste. I am not alone in my opinion.

JEAN H. PARKIN
Salt Lake City, UT

Elbert Peck replies:

The humor generated by the Paul Dunn episode was a crucial part of our culture's processing of the event. As uncomfortable as the cartoons made some feel, they accurately mirrored the biting Dunn satire which was omnipresent at BYU and elsewhere after the *Arizona Republic* story broke. We may not like to see this LDS satire in print, but it was ubiquitous orally. All of the cartoons we ran were submitted without solicitation. We initially intended to document the humor by collecting the Dunn jokes and cartoons on one or two pages under some title that made it clear that the cartoons were part of our reporting of the Dunn event. As the length of the Dunn section increased, to save space I unfortunately decided to spread the cartoons throughout the section. Perhaps by then I had become immune to their sting. That decision, of course, allowed the casual reader flipping through the magazine to assume that



"The couple who built the house moved after one daughter married and settled in Australia and the other went to Oxford; of their sons, one's playing for the Giants, one's directing a Greenwich Village theatre, and one's in Nigeria with the Peace Corps. The house made them lonely."

the Dunn cartoons were of the same status as the others which regularly appear in the magazine. This adverse and inaccurate result made the editors appear as the cartoons' mean-spirited advocates.

TROUBLE WITH A CAPITAL 'M'

THE SHORT STORY "Reflections on the Lost and Found" (SUNSTONE 15:2) confirmed feelings I have been experiencing. Nineteen months ago, I said farewell to my son as he walked through the doors of the Missionary Training Center. This was his choice and his journey to make, with our full support. That did not preclude, however, many misgivings about the full impact this experience would have on a young man who, in spite of a goodly share of "hard knocks" in life, had exhibited an unusual amount of naiveté. I knew full well that his experiences would be diverse, complicated, and not always positive. But I did not anticipate that his hardest tests would come as a result of the unrelenting psychological and emotional stress he and many missionaries are subjected to—stress which borders on mental abuse.

He had not wanted to complain, had not wanted us to think that he was somehow less valiant, less obedient, because he was so troubled by what he was experiencing. He had been sufficiently programmed at the MTC and in the mission field to never complain, to believe that his faith was weak, and that he was somehow lacking in dedication if he questioned anything he was told to do. He refused to push people into baptism when he felt they were not ready, and received unrelenting pressure because of it. He refused to participate in the tactics which guaranteed leadership positions and "gold stars." This is a young man who does not know the meaning of the "wimp" factor—a star athlete in school, a person who always finished his tasks to the best of his ability, an innately dependable and responsible person.

The phone rang at two in the morning and a voice I truly did not recognize said, "I just don't think I can go on." What followed was a two-hour litany of the pressure, the stress, the guilt-inducement, and the feelings of failure, things that he had bottled up and shoved down in an effort to follow the "party line." Several events which had occurred within a very short time had finally broken him. He did not want to come home, but he had reached the end of his own resources for dealing with the mind games.

I, too, used to be supportive of the "make

'em humble" syndrome, but I'm angry that in spite of following the rules, and trying to the best of his ability, a missionary is still made to feel guilty when he and his companion don't reach some arbitrary statistical goal line that is constantly held just beyond their reach. Why should anyone's son who has faithfully prepared himself to sacrifice two of the prime years of his life have to endure having his faith and dedication constantly questioned? Why is he not allowed to follow the dictates of his conscience and follow the spiritual promptings to which he is entitled? Am I naive to believe that that could be done and that the work would flourish? What beautiful and exciting "good works" have been lost in this desperation for conformity?

Missionaries are subjected to pressures that no mental health-care expert would say are healthy. There is "trouble in River City."

If we would give returned missionaries "permission" to tell their stories as they really happened, we would see the damage that has been done. I hope that some day we will acquire an atmosphere in the mission field that encourages and builds self-esteem and respects the individuality and uniqueness of each missionary. Then we will see a marvelous work and a wonder performed.

NAME WITHHELD

SUFFERING EVILS

A LOT OF heartfelt concerns have been



voiced on these pages about the difficulties of living with orthodoxy, and how it stifles individuality. Having been raised in a family with a long and distinguished tradition for being mavericks and independent thinkers, I suggest that very little is ever accomplished until individuals sacrifice a small portion of their own egos for the benefit of group progress. So let us tolerate conformity with charity and forbearance, perhaps as a necessary evil, lest by our dismantling of structure, we destroy the very vehicle by which we enjoy our greatest blessings.

LEE RINEHART
Holladay, UT

AN IDIOT FRINGE OUTLET

THREE THINGS ABOUT the September SUNSTONE (15:3):

1. The letters by Loren Fay and Michael and Jennifer Warwick on conscientious objectors: I wonder why we read nothing of conscientious objectors among the Nephites. Maybe that indicates just how significant we should consider the current ones.

2. David White's letter on homosexuals' "desires of the heart": There is nothing "gay" about not knowing the difference between the digestive and reproductive systems. Heterosexuals have unrighteous sexual urges they must control; there is no reason why homosexuals cannot learn to control theirs.

3. Katherine H. Shirts's article, "Priesthood and Salvation: Is D&C 84 A Revelation for Women Too?": As soon as we begin to see men giving birth and homosex-

uals sealed in the temple, then we can assume that the second apostasy is complete and we will see women holding the priesthood other than when they are hugging their husbands.

Keep up the good work! There needs to be an idiot fringe outlet for us weirdos.

LEONARD F. DALTON
Delano, CA

CLEAN AND DIRTY

I'M GRATEFUL THAT such a forum exists to let people express their different views. Even though I'm disturbed by some of the different viewpoints, it's refreshing to be thrown out of my comfort zone—it helps me grow and define my own personal reality in relationship to others and to God. A poem by e. e. cummings reminds me of what SUNSTONE is:

"let's start a magazine

to hell with literature
we want something redblooded

lousy with pure
reeking with stark
and fearlessly obscene

but really clean
get what I mean
let's not spoil it
let's make it serious

something authentic and delirious

you know something
genuine like a mark
in a toilet

graced with guts and gutted
with grace"

D. BLAINE ROBBINS
Carmel, IN

FOLLOW THE BRETHERN

SUNSTONE SENT ME a promotional subscription letter that read, "What happened to George P. Lee?" I would like to share a true story which may help George Lee.

The story comes from Elder Matthew Cowley concerning his father Matthias F. Cowley, (former member of the Quorum of the Twelve). Sometime after Matthias Cowley resigned from the Quorum, he was excused from using his priesthood for twenty-seven years. He was not disfellowshipped, not excommunicated, just not permitted to use his priesthood.

During these years he sent five sons on missions. He presided as patriarch in his own home, saying this was still his right, which it was. Matthew gives us a phrase which his father always used in his family prayers:

Holy Father, if there comes a time when my children have to decide between following the counsel of their own father or following the counsel of the priesthood of thy Church, give them the courage to forsake their own father, and follow the priesthood of thy Church.

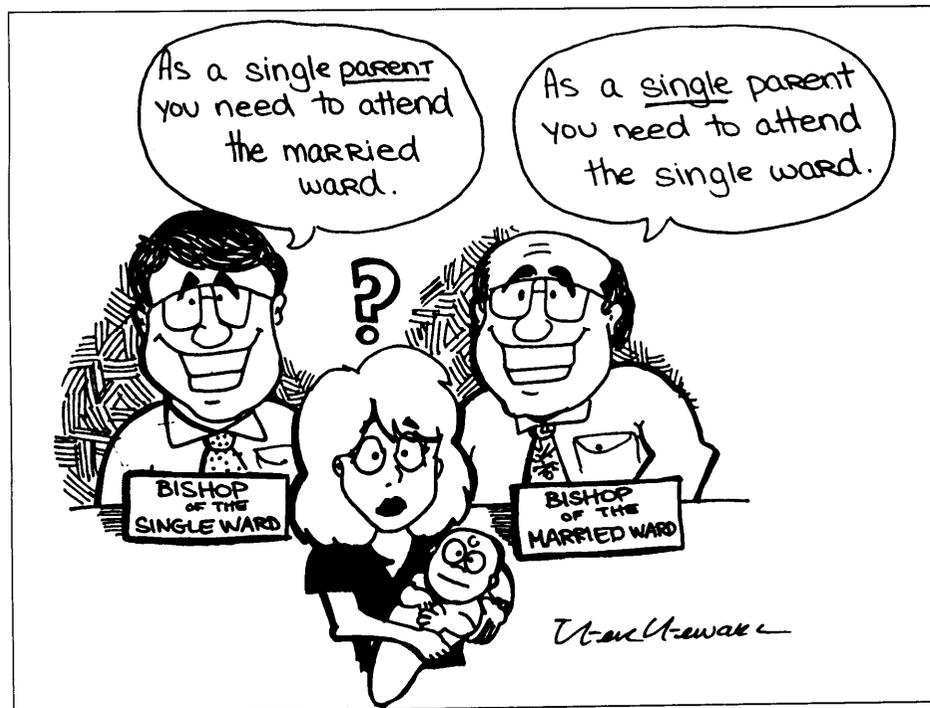
Elder Matthew Cowley says that this counsel kept his father's family in the pale of the kingdom during those trying years.

MELVIN A. WEENIG
Sandy, UT

IT'S ABOUT TIME!

THANKS TO the general authorities, I have recently had the flippin' privilege of defending SUNSTONE in a lot of discussions. While I concede that there are some items that SUNSTONE should not have published (such as the Paul Dunn humor or the Sunspot of George Bush's Mormon workaholic advisors [SUNSTONE 14:3]) and perhaps it needs more faith-promoting articles to balance the troubling ones, most of the criticisms seem to be cases of either killing the messenger or having unfair expectations.

Some people get mad because SUNSTONE prints articles that are unflattering to the Church. Well, who else will tell us what the heck is happening in South America? Are we



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angry because the Church is blowing it or because someone is speaking honestly? Let's keep our eyes clear and our ears clean so we can be informed, rather than plucking them out and cutting them off because of the sights and sounds they relay.

If all one read was SUNSTONE he or she would get a biased view. SUNSTONE is a supplement. I wish it had the budget for a full-time investigative news bureau, but I suspect the writing of news is shoe-horned in with other over-booked projects. I expect SUNSTONE to report news relevant to the LDS intellectual community which I can't get elsewhere. Hence, I'm glad the cheery good news in the *Church News* isn't duplicated in SUNSTONE thus stealing precious space from other reports. Similarly, I value the spiritual journeys of Scott Kenney and Levi Peterson, but must balance them with the *Ensign's* conversion stories. SUNSTONE is not—and I don't think it pretends to be—a full-blown religion. Those who use it as such are spiritually undernourished, but those who criticize it for not being one are unrealistic.

SAMUEL FLAKE
Mesa, AZ

FAITHFUL HISTORY

CONCERNING THE Lou Midgely/Wayne Sandholtz dialogue ("The Myth of Objectivity: Some Lessons for Latter-day Saints," SUNSTONE 14:4; letters, SUNSTONE 15:2 and 15:4), I view history as interpretive and subjective, something we approach with unavoidable biases. Despite the inability to achieve perfect objectivity, history is important in our quest for understanding; it is not indoctrination. It is vital that we have a variety of historians and approaches to glean from; that historians have full access to documents; and that they be allowed the dignity of not having their commitment to the gospel and their spirituality questioned when they arrive at perspectives that don't conform to prevailing Church norms.

What is faithful history? I find my faith built and my soul inspired by history that takes in broad viewpoints. We should value everyone's sincere viewpoint because we need dialogue for balance. I understand that a few years ago John Sorenson wasn't able to publish *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* because two apostles thought that Sorenson's idea of limiting Book of Mormon geography to a small Central American area ran counter to what Joseph Smith had to say and what most learned in Primary and seminary. Sorenson had to wait until his opponents died. Presently,

Sorenson's brand of history (I guess technically anthropology) is deemed faithful.

Faithful history comes in different colors. It's wrong to condemn others as Korihors, take temple recommends away, impugn character, block publishing of those who see things differently. Church teachings, beliefs, and philosophy shift and change. At one time polygamy was considered an eternal and saving principle, and the Church literally went through hell to maintain it; yet we hear little about it today.

Nothing should be so sacred that opinion and belief are quashed and suppressed. That is an infringement on the sanctity of the soul. We need to keep breathing room in the Church for many sincere and honest viewpoints.

GABBY ADAMS
Sierra Madre, CA

INTELLIGENT HISTORY

THE WHOLE IDEA of faithful history has me stumped. The idea that "The Glory of God is Intelligence" must have been left behind when faithful history was promoted. I wonder why "faithful" seems to be emphasized over intelligence and integrity. The emphasis seems to be on "Follow the Brethren" and their evaluation of history. I prefer history based on integrity and historical expertise, where historians fear not for their livelihood if they tell the truth as they see it. Until this is the case and until historians have full access to documents, I don't believe

"faithful history" has any validity.

Church members are asked to operate from many historical myths which have a negative impact. Some of these are miracle stories told to build faith. One recently came up in an institute class. The institute director had the honesty to tell us what he considered was a more accurate version. When asked what stories he told his children, he said he starts his children out on the faithful ones and then later tells them the truth. This kind of faith-promotion sets people up with larger-than-life ideals that has them running after a perfection that is self-defeating and unrealistic.

Relying on a confirmation by the Holy Ghost that the Church is true doesn't mean that everything taught in the Church is true, including our history as we choose to tell it, and it doesn't mean that we shouldn't be skeptical of what spiritual confirmation means. Sincere people all over the world have the same types of spiritual manifestations about things that we Mormons would never accept as true. I think it would be hard for us to deny these Catholics the validity of their Virgin Mary visions except to the degree that we are willing to be skeptical of our own religious experiences.

We need to quit fighting over faithful history; let people write history as honestly as they can. Let's fight to keep historical documents accessible to all researchers and trust that what emerges will enhance the Church.

JAY MARSHALL
South Pasadena, CA



SEEING TO THE SOURCE

In "Aunty-Mormon I Ain't. . . ." (SUNSTONE 15:3), Samuel W. Taylor refers to a general conference statement by President Spencer W. Kimball, found on page 48 in the May 1978 *Ensign*, where President Kimball indicates that President John Taylor had seen Jesus Christ: "I know that God lives. I know that Jesus Christ lives," said John Taylor, my predecessor, 'for I have seen him.'"

Taylor then quotes a letter from President Kimball's secretary that states it should have been President Lorenzo Snow and not John Taylor. Samuel Taylor takes exception to this change. However, it was not John Taylor who made the statement quoted above, nor was it Lorenzo Snow. It was George Q. Cannon.

In the April 1974 general conference, President Kimball correctly gave credit to Cannon as the one seeing Jesus Christ: "Elder George Q. Cannon, who was in the presidency of the Church at one time, said this: 'I know that God lives. I know that Jesus lives; for I have seen him.'" (*Ensign*, May 1974, 119.)

This statement is from a conference address that President Cannon gave on 6 October 1896 and was printed in the 27 October 1896 *Deseret News Semi-Weekly*, in the 31 October 1896 *Deseret News Weekly*, and later in *Gospel Truth* (vol. 1, iv, 1st edition, 1957, compiled by Jerreld L. Newquist).

DENNIS C. DAVIS
Ogden, UT

FAITHFUL DISUNITY

AFTER READING the *Mormons* and Their Neighbors columns (Martha Paulson Harrington's "Not Every Family Rejoices to Have a Child Go on a Mormon Mission," SUNSTONE 14:6, and Elise Lazar's "A Non-Mormon in Zion: A Stranger in Paradise," SUNSTONE 15:2) and the subsequent debate in the Readers' Forum, I find myself reflecting on my experiences with fellow human beings, both Mormon and non-Mormon. I grew up in the home of a stalwart, fourth-generation, pioneer-stock mother and a non-member, principled father. Because I was told many times in Primary to pray for his conversion and it would be so, I was confused about my relationships of love with those who have not yet made LDS covenants.

Time and experience have erased this confusion. The only other Mormon in my law school class opened my eyes to the pursuit of truth as an avocation and jolted me from my business-oriented life focus. I then learned that many non-member friends had considered some of life's most fundamental questions (including our relationship with Heavenly Father) more deeply than had I.

Today, as a bishop I enjoy relationships with counselors, auxiliary leaders, and members of the ward that I count as truly priceless. I have relationships outside the Church equally treasured and rewarding in their assistance in my search for truth.

I believe that the priesthood, though essential, is but one way that Heavenly Father works through men and women. I know many servants of the Lord who because of society's prejudices and historical biases could not be effective if they were members of the Church. I am not troubled that we have not yet come to a unity of the faith. The true order of the universe, and each of our places in it, will be facilitated by a God who loves us equally, both Mormon and non-Mormon, both Jew and Gentile, both black and white. Though our opportunities and experiences may be different, those differences serve a profound and eternal purpose.

While we should not apologize for our unique culture and spiritual insight, we should also celebrate our differences in learning, culture, race, and conviction. Tolerance will provide us with minds more open to the receipt of greater knowledge and truth.

A. RICHARD VIAL
Portland, OR

THE WAR OF THE WORLD

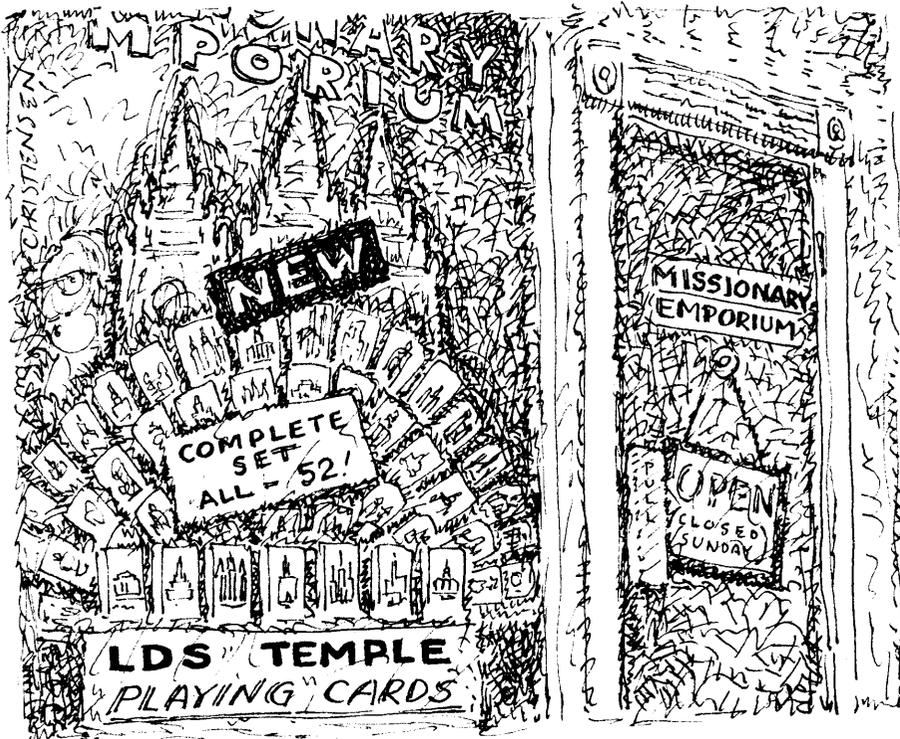
I FIND Joseph F. Wyson's suggestion ("Children of Light," SUNSTONE 15:3) to dis-fellowship non-Mormons to be not only unfriendly, but ignorant. I've been active in the Church from the age of eight and have been blessed with the friendship of several non-Mormons who have enriched my spiritual and temporal well-being. It is selfish to deny others the blessings we receive.

Wyson believes that shunning non-Mormons is "spiritual integrity." He reflects the rhetoric Church leaders have used for years to alienate us from reality. No church is an island unto itself and to shun those not of our faith directly contradicts the Church's missionary and fellowshipping efforts.

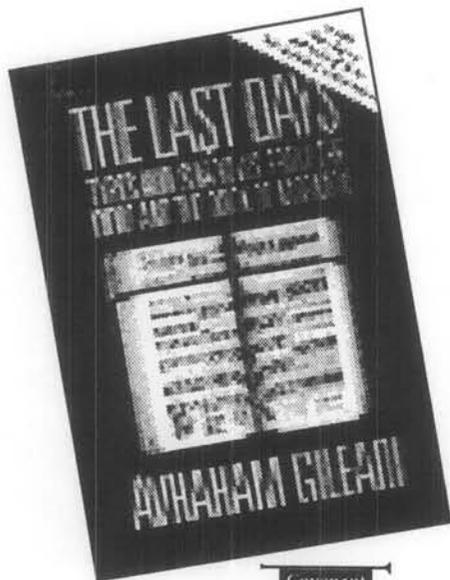
Wyson stated that the world will not succeed in "modernizing" the Church. Judging by the Mormon youth wandering through the local malls, the world has done a well-enough job. We should not blindly resist the winds of change. After all, change is what distinguishes a truly living church from one that has stagnated.

STEVEN PARK
Salt Lake City

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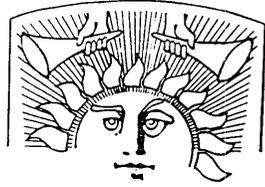
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EXPLORING THE RIVER



By Elbert Eugene Peck

WHEN I WAS a Scout, my troop organized annual canoe armadas on the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. Upon approaching rapids or a wide part of the river, our canoe's navigator would stand and survey the current's flow. Sometimes he directed us wrong and, lodged against a boulder or on a gravel bed, we'd have to get out and push while friends steered clear and jeered as they swiftly passed by. With an island, choosing the wrong side could mean ending up in a shallow and murky dead-end fork. Then we'd have to back-track by paddling upstream. Our goal was to pursue the main current (especially in races), but my fondest memories are of the detours from it, whether due to mishap, short-cutting, misjudgment, pursuit of adventure, or to just kicking back and drifting shirtless on a sultry summer afternoon with one bare foot dangling in the water.

From pre-history myths to Mark Twain to *Deliverance*, the river journey has been a metaphor for life. In the Church, we are wisely counseled to stay in the mainstream to avoid the shoals and rocks of life. Having to float helplessly down a cascading river without a paddle may make a compelling campfire story, but for those who live that metaphor in real life it is only hell.

What exactly do we mean by "stay in the mainstream"? To keep the commandments, certainly, and not to get caught up in fanatic doctrines or fads which can lead to dysfunctional cults and other endless whirlpools. But as I contemplate the Mormon, and American, mainstream—our popular mass culture—I celebrate those geniuses, iconoclasts, and eccentrics who have enriched our religion by swimming upstream, or, to change the metaphor, by marching to a different drummer. This mainstream river metaphor for safety doesn't account for these individuals; by eschewing the common path they were empowered, not disabled. At some point all metaphors fail to approximate reality; and if

we then continue to use them as a model, their injury can surpass their revelation. In this case, the mainstream metaphor counsels prudence but does not pretend to account for individual journeys and shouldn't be used to compel conformity.

HOWEVER, the river itself, not the journeying on it, has applications for diversity and the mainstream. It is the main current which gives the river its identity and dynamism. The power of the current originally cut the river's course, keeps the water from stagnating, and transports huge quantities of nutrients from the tributaries to downstream lands. It is the current that maintains the tried-and-true route which serves most water, keeping it open for future flows, moving huge boulders along its course. These same positive attributes apply to the main currents in religious traditions.

But on the banks exciting things also happen. There, intercourse with the world occurs and life flourishes. In the trees and sedges, in the reeds and soggy meadows, in the thickly leaved brakes laced with fretty chervil, egrets stalk salamanders, deer eat tender leaves, muskrats burrow into the mud, fish spawn, and bugs lasciviously breed. There, in the slow-moving side-eddy, the river nurtures life and in turn is nurtured by it. The nutrients deposited downstream come from these upstream shores and streamlets.

If we modeled the Church solely on keeping Saints in the mainstream, we would have an organization that eschews commerce with the outside world, and the individuals on its margins would be suspect. Its richness would be reduced. Taken to the extreme, overemphasizing the mainstream results in a concrete canal which efficiently hurries the particulate-free water along a route that cuts indiscriminately across the landscape, not losing one drop along its way. The destination is all; there is no life along an irrigation

canal, and the rich, layered journey of a river is traded for a sterile, single end.¹

Fortunately, great religions are more like great rivers. They sustain multiple ecosystems, giving life to whatever comes to it. In a river, the distinction between mainstream and side-water is a matter of degree and is temporary. What was slow-moving water is now, with the bend of the river, rapid current. We all flow in and out of the mainstream church, sometimes within minutes. In a gospel doctrine class the most mainstream Saints sometimes express the wackiest beliefs. But their next comment is back in the center of Mormon thought. When members easily flow between the mainstream and the margins, the Church is enriched and so is the individual.

Almost all rivers have a mainstream—a discernable current in which most water travels. Florida's Everglades are an exception. It appears to be a swampy forest, but it is really an incredibly wide, sluggish, shallow river that sustains diverse flora and fauna. The Everglades could be a metaphor for the Unitarian Church; Mormonism is definitely a river with a strong and deep mainstream. I have heard President Hinckley tell members to "stay in the center of the Church." That is not always easy to do. Rivers twist and turn, and the water's momentum often runs it to the sandy shore. In the absolute, that would overrule personal integrity. I know individuals who laboriously revise their opinions and beliefs to every nuanced shift of the Brethren so as to keep in the mainstream. Since all Saints are marginal in some ways, a more practicable approach would be to see that the majority—the mainstream—of one's life coincides with the mainstream of the Church, especially with its core beliefs and practices. But even that is not possible for everyone.

For those who live more on the margin (but still in our river), it would be nice if the mainstream Church affirmed that they are a contributing part of the LDS river. Similarly, those on the margins need to realize that the mainstream creates the river and determines its course. Each needs to celebrate their interconnectedness.

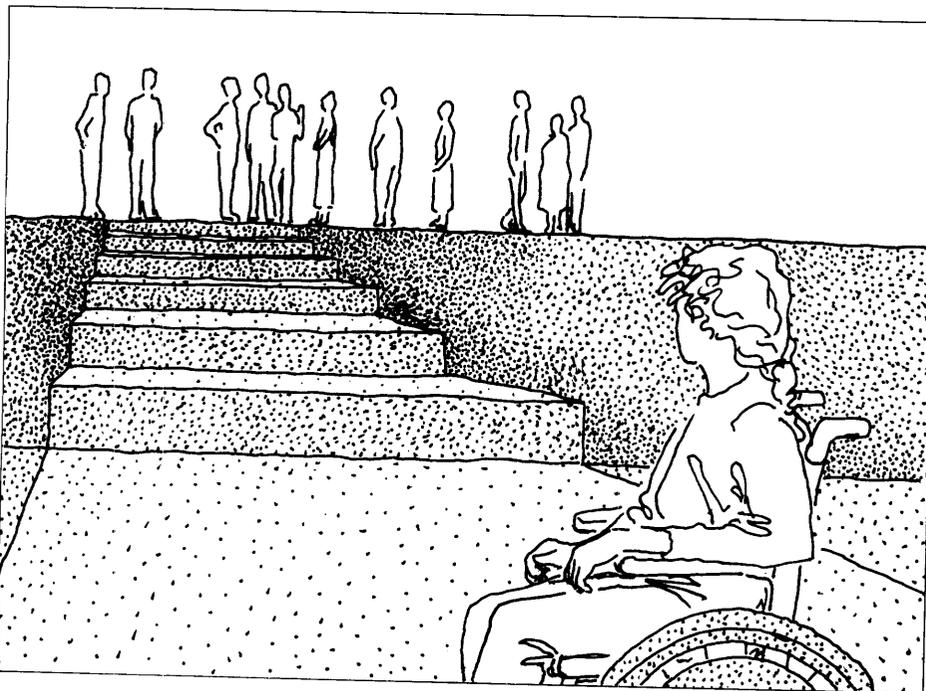
Perhaps I have strained this metaphor, but such thinking is fun, and I have gained an amateur appreciation for river ecology and for our collective religious life. If Jesus had grown up in Paw Paw, Virginia, or Hannibal, Missouri, he might have said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a river. . . ."

1. The introduction to Donald Worster's *Rivers of Empire* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985) introduced me to the ecology and life of rivers and to their social implications.

TURNING THE TIME OVER TO . . .

Romel W. Mackelprang

NEITHER HERO NOR SERVICE PROJECT: DEVELOPING HEALTHY ATTITUDES TOWARD PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Persons with disabilities are judged according to their limitations, not their strengths. The lack of opportunities for participation in society poses a greater handicap than the disability.

THROUGHOUT JUDEO-CHRISTIAN history, miraculous events abound. These experiences have been explained as manifestations of the power of God and as proof of God working through his people.

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Enoch moved mountains and changed the course of rivers (Moses 7:13). In the desert, Moses caused water to spring forth from a rock that provided Israel's millions with water (Exodus 17:6). In New Testament times, Peter healed a man who had been lame since birth (Acts 3:2-6). James taught the elders to offer a prayer of faith to heal the sick (James 5:14-15). Christ taught that "signs" would attend his followers, including protection against poisonous serpents and drinking "any deadly thing" (Mark 16:18).

The Restoration was ushered in with

many miraculous occurrences and heavenly manifestations. Latter-day Saints are taught that the priesthood is the means by which Christ's followers bring about miracles. Each priesthood holder is taught that he has God's power to act in His name. Priesthood blessings and healings are an integral part of Mormon theology and culture. Stories abound of personal lives touched by these events. Church meetings and conferences frequently include stories of the benefits of priesthood blessings. When medical, health, or psychological problems arise, priesthood holders are summoned, often in conjunction with or in lieu of professional help. In those instances where an individual has died, survivors have felt comfort in the belief that the Lord needed the person on the "other side" or that "it was their time."

In recent years, an increasing number of people are surviving illnesses or disabling events who previously would have died. With advances in medical and health care, people are living longer, but often they have long-term health problems and disabilities. Psychosocial adjustment to illness and disability is often difficult as people are forced to cope with changes in lifestyles, activities, and roles. Latter-day Saints frequently face another issue that can be as difficult to cope with as the disability: Many have been promised full restoration through divine intervention but are left with long-term disabilities.

This paper addresses the psychosocial implications for individuals and families who experience chronic illnesses or disabilities. I discuss the attitudes of society and the implications of unfulfilled priesthood blessings and suggest ways to address the needs of individuals with disabilities.

SOCIETAL REACTIONS TO DISABILITY

IN Western culture, people with disabilities are often relegated to invisibility or second-class citizenship. Physical access to public places and services have traditionally been limited. Access to education, employment, and social opportunities are inadequate. This resulting lack of opportunities for the disabled engenders societal ignorance and contributes to isolation.

Persons with disabilities are judged according to their limitations, not their strengths. For example, a person with a mobility impairment is perceived as "confined to a wheelchair" rather than as an individual who uses a wheelchair for mobility. People with short stature are often called "midgets" or "dwarfs." The disability is the standard by which the person is viewed,

while the person's attributes are often overlooked. Frequently, the lack of opportunities for participation in society poses a greater handicap than the disability.

Public exposure to routine lives of people surviving illness or trauma with lifelong health limitations or disabilities is minimal and usually inadequate. The recent portrayal of a paraplegic on a television program illustrates the type of exposure most people experience. The "tragedy" of his accident and "hopelessness" of his resultant paraplegia were explained. The documentary dramatized his "heroic" efforts and "undaunted" motivation to train for and excel at wheelchair athletics. The story ended with comments from choked-up commentators about how inspirational this man was to other "crippled" people and to "us all." No mention was made of the routine aspects of this man's life, his family, or work. Stories like this, combined with lack of exposure of the disabled as ordinary people, reinforce inaccurate and stereotypical views of a disabled life in which people are seen as objects of pity or as inspirational figures overcoming overwhelming odds to achieve success.

Mormon culture at times unwittingly reinforces the inaccurate perceptions perpetuated by society. A review of the *Ensign* from January 1987 to July 1989 produced some interesting results. The terms "confined to a wheelchair" or "wheelchair bound" were used at least eight times. Other references to people with disabilities included such terminology as "victims of cerebral palsy," "cripple," and "risen above her handicap." At least nine articles referred to the chronically ill or disabled as objects of service. There were at least eight references to miraculous healings sparing the person death or disability as a result of faith and/or priesthood blessings. These stories are very inspirational, but there can be unintended negative consequences for those who are not recipients of healings, especially when the stories are not balanced with events that normalize life with an illness or disability.

TRAUMA OF UNFULFILLED BLESSINGS

IT is the responsibility of each priesthood holder to always be worthy to exercise his priesthood when the need arises. When acute illnesses, accidents, or other traumatic events or psychological distress occur, blessings are frequently requested on short notice. The priesthood holder has little or no time to prepare before giving a blessing. The person and loved ones for whom the blessing is requested are in crisis and may

have high expectations of the blessing. Thus the person giving the blessing may feel powerful pressure to pronounce words that meet the hopes of desperate people. The motivation to pronounce a "satisfactory" blessing may be extremely strong, especially when the person giving the blessing is a loved one. For example, when a father gives a blessing to his child who is gravely ill, he will desperately want to give a healing blessing. His wife and other loved ones may have strong desires for him to bless the child with health. In these situations emotion and desperation can prevail over inspiration.

The following example illustrates. M. J., a sixteen-year-old girl, sustained multiple injuries including a severe head injury in a single car rollover. Her family was informed that her prognosis for survival was approximately 50 percent and that, if she lived, she would be permanently and severely disabled. Her grandfather, considered a family "spiritual giant," was asked to give the comatose child a blessing. After a "powerful" blessing for healing, M. J.'s family felt confident that her grandfather's promises would reverse the effects of the accident.

M. J. survived, and though she was blessed that she would be "made whole" she has lifelong physical and cognitive deficits that will preclude her from returning to a normal life or allow her to live independently. M. J.'s grandfather carries much guilt in the belief that he failed his granddaughter and disappointed his family. He blames himself for her condition, assuming that his faith was insufficient for her to be healed. His feelings of inadequacy are intensified when he attends church meetings or listens to general conference and hears stories of others who received blessings and were restored to full health.

The tragedy of M. J.'s injuries and subsequent disabilities is compounded by the confusion and guilt her loved ones feel because the blessing she received "failed" to produce the intended results. Because of severe cognitive deficits, M. J. is incapable of understanding that her family has been doubly traumatized.

The following example illustrates the reactions individuals can have when their blessings are not literally fulfilled. T. S., a fifty-two year old businessman, suffered a dislocation fracture of his eighth thoracic vertebrae when the motorcycle he was driving was struck by a car, injuring his spinal cord and resulting in paraplegia. Alert when he reached the hospital, yet unable to move or feel his lower extremities, he immediately requested that a long-time friend and prominent

Church leader be called to give him a blessing. Within hours of his accident, T. S. was promised that he would be "made whole" and "walk out of the hospital." Throughout his initial hospitalization, though he experienced no neurological return of function below his injury, he remained confident that his health would be restored. For two months he participated fully in his hospital program "to do [his] part"; however, he refused to purchase a wheelchair because of the assurance he received that he would walk out of the hospital "whole." Three days prior to his discharge, it became obvious that he would not leave the hospital "whole," and he authorized the rental of a wheelchair. It took several more months before he began to verbally acknowledge that his condition might be permanent.

Three years later, T. S. was still befuddled about "what went wrong" with his blessing. He vehemently rejected suggestions that his blessing reflected a future cure or was a promise intended for the resurrection. He was adamant in his conviction that he was promised that he would be healed before he was released from the hospital. He sought counseling from an LDS therapist after hearing in general conference about a young man who had a miraculous recovery from similar injuries. He was distressed at the speaker's explanation that the young man was restored to health because of his faith. T. S. despaired as he pondered the personal implications of this story. He had experienced absolutely no return of function even though he had demonstrated all the faith he was capable of and had worked as hard as he could. His feelings of self-worth were negligible. He openly questioned God's love for him. He was also extremely distressed because other members questioned his faithfulness. He expressed suicidal ideations, stating the primary reason for not terminating his life was the fear of the "eternal consequences."

These stories graphically illustrate some of the intense problems faced by Latter-day Saints who are personally affected by long-term disabilities or chronic health problems. For some, the disappointment and confusion of unfulfilled blessings may be more difficult to cope with than the process of adjusting to their disabilities.

SPIRITUAL CONCERNS

MOST Latter-day Saints who become disabled resolve their religious and spiritual concerns independent of professional help with the support of their families, and sometimes with the help of local Church leaders.

Those who seek professional help with their spiritual quandaries will typically seek an LDS counselor whom they perceive can understand and accept them. Frequently encountered questions include:

1. "What have I done wrong that makes me unworthy to receive God's blessings?" These people blame themselves for their problems. They believe they would be healed if they were worthy. They become demoralized by their perceived unworthiness and inability to gain divine approval.

2. "Does God love or care less about me than those people who have had miraculous events in their lives?" The power of God is not questioned, but the person's relative personal worth is scrutinized, often with the conclusion that God loves or cares less for them than people who have been beneficiaries of his divine intervention.

3. "How could the Church be true when I was promised that I would be healed and nothing happened?" These people are in danger of losing their testimonies of the gospel. They have been deeply hurt and disappointed and may begin to attribute manifestations of priesthood power for others as coincidence.

4. "How are my faith and actions inadequate for the Lord to help me?" This question is often asked when a blessing has been predicated on the faith and efforts of the recipient, who as a result, blames him or herself for the lack of fulfillment. This self-denigration produces guilt and despair.

5. "What was the matter with the person who gave me the blessing?" These people may blame their condition on the person who gave the blessing, reasoning that someone more worthy would have achieved successful results. It is not uncommon for them to seek out others for repeated blessings in a futile attempt to achieve the desired results.

6. "Is there a God?" These people question whether a loving God could consign them to their present existence. They are mourning their losses and see little hope for the present or future.

These questions can shake spiritual foundations, and people may agonize over them for months, years, or even a lifetime. Likewise, loved ones of persons with disabilities may experience the frustration of being unable to understand the disparity between reality and shattered expectations. Until we as a church address unfulfilled blessings, people will be left to cope with this dissonance individually and in isolation. Frequently, Church leaders or members attempt to offer culturally acceptable explanations. These include:

1. "The individual will be 'made whole again' in the resurrection." Being "made whole" in the

resurrection is a comfort for members of the Church. However, this promise does not address the lack of restoration in this life. As T. S. stated when offered this suggestion, "I was blessed I would be healed in the present. There was no reference to the resurrection."

2. "The disability is a test from the Lord." This explanation is difficult to accept when the person acquires serious cognitive deficits or develops uncontrollable dysfunctional behaviors, or, in some situations, permanent lack of consciousness secondary to illness or accident. Similarly, it seems out of character for the Lord to impose problems of this nature as a test. While people may use experiences stemming from their disabilities for growth, and the Lord allows misfortunes to befall people, it is out of character for the Lord to create catastrophes for this purpose.

3. "Hard work will bring the Lord's healing blessing." This explanation, given to a paraplegic with atrophied and anesthetic limbs, or to an individual with multiple sclerosis who has witnessed steady deterioration of function with no realistic hope of symptom reversal, will be viewed as ludicrous.

4. "The individual is being used as an instrument in the Lord's plans." This statement may be valid for everyone from an eternal perspective. However, a god who brings tragedy to people for some unknown purpose seems incongruous with the God of Mormonism.

Though these explanations are culturally acceptable, they are speculative. Ecclesiastical leaders and others are prudent when they avoid using them to explain a person's disability. It is important to acknowledge that the reasons someone was not healed may never be known. He or she can also be encouraged to discuss the situation with the Lord and to seek reassurance of his love and concern. Eventually people need to concentrate their efforts on coping with the reality of their situation. Then they can focus on the task of making happy, productive lives for themselves.

Members who struggle with unfulfilled expectations for divine intervention may have more difficulty with this issue than with their disabilities. They may question the gospel principles they have been taught for years—in some cases a lifetime. To attempt to find the reason for their current condition most often is futile. It is more productive to help the person put the situation into a larger perspective.

An open discussion of blessings in the Church is desirable. Church members, including people with disabilities, need to begin to understand that the miraculous

events they read about in scriptures and Church publications and that they hear about in Church settings are not samples of everyday events, but are shining examples of what *can* happen. Were miraculous healings common events, they would not be the subject of the attention they receive. These accounts are not the norm; rather, they are the exceptions.

An evaluation of miracles in the Church is critical. Many people ascribe divine intervention to events that are more complicated. For example, in a recent fast and testimony meeting, a mother related the story of her daughter's brush with death. She told of her daughter's central nervous system infection that produced serious neurological symptoms requiring emergency hospitalization. She talked of the blessings the child received shortly after admission to the intensive care unit and her recovery that began shortly thereafter. A physician who was aware of the situation and heard this inspiring story also mused on the miracle of modern science and the newly developed antibiotics that helped restore the girl's health. The majority of the congregation left the meeting that day with the belief that the blessing this girl received was the reason for her restoration to health. On the other hand, while cognizant of the priesthood, the physician left feeling more appreciative of the "miracle" of recent technology and antibiotics available to the girl and to the many others he had seen "healed" in a similar fashion.

UNHEALTHY RESPONSES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

THE Church as an organization and its members have treated people with disabilities the same ways organizations and people do in the larger society. Lack of exposure to people with disabilities promotes the stereotypical beliefs portrayed in the media.

Frequently, people with disabilities are avoided. "Separated shoulder syndrome" is a manifestation of this avoidance. This condition is produced in children who ask persons with obvious disabilities, "what happened" to them, and their embarrassed parents "separate their shoulders" by jerking the children away as they apologetically exit the scene. Unfortunately, the vast majority of people with disabilities would like to talk with these children and are denied the opportunity to interact and educate by overly concerned parents.

The majority of people with disabilities welcome the opportunity to talk openly. As others begin to understand the disability,

they can begin to see strengths and capabilities, not just deficits and limitations. Fear and discomfort can then be replaced with friendship.

When confronted with a ward member with a disability, Church leaders are often at a loss as to how to respond to the person. Many wards adopt a “service project” mentality. But when the preponderance of interaction is focused on providing service, the net effects are negative. When persons with disabilities are treated primarily as objects of service (through which those who serve them receive blessings), their unique potentials as individuals and resources for the Church are not tapped and they are denied the blessings of service and personal growth.

Perhaps the most pernicious attitude some members of the Church display toward people with disabilities is the philosophy that they are somehow at fault for their conditions. This attitude was manifest during Christ’s life when he was asked if a man was born blind because he or his parents sinned (John 9:2). Unfortunately, that mentality still exists today. Some Church members assume people with disabilities are not worthy of the Lord’s blessings, their faith is deficient and/or they are being punished for sinful behaviors. When these attitudes are displayed, they create pain and anguish that can be extremely difficult for persons with disabilities to cope with. This pain was expressed by a man with a potentially fatal form of cancer who grieved at the open questioning he received from some ward members who suggested his cancer could be God’s punishment. Referring to this social treatment, he stated, “their attitudes are sometimes as hard to deal with as my cancer.”

Some people with disabilities are accorded the status of heroic or inspirational figures. This hallowed view is reserved for those who “overcome overwhelming odds” or who “triumph over the handicap.” They are inspirational figures who receive accolades and notoriety for their accomplishments. While these figures deserve recognition for their accomplishments, the average person has little hope or desire to achieve in this way. As one woman stated, “I just want to be a regular wife and mother.”

It is probably most comfortable to most Church members to avoid contact with those who are disabled. By so doing, we do not have to face our own discomfort or devote time to someone who is different or who has a condition we fear. Sometimes obligatory offers for help are given, but concrete attempts to establish friendships are avoided. This benign neglect further isolates individuals who are already relegated to second-class citizenship.

INTEGRATING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES INTO THE CHURCH

INTEGRATING persons with disabilities is a challenge for Church leaders and members. Modifying Church culture to include disabilities as a part of mortality that can affect anyone is a first step. Revising our expectations for miraculous events and opening a dialogue about priesthood blessings that do not meet expectations is a critical component of this shift. We need to create an atmosphere that puts priesthood blessings into perspective and reduces expectations to more appropriate levels. This will also tend to temper a “blame the victim” mentality.

Normalizing disability will reduce the fear many people have of disabled persons and help them begin to see the whole individual and not just the disability. Desensationalizing disability will assist in this process. For example, changing a reference to the disability from the typical “John Doe is confined to a wheelchair since he was the victim of a tragic automobile accident that crippled him,” to “John Doe, who uses a wheelchair for mobility since he sustained paraplegia in an automobile accident,” will help to normalize the disability. The former example portrays him as a crippled victim of a tragic accident; the latter explains facts without minimizing them. Such inflammatory descriptions create the stereotype that disability is a fate worse than death and create a culture where people with disabilities are to be either avoided or helped. On the other hand, accurate unsensational descriptions normalize the person and promote healthy attitudes and beliefs. An atmosphere and culture of acceptance of differences is created, and isolation is reduced.

Before we plan to make people in the Church objects of service, we should ask them about their needs, keeping in mind that they best know what their needs are. Sometimes the service they most desire is the opportunity to contribute. Often, the best “service” is honest, sincere friendship. The disability can be acknowledged as much as a part of the person as height, weight, gender, and ethnicity. However, it is not the primary component of the relationship. The key is to treat the person with dignity and respect—essentially in the same manner anyone would want to be treated.

People with disabilities and their families may need to modify their lifestyles and activities because of their situations. For example, the Roes decided to switch some of their roles. Mr. Roe, a thirty-five-year-old father of three young children, was unable to continue working as a mechanic after becoming

paraplegic. Though he received Social Security disability benefits, the Roes experienced a dramatic drop in family income and loss of insurance benefits. His relationship with his wife deteriorated as they struggled to deal with not only the physical implication of his disability, but the lifestyle changes brought on by his situation, such as the dramatic increase in time spent together. Ms. Roe had been a school teacher prior to having their children, but had worked very little for eight years. During therapy, the Roes explored the possibility of Ms. Roe returning to her profession as a way of bolstering finances and reinitiating medical benefits. This avenue was pursued successfully. Ms. Roe enjoyed returning to elementary school teaching. Mr. Roe fulfilled the role of homemaker in the family. With Ms. Roe out of the home, Mr. Roe felt less like a burden and more like a contributing member of the family. Although unable to engage in previous vocational pursuits, Mr. Roe took pride in his responsibilities as a homemaker and primary care parent for their children. The Roes were also able to spend time away from each other, thus alleviating some of the day-to-day stress they had previously experienced. As a result, their marriage and family relationships were strengthened.

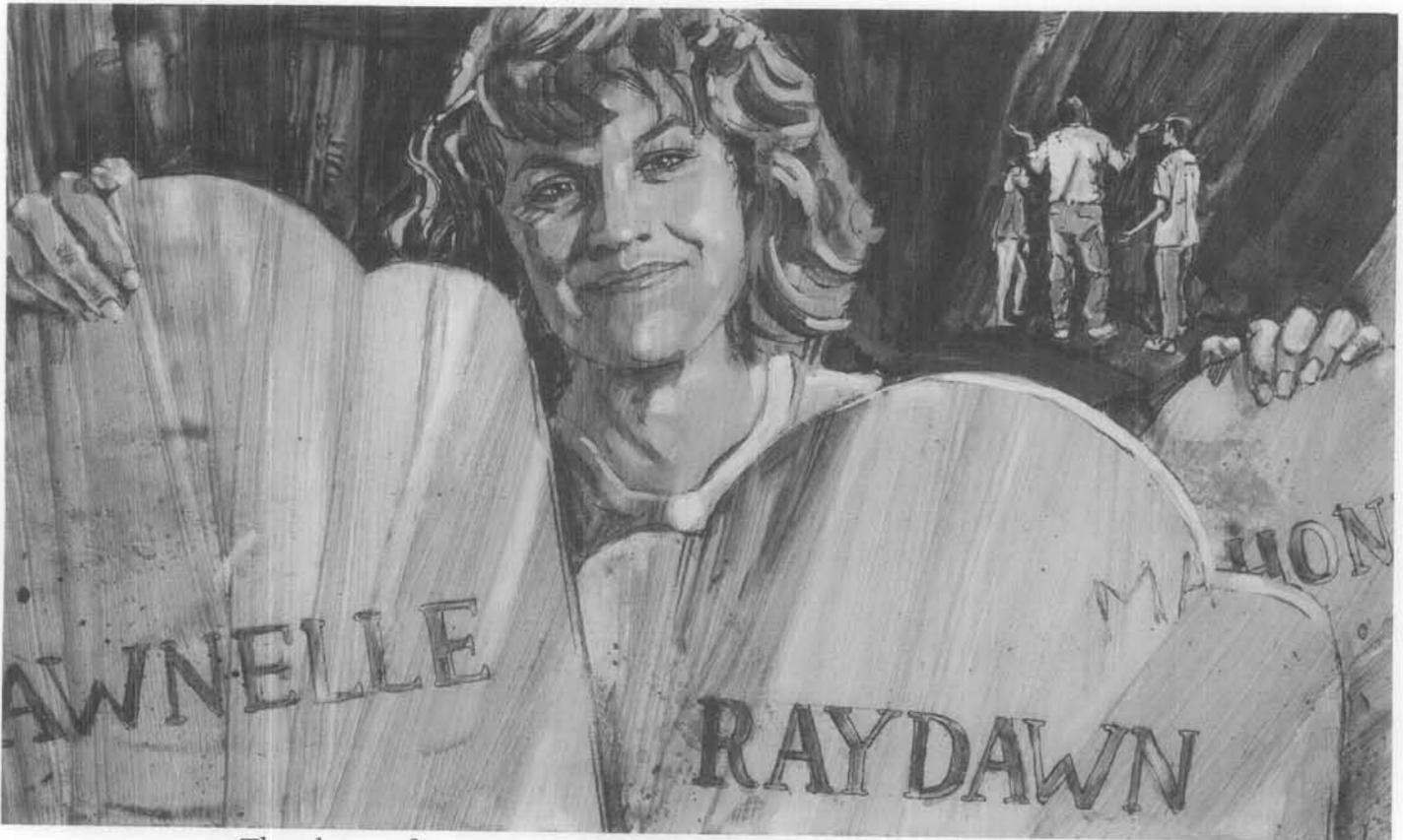
The Roes’ altered lifestyle worked very well. After a time of disequilibrium, the family stabilized. They functioned as contributing ward members and achieved a goal they frequently articulated in the weeks and months following Mr. Roe’s accident. Meals and child care were periodically provided by ward members until their situation was stabilized. Occasional requests for help were met. Members of the Roes’ ward showed compassion and acceptance, not pity or benign neglect. Though Mr. Roe’s accident was unfortunate and even tragic, he was not seen as a tragic figure. A supportive ward helped the Roes as they reconstructed their lives. They were an ordinary family who adjusted to a disabling accident, not heroes or martyrs.

In closing, it behooves members of the Church to follow the golden rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (see Matthew 7:12). Members of the Church with disabilities want the same opportunities in life as able-bodied members. Unfortunately, to a large extent, they remain untapped resources. We need to modify our culture pertaining to disability and reassess our individual attitudes. Many people with disabilities use the acronym “TAB” to describe those who do not have disabilities: all “temporarily able-bodied” persons are only an accident or illness away from disability. ☐

1990 Brookie & D.K. Brown Memorial Fiction Contest Short Short Story Winner

REPRESENTATION

by Penny Allen



The three of us get outvoted regularly on one thing or another, up against Mother's solid block of four.

NOT BEING ONE TO EXERCISE UNRIGHTEOUS DOMINION, when Mother, Fawnelle, Raydawn, and Mahonri all wanted to paint the house green, and only me, Nephi, and Janeen wanted it white, we got a green house. The three of us get outvoted regularly on one thing or another, up against Mother's solid block of four.

In fairness, I have to say that I remember at least two times Raydawn and Mahonri voted with us. Once we even had a tie. However, because they all like pears, we planted pear trees. Mother always bottles about a hundred quarts, but the rest of us wish we'd planted peaches. We never miss the Pioneer Day parade. On Labor Day we have a corn bust. That's what they

like to do. We have to visit Mother's folks in Henryville on vacation because they like that better than fishing at Strawberry Reservoir, which would be our choice.

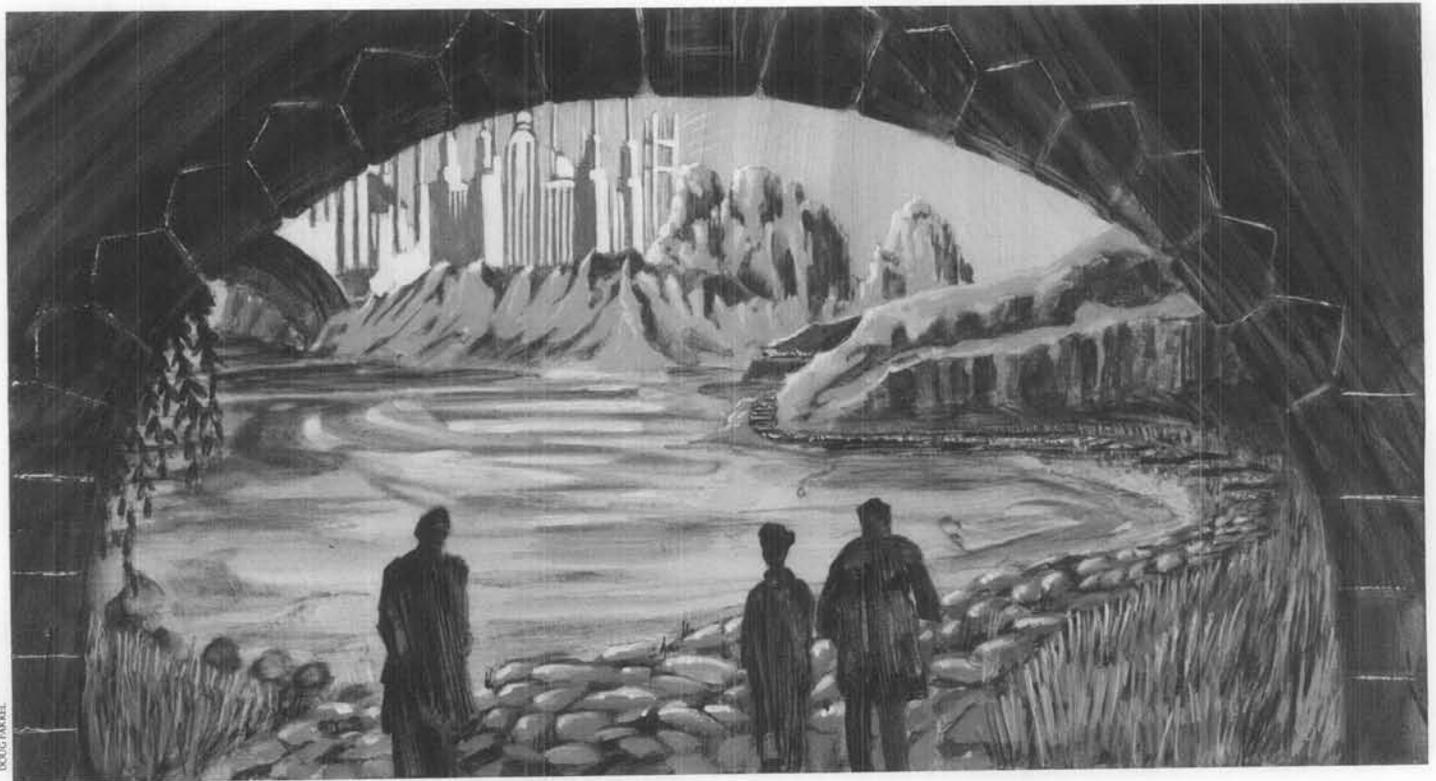
I don't mind being outvoted on the little things, but this time they've gone too far. This time the three of us want to build a new shed. The old one's leaning heavily and come snow, she's going to founder. But we're up against Mother and the rest of them for a new stove, which we need sure enough, but the shed's real urgent. Uncle Jake says I ought to assert my authority, but he's not married to Mother. It's got to be a real problem. At first, after the children died, it was touching the way Mother said they were part of our eternal family, so included them in our plans and projects. But the rest of us are getting damn tired of being outnumbered!

PENNY ALLEN is a writer living in Bountiful, Utah.

Pillars of My Faith

"YET ALL EXPERIENCE IS AN ARCH"

By Elouise Bell



The pillars of my faith are less pillars than arches where
through gleams the rest of the journey.

WHEN SUNSTONE'S GODFATHER ELBERT PECK mentioned to my friend Kathleen Flake that he had invited me to give a Pillars of My Faith talk this summer, Kathleen, rather startled, replied, "Which faith?" Though in part facetious, this question was, like most of Kathleen's questions, profound, and has helped me focus my remarks this evening. I certainly believe that I have faith, even a faith, but the point I want to

make is that there are many tributaries and many wellsprings that fed *and continue to feed* my faith. My hope is that in my attempt to talk about these wellsprings, these pillars of my faith, I will raise some points that may help you to reflect on your own pillars, and your own faiths.

My first memory of a religious nature is set in the Myrtle Street Methodist Church in Scranton, Pennsylvania, where I was born. My parents and grandparents were what might be called "generic Protestants," an assorted group of Baptists, Lutherans, and Methodists. My father, like a majority of working-class men, never went to church services. My mother, aunt, and grandmother, like most working-class women, went regularly. At age three or four, I would sit in a pew of the large

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Methodist church as the choir came slowly down the aisles, singing, their white robes crisp and full. My specific first memory is of their singing “Holy, Holy, Holy,” a fine, robust hymn. The words continue, “Lord God Almighty; early in the morning, our song shall rise to thee,” and go on to sing of cherubs and seraphim, and of God, merciful and mighty, “God in three persons, blessed Trinity.” It was an excellent hymn: I thought so then and I think so now. It has everything a hymn should have: vigor and mystery, praise, and a singable melody. Hearing the hymn made me feel solemn and part of something majestic, much larger than myself or our small family.

THE church building had stained glass windows, though what they depicted I cannot quite recall. The feeling of those windows is still with me, however, the certitude of the bold outlines of angels and shepherds.

While music was my central memory of that primal religious experience, I also have a clear image of the collection plate going by, a large heavy plate of dark polished wood with a circle of felt covering the inside, presumably so that there would not be any irreverent clinking of pieces of silver as the bowls circulated. Like millions of children the world over, I was given a penny each Sunday to put in the plate as it passed. I am glad to report that I resisted all temptation to take anything *out* of the plate.

At church, what took place was both strange and ritually familiar. What happened was ritual: occurring over and over in the same way, it became familiar. And like all ritual, it had meanings greater than its outward reality. On the other hand, everything was strange in church, not like things at home or at school or anywhere else. Nowhere else did men as well as women parade down aisles in full white dresses, singing. Nowhere else did people pass around bowls of money. No other windows were full-color pictures. And certainly, I had never seen elsewhere an organ, which a hunch-backed spinster played, not only with hands but with feet, indeed her feet often busier than her hands, flying back and forth over long pedals and making sounds that roared out of the huge pipes and rose clear up to God.

My first occasion for public speaking took place in Myrtle Street Methodist. I was four. I clearly remember the white dotted Swiss dress I wore, with red and blue soldiers marching across the yoke. I remember also that I apparently dropped my collection penny and calmly told the audience they would have to wait a minute while I searched the carpeted floor of the dais (on all fours) for the coin, after which I resumed my talk. I have no memory at all of what enlightenment I shared with the assembled Methodists that day.

It was at this age, also, that I came to love the drama of the Bible. I had a large, beautifully illustrated book of children's stories from the Bible, which I read and reread. The pictures were bold and theatrical. My favorite picture was of King Nebuchadnezzar, mighty potentate of Babylon six centuries before Christ. It was not his power that transfixed me, but his hairdo, surely one of the most elaborately styled coiffures ever, with long dark curls that any child of the Shirley Temple era

would covet. And how I loved the story of Daniel and his back-up group, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! Brave young Daniel, who just said No! to the king's rich food and wine, and proposed instead, and I quote: “Let them give us pulse to eat and water to drink.” And sure enough, “at the end of ten days their countenance appeared fairer and fatter than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.” The romance of that story, and its message of the rightness of following one's own conscience in the face of powerful external pressures, stayed with me, even after I discovered, decades later, that “pulse” was plain old pea soup.

When I was seven, we moved to another state. Instead of Myrtle Street Methodist, Mother and I attended Lakeside Community Church. A big change. This was a non-denominational church serving the small rural community. Instead of the dimly lit grandeur of Myrtle Street Methodist, we had a white one-room frame building to meet all our needs. We sat on folding wooden chairs. No choir, no robes, no organ, not even a paid minister.

The building did have a stage, though, and Lakeside was into pageants. Of course, when I say “pageant,” you must not think of Cumorah or Manti. You must not even think “road-show.” Think grade-school Christmas performance. Nonetheless, all major holidays were observed with a pageant, and the painted backdrops, used over and over, would be rolled up and stored behind the curtains in between shows. We had a stage, but no microphones or sound equipment of any sort. (We're talking the 1940s here, for the record.)

It occurs to me now that the lack of a microphone may have had a lot to do with my regularly getting the choice roles in these productions. Even at ten, I had no problem projecting my voice across the stage to the assorted Protestants who were waiting to discover why the stone had been rolled away. It must have been here that the foundation was laid for my deep joy in the Easter season. Easter has always had for me a spiritual beauty and sense of exaltation that even Christmas can't touch.

That joy in Easter was heightened by the hymns we sang. “Up from the grave He arose, with a mighty triumph o'er his foes! He arose the victor from the dark domain, and he lives forever with his saints to reign! Hallelujah! Christ arose!” And the other Allelujah hymn: “Christ the Lord is risen today; Allelujah!”

I loved all the music I heard in the Community Church. I even ignored the essential embarrassment of the Goldy Sisters' singing—one matronly contralto and one warbling soprano—as they repeatedly did, “I come to the Garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses; and the voice I hear, falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses. And he walks with me and he talks with me, and he tells me I am his own; and the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known.” I loved the song and I loved the sentiment, and it was years and years before I asked *why* the joy the poet shared has never been known by another. Rather a selfish thought, now you think about it. But the intimate personal passion of the song was nonetheless deeply moving.

As a congregation, we sang many lively hymns. We sang the standard battle songs: "Onward Christian Soldiers" and "We Are Marching on to Glory" and "We Are All Enlisted." But because of a strong Methodist contingent, we sang the sea hymns that had come from England, from Britannia who ruled the waves, whose orientation was more naval than infantry: "I was sinking deep in sin, far from the peaceful shore; very deeply stained with sin, sinking to rise no more." We would sing, shrill and fervent, eight- and nine-year old girls, swinging our white Sunday shoes in tune with the music, transported far out into the waters of wickedness, going down for the third time.

In some mysterious way, perhaps in the way small grains of sand eventually become great sandstone cliffs, all this experience was coalescing into pillars of my personal faith. At eleven, for a period of time, I fantasized becoming a priest. Why a priest, I have no idea. No church I'd ever attended had priests of any gender. Perhaps I saw myself in white collar and black coat because the only ministers I saw in movies were Catholics—Bing Crosby, Pat O'Brien, young Frank Sinatra, Gregory Peck. But why the clergy at all? I didn't know why then, and I'm not sure I know why now. My best guess is that I loved the questions religion raised. They certainly were the most consequential questions I had encountered in my young life, far more interesting than "What is an isosceles triangle?" "What is the capital of Ethiopia?" And "Why can't you do your work more quietly, Elouise?" At the age when we most readily give our hearts to the Ideal—capital I—it was these questions, the questions of faith and of spiritual inquiry, that seemed to me most worth pursuing.

WHEN I was twelve, my family moved far across the continent to Arizona. Mother apparently decided at this time to curtail her church-going. I never asked why: maybe she felt her poor health required more rest on Sunday; maybe she believed that after forty years of church service, she'd done her stint for a while; maybe she just thought it was too hot in Tucson to sit in church. In any case, I attended First Methodist Church on my own, being confirmed there at thirteen and even packing off to church camp in the mountains.

It was at First Methodist that I first became aware of the rich historical legacy of Christianity. In Sunday School, we studied about Peter and Paul, real people who traveled far and wide in the Mediterranean world, preached and wrote impassioned letters, quarreled and encouraged one another, endured prison and shipwreck and death. In addition, we learned of later Christian heroes, men and women who fought and sometimes died for the right to read the scriptures in their own tongue, who exposed ecclesiastical corruption and who felt it their duty as Christians to take the Good News and hope to the poor and broken-spirited, hope not only for the world to come but for this life as well. We were stirred by the stories of Luther, John and Charles Wesley, Tynsdale and John Wycliffe. I was also stirred by the autobiography of Gladys Aylward, a simple chambermaid from England who decided her calling was to take God's word to the Chinese, who saved penny by penny

and shilling by shilling until she had enough to buy a train ticket via the Siberian Railroad to China. Totally disdained by any organized missionary group, with a grade-school education, without, as we would say, purse or scrip, she made her way into China, learned the language, carried the Gospel to rough mule-drivers of the mountains, and spent the rest of her life doing the most extraordinary things, through wars and famines and opposition from all sides. Among other things, she quelled prison riots, unbound the feet of Chinese women, and on one occasion shepherded more than a hundred children over impossible mountain passes and out of harm's way to safety. You can see a pallid version of her story in the film, "Inn of the Sixth Happiness." Much better still, read her autobiography: *The Small Woman*.

First Methodist helped me connect in my imagination with Christians back through the centuries and around the globe. But adolescence was waiting right up the road, and as Carol Pearson explains in *The Hero Within*, adolescents are often dominated by Wanderer energy. For a year or two in high school, I wandered away from the questions religion asked and became engrossed in the questions posed by philosophy, sociology, the arts, and sciences. It was interesting for me to see where people found conflicts between these spheres of inquiry. One day Mr. Taylor came into tenth grade biology class and said, very carefully, "Today I am going to *tell* you about evolution. I am not going to *teach* it to you, but simply explain what the theories say." Despite his disclaimer, a fundamentalist classmate named Chuck Yehling put his fingers in his ears for the whole class period. I had thought Chuck a pretty interesting fellow, before that day. But his attitude toward the free and open search for truth struck me as unattractive, not to mention dangerous.

By my junior year, I was back in church, this time at Trinity Presbyterian. A friend had asked me to come with her, and I went, simple as that. Now you may recall that the Presbyterian church has strong Scottish roots, and so do I. Scots and Presbyterians both place strong emphasis on education. My interest in philosophy and liberal arts seemed very appropriate among the Presbyterians, who read an awful lot of books and had busy, well attended study groups. I went to camp with the Presbyterians, as I had with the Methodists, and in addition to hiking the mountains and singing "Kumbaya" around the campfire, we had heavy duty classes, including one in "Building a Christian Library." We investigated concordances to the Bible, histories, biographies; we surveyed a dozen national church periodicals. At one point, the teacher even held up a Book of Mormon and told us a little of its history. One young woman in the class—me—raised her hand and asked, "Jack, how can people believe such stuff?" Moral: keep your words sweet and tender, for you may one day be required to eat them.

The Presbyterian era overlapped the dawn of the Mormon era. For a number of months, as a college sophomore, I attended Trinity Presbyterian in the morning and went to the executive meeting of their Young People's group in the afternoon, but would excuse myself early and run down Mountain Avenue to the LDS Institute in time for four o'clock sacrament

meeting.

This is not the occasion to recount my conversion story. Tolstoy writes that all happy families are happy in the same way; I think all converts share common luminous experiences, whatever the particulars. I did teach the Relief Society theology lesson for a year before being baptized, though: that may not have been exactly standard.

BUT I would like to make a few points about my conversion, and about my faith today. I did not come to my first LDS meeting devoid of faith, nor did the waters of baptism expunge from me the religious and spiritual experiences of a lifetime nor from the faith based on those experiences. For that matter, Joseph Smith did not go to the Sacred Grove as a tabula rasa; he was already formed by the faith of his parents and of his New England background. Mormonism, so often called by others “the American religion,” would have been a different institution had its founders come from other backgrounds than they did.

Paul writes of conversion as “putting on the new man,” and there is in his metaphor the idea of exchanging one suit of clothes for another. But as real as the conversion transformation is, we over-simplify if we think that a convert puts off a lifetime of experience from one perspective as she puts on the vestments of a new perspective. Even stronger than the new clothes metaphor, the baptism ritual is an image of death and rebirth. But that convert’s baptismal rebirth no more demolishes all of her past experience, faith, and spiritual heritage any more than Death itself demolishes and wipes out our mortal knowledge, relationships, or identity.

What then exactly are these pillars of faith, as we call them? Surely they are the unique components of an individual life experience, both practical and transcendent. Words trip us up just a bit here. We can speak of the Mormon *faith*, meaning the Mormon religion or belief system. We think of that as a relatively fixed, formed set of concepts. But when we speak of an individual’s *faith*, what we are talking about is a totally unique thing, as individual as fingerprints or memories. Latter-day Saints may share certain scriptures, doctrines, practices, articles of faith, correlated lesson manuals. But the faith of any particular Saint is one of a kind. Nor can any one of us really know—let alone dictate—what forms the central pillars of another person’s faith. So to Kathleen’s question, “Which faith?” my only possible answer is, “my faith.”

Let me give you an example. My faith has recently been increased by coming to know the Mormon pioneer midwife and healer, Patty Bartlett Sessions. Through reading her journals of the crossing of the plains and the years of early settlement, through writing a forty-five-minute script based on these journals, and then by performing a one-woman show as Patty throughout seven Western states over the past two years, and most of all by feeling the spirit of this remarkable woman, I have been strengthened and uplifted and renewed. Patty’s faith, which was at any given time the composite of her unique life experiences, has fed my faith.

My faith was also increased some years ago by coming to

know, through her writings, another woman, a Dutch Christian, who manifested her great faith during the Second World War by risking her life to save the persecuted Jews in her homeland. Ultimately, she and her sister were forced into a concentration camp for their deeds, where, under brutal circumstances, her sister died. But Corrie ten Boom lived to carry on her life of love and healing and faith. Her book, and the movie, *The Hiding Place*, tells the story of that particular and amazing faith. At the end of the film, the real Corrie, now old and immensely powerful, as full of zeal and faith as anyone I have ever seen, looks straight at the camera and fixes it, and us, with her piercing eyes as she gives her testimony. Corrie ten Boom has strengthened and uplifted and contributed to my faith. My faith is not her faith, however, and my faith is not Patty Session’s faith, any more than I am a banana because I have eaten crates of bananas in my life.

My faith has been blessed by many who are neither Mormons nor Christians. It would take at least another speech to tell what I owe to Jewish women and men of strong faith. The spirit and the faith of Native Americans have bolstered my faith, shored up my faith, with pillars I had not found anywhere else. Certain rays of light from eastern religious traditions have illuminated and enriched my faith.

SOME of you may know Helen Stark, of Provo, one of Mormondom’s true sages, a writer and philosopher now in her nineties. Throughout her life, Helen has been fed by well-springs of Quaker origin; and all of us who know Helen have, in turn, been enriched by this aspect of her faith.

Today, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is daily adding to its numbers men and women from every corner of the globe, some with little in the way of previous faith, it is true, but many with mature and seasoned faiths of a composition little known to nineteenth-century Mormons, or even to most contemporary Saints. From Africa, from Asia, from South America, and from Eastern Europe, the Church is gaining members with experiences, backgrounds, insights, and wisdom that have not been available to us as a church body before. What a wonderful day this is! What pillars of faith these people will be able to share with us! And certainly, we would be most unwise, not to say unrighteous, were we to say to the spiritual insights these new saints bring: “We have no need of thee.”

When we use the phrase, “pillars of faith,” we are employing a metaphor that compares our faith to an edifice, a house or temple. My message tonight is that each house is wonderfully different, truly unique. We do not inhabit a Leavittown of tract homes, identical except for a few exterior touches of color and facade. Each house of faith is one of a kind, custom-made. My faith has been erected and built upon fifty-five years of life. It includes everything from “Holy, Holy, Holy” to miraculous healings at the hands of priesthood holders and non-priesthood holders; from the image of Daniel spurning the king’s rich diet to a crucial answer to prayer that came to me while fasting; from the sweet peace I felt the first time I heard the hymn, “Joseph Smith’s First Prayer”—“Oh how lovely was

the morning!”—to the rich joy I felt when I visited the Elizabeth Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, a few years ago and heard that black congregation line out their hymns and praise the Lord.

We have heard it said, with increasing urgency, that the greatest challenge facing Mormondom today is the challenge of the international Church. Dealing with sheer numbers, providing facilities, education, and welfare, developing leadership—the problems that accompany the rich harvest of converts are many. We will need to think in different ways than we have ever thought before. For example, someone concerned about the enrollment limit at BYU asked President Hinckley if the Church had considered establishing a second university. Pointing out that there are over 100,000 seminary students in the Philippines, he said, “You see, if we *were* to build a second university, it wouldn’t be in the United States.” That’s what I mean by thinking differently. The members of the year 2000 will be different in countless ways from the general membership of the Church in 1956, when I joined, even as the Church of the fifties is different from the Church we know today. What richness the members in 2000 will know! And what a mosaic of faiths they will make!

Nor do we need to look across the ocean to see the changing nature of our membership. Here in the USA and in Utah and along the Wasatch Front are Mormons who, whatever their outward appearance and whatever their conformity (this audience not being known for its relative conformity!), I say, whatever they may look like and even sound like, American Mormons today are much less of a pattern than most of us suppose. Mormons tend to speak up about the aspects of their faith which are predictable and traditional; they tend to keep quiet about those parts of their faith which are exotic, unexpected, and highly individualized. But more and more of these folk are speaking of their faith these days. (Look at the program in your hands for proof.) What with the harvest of converts abroad and the unexpected varieties in the crop springing up at home, the Church membership will have many interesting questions to ponder in the years ahead.

HAVE I wandered from the theme of pillars of my faith? I don’t think so. I spoke earlier of my loving the questions that religion asks. If I am somewhat more excited about the questions than about the answers, that is only to say that I see life as a quest. Now, a pillar can be considered as a brace for a roof or a wall, to fix the dimensions of a house, to fix something firmly in place. It can also be considered as something to climb upon in order to have a better vantage point, a means to extend the horizon. Tennyson, of course, said it much better:

I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethrough
Gleams that untraveled world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.

PERHAPS, then, the pillars of my faith are less pillars than arches—arches being the more female symbol in any case—arches wherethrough gleams the rest of the journey, the

land of the continuing quest, that “untraveled world.” Perhaps in reality, my house of faith is a motor home; who knows?

I conclude with a scripture that I have come to cherish more and more as the years go by. I leave it with you as one expression of my testimony. It is from the Book of John, the apostle of Love, according to whom Jesus said:

In my Father’s house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

TWO WORLDS

Not for many years creatures of water,
we sit uneased on the *Pegasus* as she breaches dunes
of waves up Powell toward the late sun.

We watch.

The fish remain hidden deep like roots
of desert plants. The motors bring forth
filigrees of lake—the only flowers
of the day.

She slides six feet into the solid world.

Children tumble red

on the hill, singing cries of ball and burrs,
as we chase leopard lizards, whose legs rocket
them beyond our reach, and follow spoor laid down
by the busy tails of kangaroo rats. Caterpillars
fall in armies from blackbrush as we pass, not knowing
that the ground offers no more protection than
the bunker at Baghdad.

We gather spectacle plants
for Pat to see—easier than last year when we tried
to make her see prairie dogs near the road
to Hanksville.

Here, under arches humbled by God,
we discover right-angled hieroglyphs quarried by slow
liquid time, RONA LOVES JEFF, and dwarf bushes
basted to the cliff by their hair.

When the merganser packs her young across the channel,
we sag into quilts. This night it’s Mozart: the wind
making violins of the antenna and the pontoons praying
the resonant notes of canyons of water—

Lacrimosa . . .
Huic ergo parce, Deus
Pie Jesu Domine:
Dona eis requiem. Amen.

—DIANNA BLACK

We can work to overcome the Church's shortcomings and celebrate its enduring lessons, which have been very real and meaningful throughout my life.

THE WORLD BEYOND THE VALLEY

By Esther Peterson

ESTHER EGGERTSON PETERSON was reared in Provo, Utah, and was graduated from Brigham Young University in 1927. She received a Master of Arts degree from Columbia University and has received honorary degrees from many other institutions, including Smith College, Carnegie Institute of Technology, the University of Michigan, Northwestern University, Oxford University, and two universities in her native state, Utah State University and the University of Utah.

Her illustrious public service career began as an instructor at the Branch Agricultural College in Cedar City, Utah, followed by positions at the Winsor School in Boston and the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry. She has been active in the labor movement since the early 1930s, serving as the assistant director of education for Amalgamated Clothing Workers (1939-44) and later as its legislative representative (1945-48). Between 1957 and 1961 she worked for the AFL-CIO as a legislative representative in its Industrial Union Department.

Peterson served under President John F. Kennedy as the director of the Women's Bureau in the Labor Department (1961) and as an assistant secretary of labor for Labor Standards (1961-69). As executive vice chair, she assisted Eleanor Roosevelt on the President's commission on the Status of Women (1961-63). Under President Lyndon Johnson she became the first special assistant to the president for consumer affairs. She also chaired the President's Committee on Consumer Interests (1964-67). Peterson served under President Jimmy Carter as chair of the Consumer Affairs



The labor movement became the way for me to express my religious beliefs about community and collective action, about extending a helping hand, about fairness.

that I was born and raised in the Church. Anyone who has grown up in the Church and yet spent most of her life outside its doctrinal and financial rules, has to wonder, when she reaches my age, how this experience fits into life itself. Maybe it is my age, maybe it is my life-long tendency toward simplicity and sentimentality, but in recent years I have found myself looking back again to the church of my youth. It is probably to be expected, now that I have finally reached a mature and reflective age and outgrown the youthful rebelliousness of the sixties and seventies. I'm talking about my sixties and seventies.

Council. This council assured that consumers had a voice in federal policy-making. In the private sector, Peterson worked for Giant Food Corporation as the vice president for consumer programs and as a consumer advisor to the company's president (1970-77).

She has received numerous national awards in recognition of her contributions, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Food Marketing Institute's Industry Statesmanship Award, and the Trumpeter Award from the National Consumers League. She has been inducted into the State of Utah Beehive Hall of Fame and was selected as the Democratic Woman of the Year in 1979.

Peterson met her husband, the late Oliver Peterson, when they were studying at Columbia University. She is the mother of four children.

Esther Peterson gave this paper at the Sunstone Symposium XIII on 10 August 1991.

WHEN I AM ASKED, are you a Mormon, I always answer with my head held high

So your invitation to me to speak this evening has deep meaning for me. It is sort of like a Mormon friend saying, "Come back, Esther." But I am here to ask you, have I ever left?

What did I take away with me from my Provo girlhood on North University Avenue, my wonderful family, my brothers and sisters, my young womanhood at the BYU, and my teaching years in Cedar City? What are those memories telling me about my feelings today? One answer is very clear to me and always has been: The LDS church taught me to remember and consider others and to give of myself. I learned from my Church experience that happiness comes from that, from giving as well as from receiving. It goes back to the old song we used to sing: "Have I Done Any Good in the World Today? Have I cheered up the sad? If not, I have failed indeed." I grew up with this. This is very deep in my feelings, certainly. You may think this is an oversimplification, but to me, that song is the heart of Mormonism. It speaks to the Church's great insight, born in the adversity of the eastern settlements and nourished in the Salt Lake valley: that people want and need to belong to each other, that it is good for us to have a social conscience, and that we all, as the song suggests, owe something to this world. Something beyond ourselves, something giving of ourselves. Faith and good works: Mormons could not have built the Church and this state of Utah without yoking faith with a caring for others. That spirit infused my childhood in this valley.

BUT as I grew older, I started to wonder: Whose world are we singing about? Is it the world of this valley, of tight-knit families, church on Sunday, and church meetings throughout the week? Or does that song sing of a larger world beyond our own? I have been reading lately about life in the early Utah days, about the Greeks and the Japanese and, yes, of the Negroes in Utah. Where were they during my growing-up days? We knew they were there, but did we ever really see them? I heard people talking about "the Dagoes," but did anyone of us really reach out to them, to try

to know and understand these people who were living among us, and whom we had brought into the state to help us build our railroads, our irrigation projects, and to work in our mines and coal fields? I did not know then that these outsiders had their own stores, their own churches, and their own rich cultures which we so largely ignored. Sure, they disliked us as much as we disliked them, but was that any excuse for us to allow the distance between us to exist?

Too often, I am sorry to say, Mormonism began to strike me as being a little too stuck in its own world, in its own family, which is a very small world compared to the one outside, where everyone else lives. It is like the old story all of us know—my father used to tell it with such glee—about the newcomer to heaven being shown around by Saint Peter. This newcomer sees the Catholics in one room, the Lutherans in another, and so on, until they come to a closed door. "Don't open that, that's the Mormons," says Saint Peter. "They think they're the only ones up here." We were taught that we were the chosen. However, at BYU in Professor Poulson's course on comparative religions, I learned that we were but a tiny portion of the planet's peoples.

Two experiences during my early years laid a solid base for my later work. One relates to my brother Luther. I remember the farewell party for him at the Provo Fourth Ward in 1913, before he left on his mission to England. I was, I think, about seven years old. I was so proud of him when he stood up and sang, "I might be envied by a king, for I am a Mormon boy!" I

remember the pride I felt that he was my brother, and he was going off to do all this.

When his letters began to arrive from England, from Liverpool and Blackburn, I listened as my parents read them aloud to the family. Afterwards we would discuss what he had written. And I listened to those discussions. He wrote about the appalling living and working conditions of the people there, and of how he wondered if the Church's new members had converted to Mormonism out of true faith and belief or just in



ESTHER PETERSON ON GRADUATION FROM BYU, 1927

What did I take away with me from my Provo girlhood? That people want and need to belong to each other, that it is good for us to have a social conscience and that we all owe something to this world.

hopes that the Church would help them better their situation, help them escape their miserable living conditions.

The memory of Luther's letters is very significant because it let me know very early that all was not right in the world beyond the valley. I would comfort myself with the thought that, since we were the chosen, we were spared such worries.

But then, in my early teens, the problems of others came closer to my world when the railroad workers struck in the Salt Lake Roundhouse. I drove up from Provo in a car full of BYU student strikebreakers. As we drove through the crowded picket line, which was being opened up for us by a policeman on horseback, we came practically to a stop. A woman with two children, one in her arms, caught my eye and said to me, "Why are you doing this to us? Why?" I knew something was wrong.

Robert Blake wrote about the dark satanic mills that my brother Luther witnessed. And I was beginning to get an insight into the satanic work places in parts of our own country in the late 1920s. And when, as a young teacher in Boston, I first heard the song about taking up swords and arrows of desire to build New Jerusalem in the modern world, it helped inspire me to work to improve the lives of workers in this country.

You all know that song, "Jerusalem," don't you? You mind if I read it to you? Blake wrote,

And did those feet in ancient times,
walk upon England's pastures green,
and was the Holy Lamb of God
on England's pleasant pastures seen,
and did the countenance divine
shine forth upon these clouded hills,
and was Jerusalem builded here
among these dark satanic mills?
Bring me my bowl of burning gold,
and bring arrows of desire,
bring me my spear, O clouds unfold.
Bring me my chariots of fire.
I will not cease from mental fight,
nor shall the sword sleep in my hand

till we have built Jerusalem
in England's green and pleasant land.

That song meant a great deal at a time when the wider world was opening up to me.

THE effect of all this grew in me, and I began to wonder, could organized religion, particularly a highly centralized, orthodox one, contain the guidance that I needed in my life's work?

This is hardly a revolutionary insight. Everyone in this room probably has a story to tell about doubt and occasional frustration. Perhaps some of you also have, as I have, close friends and relatives who went beyond self-doubt and questions and slipped into a deep and abiding distrust and disappointment with the Church. They were hurt by a sense of being outsiders for their doubts. They resented being considered less than good Mormons for being less than good Republicans and for questioning authority. Or they were

wounded by loved ones that sometimes used their faith as a kind of philosophical trump card. That was hard for me.

We were taught that the glory of God is intelligence. And then, we were denied using the intelligence that was given to us. I can remember, as a senior at BYU, having life explained to me in terms of a pocket watch, with God as the mainspring, and the man I thought I was in love with, who was doing the explaining, of course, was one of the bigger wheels, and sweet little me somewhere down in the parts you can't see, I think with the rest of the women. I must tell you that I came away from these discussions feeling hurt, a hurt that I kept quietly in my heart. It nurtured a kind of self doubt, the doubt that made me ask: What's wrong with me? Why am I different? Why don't I have the same rock-solid, untroubled faith that everyone else carries so effortlessly? Why aren't my prayers answered when I have asked for answers?

Some people got angry with the Church, but anger was never part of the equation for me. I think my wise and gentle father, Lars Eggertson, that sinful coffee drinker, helped me to keep a smile about my feelings for the Church. He helped me sort out the list of what's important. Nowadays they call it



ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, CHAIR OF KENNEDY'S COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, AND ESTHER PETERSON, VICE CHAIR, 1962.

When I helped draw up John Kennedy's special report on the status of women, I recalled the importance placed on the contribution of women in early Mormon life.

"prioritize." I must also say that my mother gave me the best course in consumer education anyone could ever have. Applying the Church's teachings of self-reliance and frugality and work, she gave me lessons in caring for home and food and all that stood me in good stead.

Later, when I was in the White House as consumer advisor to Lyndon Johnson, I got into a squabble with one of the big canners who kept saying that they could not tell the consumer how much water there was in a can of beans, how much was water and how much was beans. I sat at this conference table with all these men. (I have to tell you that the women were serving the coffee from the little room next door, and I'm sure that if I'd talked to every one, that every one knew that we could have answered that, but that's another story.) Anyway, they said, "It can't be done."

And I remember saying to them, "Have you ever canned beans?" They hadn't. "Well, I have," I said, "and it can be done." I can't tell you how many examples of open dating, unit pricing, all kinds of things we worked on that came from my background. I knew it from the bottom up!

So, you see, I grew up and moved away, both physically and emotionally, from my childhood, yet I don't think I ever lost my sense of owing something to the world that the Church gave me. That feeling is what kept drawing me back, and what drew me back today.

IT was my husband Oliver, a Lutheran from the North Dakota homesteads, who translated that feeling of debt in me into a lifetime of work on progressive political issues. As I look back on it, I believe that it was in my work that the religious impulses, planted by the Church in me, began to flower, and they have continued to flower ever since.

In Boston, when I looked into doing something beyond myself, I naturally expected it to be Church work. But Oliver urged me, "Do something different, Esther." This led me to be a volunteer in the industrial department of the Boston YWCA, where every Thursday evening the doors were opened to women from the factories and to domestic workers—cooks and maids from the wealthy homes. (They had one night off a

week, and every other Sunday after breakfast.) That's where I met, for the first time, the problems that working women faced, where I encountered industrial homework and child labor. And it was my first, firsthand experience with what we now call the working poor, which has been a very strong issue in my life. This was in 1930 when the country was sinking into

the Great Depression, and it was clear to me that these people needed help. It was then that I threw my energies into work with the labor movement.

When I was growing up in Utah, labor leaders were people who carried bombs around in their pockets. But for me, the labor movement became the way for me to express my religious beliefs about community and collective action, about extending a helping hand, about fairness, and about giving a voice to those Eleanor Roosevelt called "the left out people." I wonder, didn't the early LDS church fathers have ideas something like these when they created the cooperatives, the United Order, the great communitarian Church enterprises? Maybe the United Order did not last very long, but the idea, to me, says something about the founders' basic ideals.

During the years and decades that followed, I often hearkened back to the core values that I absorbed in my Mormon girlhood. I well remember my work with Senator Elbert Thomas, one of the great heroes from Utah. When I asked him how he would decide how to vote, he said he would ask, "Is it needed? Who does it

help? Does it really help? Is it for the people? Or is it for some special interest?" He always voted for the large group; "The many get my vote."

Another one who used to do the same thing is former Utah Senator Ted Moss. Oh, I remember Ted so well, his wonderful votes and courage. I could do a speech on him, too. Anyway, those ideas were great traditions of Utah, it seems to me. They did what was right and let the consequences follow. You remember that tall principle? It may be naive, but it's stuck with me so much.

I'll never forget the experience with President Carter when big multinational corporations were dumping abroad hazard-



PETERSON ON A 1965 CHOCOLATE PLANT TOUR FOR PRODUCT QUALITY CONTROL AND WOMEN'S JOB EQUALITY.

As a young teacher in Boston, I first heard the song about taking up swords and arrows of desire to build New Jerusalem in the modern world. The song helped inspire me to work to improve the lives of workers in this country.

ous waste and sending abroad products that were banned in this country. We finally got an executive order through, with great difficulty, to regulate it somewhat so people would be informed. If they wanted it they could have it; we didn't say they couldn't. But there had to be the information. And, oh, the corporations went after President Carter: "You can't do that, it'll be political suicide." I'll never forget when somebody said, "Why did you approve that?" and he looked them in the eye and said, "Because it was right." This wonderful, religious, intelligent man paid a price for doing right.

When in the early 1960s I helped draw up John Kennedy's special report on the status of women, I recalled the importance placed on the contribution of women in early Mormon life. I wanted to see that respect for women's work renewed and expanded. Perhaps most importantly, I wanted to see that respect renewed and expanded in the modern Mormon church of the day.

I CAME here to talk about faith, of course, and not work, but my line of work took a certain amount of faith—that laws could be passed to protect the weak, to share the general prosperity a little more evenly, to see that the least among us would have a say. That there could be equal pay, there could

be safety, there could be information, so people could make up their own minds as intelligent citizens. I worked for these things. I cannot claim that this work has been religious in the strict sense; but it was, for me, religious in a practical sense.

So I would like to suggest this evening that it is possible to see the world beyond the valley of one's faith and to stretch that faith by looking into other worlds and into other lives than our own. The Church did this for me. Sometimes, I know, I have offended some members of the Church, and I have been critical. But criticism can be constructive, and if you can manage to live long enough, perhaps you will come to see your offenses understood, as I hope mine are here tonight. That works for the Church, too. We can work to overcome its shortcomings and celebrate its enduring lessons, which have been very real and very meaningful throughout my life. I congratulate Sunstone for holding these symposia, and I thank them for inviting me to do a little thinking out loud with you, and for allowing me to be here for the stimulation of this simply wonderful week that I have enjoyed. I often wonder if my life would have been different if opportunities like this might have been around in the twenties when I was beginning to feel many of these issues.

So if you ask me, are you a Mormon? I say, you decide. ☪

WIDE LIVING

When I grow up
I'm going to be
a warm woman
of big bosom
who only bakes
what sticks in teeth.
I'll put out an album
of me singing loudly
Carole King songs
and I'll send you
an autographed one
for your birthday,
Christmas too.
The Relief Society
will love me.
They'll feel beautiful
next to my mumu smocks
with bare feet whenever
possible for I plan to live
where the sun only rises
and hummingbirds eat from
green plastic feeders
full of sugar water.

—JILL HEMMING

GARDEN TOMB

Where started the idea of sleep and rest?
Our visit's work begins to break the locks,
the chains of sin; to send the messengers
of good news. Good news. Now take up this husk,
enshrouded late with haste and love and tears—
oh children, how you little understand—
now take it up again, then home to joy
before the work begins complete, anew.

So gently fold the kerchief from this face—
these wounds remain as touchstones of our grace.
As lightning cracks from earth to cloud to eye,
I take it, perfect; turn to greet the friends
who come to witness these first, glorious fruits,
like shoots that from spring earth rise ripe in bloom.
Unbounded now, to give the glory found
in comfort, teaching, feeding, clasping hands.

Our mercy races faster than the light
to turn the axis of the Earth from death
to victory through freely offered love,
not comprehended now, but on that day,
to shine for us and ours from east to west,
as all knees bow and every tongue confess
and we embrace our friends and claim our own:
Roll back that insubstantial, time-bound stone.

—LISA BOLIN HAWKINS

Second Place, 1990 Brookie & D. K. Brown Memorial Fiction Contest

LOOKING FOR GOD

By Kristen Smart Rogers

God the Father is a Bantu warrior. Tall as a tree, black and shining like basalt. Leopard skin around his loins, two-edged spear upright in his hand. Lightning face, sharp and quick. God the Mother beside him, fierce and beautiful. Her onyx breasts gleam.

Vickie Sowards leaned her forehead against the window of the hotel room. Thirty-four floors straight down, cars scurried like ants. The room was rose and gray and it smelled of stale cigarette smoke and nights smothered in malaise. God's black face filled the cavity of Vickie's chest, but the ghost of her own reflection, dark-eyed, weary with travel, was the only reality here. She turned from the window.

Someone was tapping on the door: her mother.

Vickie took a breath into the hollowness of her mouth, then she let the breath escape and went to open the door.

"Are you ready?" her mother said, gliding into the room, looking all around at everything—the pinched bedspread, the pile of flung-off clothes, the shabby daughter. Her mother's face was lustrous as pearl, and the lips that touched Vickie's cheek were fragrant. "Keep your drapes closed, Victoria," she said.

Without a word Vickie pulled the drapes across the window and the headlights and the neon signs and the building across the street vanished. Her mother smiled suddenly and held out her coat. "Help me into this, darling, will you?" she said. The coat was sensuous and heavy in Vickie's hands. "I don't wear my furs very much anymore, you know," her mother said, slipping into the sleeves. "I don't want to deal with those people, those *animal-lovers* who do such awful things." Again she smiled, over her shoulder. "These are terrible times, really," she said. "So much friction over the smallest things."

They went out into the hall then, and pressed the elevator button. "Well!" said her mother, touching Vickie's hair. "In all these years we've never been to New York together. I've got ballet tickets for tonight; how does that sound?"

Behind the elevator doors stood a short man with a large, pocked nose. Because he stood in the center of the space, they had to step to either side of him and the three of them sank earthward, each studying the descending numbers above the doors and holding one hand in the other as they endured the interminable wait. At the end, just before the doors released them into the lobby, Vickie glanced at the short man. His eyes,

fixed on some intangible point, flickered just barely, as though he knew her story only too well.

They came by taxi to a restaurant where the waiters were dressed in peasant shirts and baggy pants.

"This is where the celebrities come, then," said Vickie.

"I've seen a few. You never know," said her mother. "Keep your eyes open." The leather of the seat was soft as newborn skin. Vickie watched the people at the tables around them.

God, perhaps, wears a face of unearthly beauty. Adonis. The face of virility.

It made her smile, this sudden need to find a tangible God; how, ever since she had kissed Duane and the children good-bye, she had looked everywhere, searching the faces spinning past her in the airport concourses, memorizing profiles of the passengers in the frail plane that lifted them all only barely beneath the porches of heaven. At home, standing on the red earth of the desert, watching the brindled sky swivel around the four directions, she had not needed to know these things.

When a waiter brought the menus, Vickie watched him closely, looking for mysteries in his stolid face. His mustache brushed his lips.

"Are there any famous people here tonight?" Vickie asked him.

"Victoria—" said her mother.

The waiter straightened slowly, and regarded Vickie with a faint smile. "I'm afraid not," he said. "Lunch was very big, though. I waited on Suzanne Somers."

"Oh. Well," said Vickie, chagrined. She half-lifted a hand in self-dismissal. "I just wondered."

"You haven't told me very much about the children yet," her mother quickly said. "Is Molly still horse-crazy? Is Peter walking yet?" The waiter left.

God is Sam Shepard, thin, melancholy, with eyes that have suffered. God is Farrah Fawcett, and her hair is as pale as the daisies she sprinkled here and there on creation day.

Vickie found words, but not the right words, to tell about her children, her husband, her life among ranchers and Navajos and endless country. The ranchers she knew were great believers in the wickedness of coyotes. They set out poisoned bait on BLM land. "I hate it," Vickie said one night when the windows were open to the desert and the curtains billowed with the echo of coyote howls. "It's not right."

Duane lay with his hands beneath his head. "Try to understand. Coyotes are smart, damn smart. They know how to get

KRISTEN ROGERS is a freelance writer living in Park City, Utah.



“Don’t worry,” the coyote man said, narrowing his eyes, looking straight into her face. “I’m not after your soul. I’m not even after your purse.”

what they want. If you’re a rancher you have to hate coyotes. It’s part of the job.”

In Blanding, Utah, it was half-raining right now, half-snowing, and the shed was leaking, and Molly was coming home from Brownie Scouts. Duane was frowning into the pages of some report. He had remembered to thaw the casserole she had left in the freezer, and the warmth of it baking, its calm and enfolding smell filled the house. The print that Molly brought home from Sunday School still hung, slightly askew, on the impassive refrigerator: Jesus, in the garden—the aged olive tree, the hands clasped in endless pleading, the face invented by human longing turned upward, looking beyond the edge of the paper, frozen in doubt.

Here, at the Russian Tea Room, someone filled her glass every few minutes, the linen was stainless and smooth against her fingers, oil paintings looked languidly down on her from the walls all around. The room quivered with sleek conversations, the silvery clinking of crystal and china.

In Blanding, winter had risen from the earth, stripping the trees bare. Sometimes it seeped through cracks into the house where she kept watch over her children and where she slept

curled into Duane’s arms. But here, in the bright city, where emeralds glittered on her mother’s neck, winter was obliterated entirely.

Her mother had stopped listening. She leaned over and murmured into Vickie’s ear, “A man over there has been watching you.”

“You’re imagining things,” said Vickie.

“I am not imagining things,” said her mother, arching her eyebrow. “It’s the man at the corner table.”

After a moment, Vickie glanced around. He was alone. His hair fell to his shoulders in gilt-colored curls. Over the back of his chair was draped what looked like the hide of a coyote. She met his gaze for only an instant. Her face burned where his eyes had touched it. The tension of moonless, coyote-filled nights rose up in her. She twisted the ring on her finger. “He’s not looking at me,” she said.

Her mother blotted her lips with a napkin. “Nonsense. He wonders who the beautiful girl is.”

“Right,” said Vickie.

Her mother smoothed a strand of hair from Vickie’s forehead. “I’m taking you shopping tomorrow,” she said. “When

was the last time you bought yourself something nice?"

When, in those ancient days, calling home from college, Vickie had first hinted that there was a Duane in her life, her mother had laughed. "Range Science! My God, Victoria. Don't they have any pre-med students at that school?"

Vickie glanced at her blouse—it was old—and then, furtively, at the man in the corner. A woman was sitting down across from him, and he was grinning at her, showing his white teeth. By the time Vickie and her mother left, the man and the woman were leaning across the table toward each other, intent in their encounter.

At midnight, in her hotel room, Vickie pulled back the drapes. In the building across the street a man was hunched over a desk. She craned her head to look toward the sky, trying to find the tops of the buildings, but they went up forever; they were like sandstone walls that never stopped rising, and her abdomen fluttered at the sensation of verticality.

God is not ten billion years old and slower than a tortoise, with a beard that trails behind him. Could not, could not be. She would find him.

The first thing she saw the next morning was the coyote man. She went into a deli for a bagel and there he was.

"Hi," he said, raking Vickie's body with his eyes. He showed his teeth. His eyebrows were thick and black.

The pulse of the world ceased for an instant, until she closed her eyes and brought it back. "Hello," she murmured.

"Hey," said the man at the counter, handing over a bag and some change. "You want this, or what?" She took the bag and turned away, trying not to think about coincidences or statistical possibilities, trying not to notice the sudden numbness in her brain.

She went outside. It was not at all cold. She knew perfectly well that he had followed her, she could feel him behind her, but it seemed wise to pretend that she had never seen him, that she would never need to look at him again. She set off walking toward the Museum of Natural History. Her mother was not well this morning. A big storm—the first real snow of the season—had come through the Four Corners last night. The roads were icy, Duane had told her on the phone. They'd closed the schools. The children would spend the day at their cousins' house. Duane had things under control.

But here in New York it was endless spring. The coyote man came up beside her. She did not look his way. People of all shapes and fortunes streamed past them. She walked faster, tried to think about Blanding, where she was safe, where she had memorized the edges of the horizon, where the faces of everyone, Indian and Anglo, were weathered chunks of rock. But here, on 57th Street, she felt as though she were seeing the whole mottled mosaic of humanity for the first time. She remembered the bagel and pulled it from the sack and then realized that it was not what she wanted after all. She stuffed it back into the bag.

"Let me guess. You're not from New York," said the coyote man at her side. "You're not even from the East Coast." She knew that he was trying to look into her face, but she didn't care. She kept walking, weaving past the faces of executives,

secretaries, deliverymen, models. It's broad daylight; there's no danger, she told herself.

"Look, let me put you at ease. I'm no rapist," he said. His voice sounded familiar, as though she'd heard it before. It was a strong voice, and she had a certain respect for strength. She kept walking.

"Myself," he said, "I'm rich, not that it matters." An impulse to see the owner of this voice, just one more time, came over her, and she sidled her eyes in his direction. He grinned.

She knew that she could not let him continue. When they reached a corner, she stopped and got out her map. "Please—leave me alone," she said.

He leaned toward her ear. "I can help you get to wherever you're going," he said in a low voice. She snapped the map shut and strode off, trying to feel with every nerve whether he was following or not. She turned onto Central Park West and suddenly he was beside her. Her ribs twitched.

"Get away from me," she hissed.

"Look," he said. "You think I'm out of line, but I've learned to be direct. I don't let opportunities go by." They were walking past old apartment buildings that fronted on the park. Vickie wanted to imagine elderly ladies and poodles living in them, to imagine mistresses and dogs on languid strolls in the park.

She had a sudden lonely vision of the faces of her children. "I'll scream," she said.

"Let me make it clear," the coyote man said. "I've had all kinds of women and there's something different about you." He took hold of her elbow—her stomach lurched—and pulled her to a stop. His eyes flicked across her face. "You're ready for me. You've waited a long time, and I'm here."

She yanked her elbow away. "Look, mister," she said, but he was smiling impishly and she lost track of her anger. Maybe he was Jewish. One of God's chosen people. How could she tell?

"Don't worry," he said, narrowing his eyes, looking straight into her face. "I'm not after your soul. I'm not even after your purse."

Before she knew it, she'd let half a smile escape, but she snuffed it out and spun away from him. He grabbed her arm and grinned again. "That was a test," he said. "You passed."

Duane was cleaning up breakfast now, wiping off the high chair while Robert pulled pans from the shelf by the stove. She saw him, in that brown flannel shirt with the sleeves rolled up, filling the sink with hot soapy water.

"Here's your test," she said. "Get lost." Adrenalin was flooding her veins. It was a sweet feeling.

He moved his hand up her arm, up over her shoulder, toward her neck. His touch was hot, and she jerked away. "Look. I'm married, I have three kids. How's that?" She had the sudden odd sensation that she was trapped in celluloid, lost in the middle of a movie with an inevitable, melancholy plot.

"It's fine," he grinned. "Just fine."

Perhaps this man could teach her about God. Perhaps it was this very possibility that had led her here. She set her mind hard against such a vision. But the old apartment buildings rose up like temples. Perhaps in a room up there . . .

She began to walk again, faster, almost running. He talked his way alongside her, she felt him pulling at her. She tried to shut him out by watching the gray concrete moving beneath her, watching as carefully as if she were back in the desert, balanced on a foot-wide sandstone ledge, five hundred feet above a canyon floor. Nothing but Duane's voice could pull her across places like that—at least, in the days before it became a necessity to find God, no matter from what height she approached him. Unwillingly she looked again at the coyote man, searching his face for answers. He had wide nostrils and bright teeth. The coyote coat seemed to her a mantle of power, something a shaman might wear on the darkest nights. She wondered why she was not afraid, whether he had twisted something inside her to block out fear.

Then he stopped suddenly and, as if she were belayed to him, as if she had no power to walk on alone, she stopped too. She looked around at him, measuring time with her breaths, trying to slow the storm in her head.

He said, "Right here is where Lennon was shot."

She stared at him, and then at the building.

God's hair, flowing like a fountain.

She felt herself lurch toward the coyote man, suddenly weak. He pointed out the exact spot; she searched the pavement for blood stains. She looked up at the crouching facade of the building. The stones were dark as dusk.

Jesus was slain for my sins.

The coyote man's eyes were on her. He laughed. "Just another guy getting bumped off," he said. "Happens every day."

Vickie looked at him and he looked at her and his eyes burned her skin. "What are you saying?" she said, slowly, a line from a script.

He twisted his mouth and lifted his hands heavenward to demonstrate his innocence. "Happens every day. Believe me." He moved toward her. "Someone could come along right now and slit both our throats and nobody would even notice." He showed his teeth.

A gust of sudden cold wind swept along the ground. She shivered and shifted her eyes away from him and looked at the place again. She thought about the Blanding cemetery, the crooked pale stones marking the oblivion of a handful of Mormon pioneers. "Go away," she said in a hollow voice. The doorman looked their way, curiously.

The coyote man shook his hair and stepped toward her. "When are you going to trust me?" he said. He slipped his coyote hands around the base of her skull. He leaned close and she smelled his maleness and the strength of it and grew a little dizzy.

"You're almost there," he said. "You're alone on a precipice and you planned it that way and that's why I'm here." She felt his broad thumbs on her cheeks and a brush of fur against her neck. His image filled the universe: the heavy eyelids, the mane of hair, the white grin. She opened her mouth to make him leave . . . or maybe to join him, to let him show her what he knew. She let her head rest in the wide hands; she closed her eyes and searched for the clarity of instinct to decide the end, but then she felt a muffled warning: "Keep your eyes open,

Victoria," said the shadow of her mother's voice. "You never know."

At the instant she slid her eyelids open, a rabble of people burst into her vision. They sprinted across the street, brandishing spray cans, their faces purple with rage.

"Wolf hater! Murderer!" they screamed. Vickie felt the hands on the nape of her neck go tense, she heard a howl, she smelled the shock of paint and saw red slashed across the world. The coyote man leaped around, and The Dakota and the street and the park and the doorman all spun with him, and for an instant Vickie saw nothing but sky, and then the Furies were gone, clattering right over the place where John Lennon stepped to his death and shouting back over their shoulders, "Murderer! Murderer's whore!"

The coyote man cursed and shoved Vickie aside and sprang after them.

She gasped. He'd disappeared into the maze of streets, but her skin still remembered the touch of fur. She looked over at the doorman, standing like a statue before the shrine. As though she could outrun this place of blood, she fled.

God is the Trickster. Coyote. Wily, unpredictable.

She ran recklessly along the gray sidewalk, and then the museum reared up in front of her. She leaped up the steps, fumbled in her pocket, and pulled out a bill to thrust at the man behind the window. He handed her a round badge to put on. She took it without curiosity. When it fell through her fingers and clattered to the floor, she didn't notice. She pushed her way around the edge of a crowd of schoolchildren and hurried on, breathing hard, in no particular direction. There were no famous people here, only bones from the past in glass cases, but her mother's voice told her to keep her eyes open. You never know, said her mother's voice. You never know, you never know.

And then she was alone. She closed her eyes and stood alone and felt her heartbeat grow slow and loud. When she came to herself, she found she was standing at the entrance to a great hall, a dark hall ringing with ancient voices. She stood there for a long moment, trying to remember the name of this place, trying to remember how it was that she had been here before, trying to dare to walk, slowly and alone, down its length.

The hall was swollen with darkness and she entered it against her better judgment. On either side rose up the totems of the Northwest Indians—fish and birds and animals and grotesques: the countless faces of God staring at her with impassive eyes.

THE SALMON LEAPING UP AGAINST THE STREAM

After suffering, the body
broken. That ecstasy
of blood in a still pond.
A place to return to.
The beginning of knowing.

—TIMOTHY LIU

The atonement of Christ involved the suffering of an innocent individual for the sins of another in order that those sins might not have eternal consequences. In like fashion, we become saviors on Mount Zion when we are willing to suffer again as innocents the feelings of despair, pain, rejection, and anxiety inflicted during our childhood, but which we found too overwhelming at that time to integrate.

NOT FOR ADAM'S TRANSGRESSION: PATHS TO INTERGENERATIONAL PEACE

By Wendy L. Ulrich

AS A PSYCHOLOGIST, I HAVE WALKED WITH MANY individuals in their search for greater peace in their lives and within their families. Stacy (all names and identifying information have been altered to protect confidentiality) struggled for years to understand the bad choices she had made at age fifteen, despite her testimony of the gospel. As she reflected on this time in her life, she realized that one of the causes was the lack of support and involvement she felt at home during the vulnerable years of adolescence. Her parents' preoccupation with health problems and younger siblings left Stacy, the eldest child, feeling alone.

As an adult, Stacy took the opportunity to ask her parents about their own adolescent years. Her mother shared details of how painful it had been for her as an only child when her divorced mother, to whom she had been very close, remarried. She described her feelings of abandonment when her mother announced her wedding plans; her feelings of rejection as her place in her mother's life was taken over by a relative stranger; her retreat to the more comforting world of social popularity with its incumbent temptations. Imagine Stacy's feelings when she realized that these all-too-familiar feelings from her own life had occurred to her mother when she was also fifteen—something Stacy had not known.

Stacy then began to ask her father about his adolescence. Among other things, he recalled how painful it must have been for his father—to whom he had been very close—when he lost both of his parents in a car accident. Stacy's father described his own father becoming extremely depressed, staying in his

room alone when not at work. Her father did not mention his own feelings, but it was not difficult to imagine that he would similarly feel emotionally abandoned by his father, in addition to grief at the loss of his grandparents. No other event in his early life seemed to carry the same potential for traumatic effect. How old was her father when these events occurred? Fifteen.

Although Stacy realized that many factors influenced her early decisions, recognizing that her difficult year coincided with particularly painful events in the lives of her parents increased her compassion and decreased her blame for both her parents and herself. She examined the patterns of emotional withdrawal and psychological abandonment that had helped at least two generations of teenagers to feel rejected and alone. She determined to fight her own tendency to withdraw emotionally from her own oldest child, who was then approaching the fated age of fifteen.

Stacy's parents were not evil for their unconscious repetition of a pattern from their own lives. Nevertheless, their behavior had negative, though unintended, consequences in their daughter's life. Their transgression of the laws of love—transgressions of which they had also been innocent victims—damaged their child. Stacy's exploration of these issues was not prompted by blame, but by a desire to understand all of the influences which had constrained her choices so that she might maximize her repentance and influence her own children more positively. To unveil in our own lives concealed ancestral patterns of transgression and its consequences is to experience the remarkable, freeing power of truth. Despite our reluctance as a people to grapple openly with the transgressions of our forebearers, there is an important place in the gospel for candid examination of the impact of our parents'

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transgressions in our lives—a place secured by doctrine and precedent.

BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD

JOSEPH SMITH stated that baptism for the dead constitutes the “most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel” (D&C 128:17)—a statement that strikes me as curious. Given the vast array of doctrines and practices of the gospel, including those unique to Mormonism, baptism for the dead does not come first to my mind as the “most glorious.” Though Joseph’s statement is not completely clear, his superlative suggests that this ordinance’s significance extends beyond the obvious function of providing the opportunity for all to be baptized.

John A. Widtsoe once declared that if we are to be truly empowered by temple ordinances—of which baptism for the dead is fundamental—we must see “beyond the symbol, the mighty realities for which the symbol stands.”¹ I have concluded that temple work for the dead symbolizes “mighty realities” in addition to those symbolized by the corresponding ordinances for the living. The ordinance of baptism for the dead embodies a rich and instructive symbol of the process of making peace with our parents, and theirs, and beyond—the “welding link . . . between the fathers and the children” (D&C 128:18).

Baptism abundantly symbolizes the death and resurrection of Christ, and, through Christ, of all Adam’s posterity. It further symbolizes the cleansing and purifying of the inner self and the rebirth of a new creature in Christ. All of these concepts are equivalently symbolized by the ordinance of baptism for the dead. But there is more.

In Joseph Smith’s time, Saints performed baptisms only for their own dead ancestors and family members. Quoting Malachi, Joseph explicitly delineated the purpose of genealogical research and temple work for the dead as “turning the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.” Joseph further explained that “their salvation is necessary to our salvation, as Paul says concerning

the fathers—that they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect” (D&C 128:15-18).

Powerful symbolism pervades the ordinance of baptism for one’s kindred dead—symbolism beyond that inherent in the ordinance for the living. Specifically, baptism for the dead represents the critical, celestial process of repenting for, and forgiving, our ancestors’ sins in our own lives. By participating in this ordinance for our own families or others we both make

the Atonement available to them and personally accept the Atonement for our ancestors’ sins which have been visited on us.

SPIRIT PRISONS

WE partake of our ancestors’ sins both as innocent victims of their transgressions and as perpetrators of their erroneous ways.² This simple ordinance represents our willingness to have our kindred and our culture forgiven for those sins. It symbolizes our personal covenant to repent of their sins in our lives, preventing coming generations from receiving our sins. In short, baptism for the dead symbolizes the

combined power of human repentance and Christ’s atonement in breaking the intergenerational cycles of sin and transgression, perfecting both parent and child in the process.

As we participate in this ordinance, we symbolically release our forebearers from three kinds of spirit prisons: (1) the spirit prisons of our judgments and animosity toward them, even though we have suffered innocently because of their transgressions; (2) the spirit prisons of their own guilt and pain as they view with eternal perspective the negative results of their sins in our lives; and (3) the spiritual chains that prevent them from completing their efforts to repent because they can no longer influence nor make restitution for the unrighteousness in our lives that we learned from them. We symbolically allow them to complete the process of repentance by our recognition of their sins, our regret of them, our resolve not to allow them to be passed on to yet another generation, our lives of restitution and renewal. We become, in powerful ways, saviors on Mount Zion on behalf of dead forebearers who await our redeeming work.



To unveil in our own lives concealed ancestral patterns of transgression and its consequences is to experience the remarkable, freeing power of truth.

SINS OF THE PARENTS AND THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST

THESE celestial principals have been taught since Adam, according to the Pearl of Great Price. Enoch taught his people that Adam received angelic instruction to repent and be baptized in token of the atonement of Christ, through which “the sins of the *parents* cannot be answered upon the heads of the children” (Moses 6:54, emphasis added). The context of this scripture makes it clear that not only Adam’s transgression but the sins of all parents as well are specifically included in the atonement of Christ. Although we suffer under the mortal consequences of the transgression of Adam and Eve and the sins of our parents, through the Atonement we are promised that those consequences will not be eternal. We may be punished for our own sins, but not for the tacit, ingrained habits and unconscious replications of our parents’ transgressions.

Inevitably we are subject to the consequences of our parents’ choices and to the wise and foolish patterns of living they teach us. Continuing with Moses 6:55, we are “conceived in sin” (the sinful context of our parents’ lives), and as we grow “sin conceiveth in [our] hearts” as we learn the sinful patterns of previous generations. Just as we must endure the mortal consequences of Adam’s transgression for our growth and development, the transgressions of our immediate forebearers also provide an indispensable context in which to grow and learn—to “taste the bitter, that [we] may know how to prize the good.”

Within the confines of this mortal training individuals experience a wide variety in the amount and kind of parental transgression they must work within. The transgressions of some parents may be limited to occasional impatience and normal inexperience. Others may learn more damaging habits at their parents’ hands—abuse, negligence, dishonesty, and addiction. These great evils are part of the world of opposites we have come to earth to experience.

Other phases of our immortal journey (in the pre-mortal worlds) have provided us with ample experience with good, but with minimal experience with the stinging, bitter consequences of evil. Overall, mortality is constructed to make sure that we will experience sufficient evil to make informed choices, although, unfortunately, many of us will experience too little of good. In fact, there have been occasions when there is so much evil and so little goodness that children grow up without true choices about their behavior. When such is the case, wholesale destruction is ordained by God because the purposes of mortality are being thwarted. On the other extreme, in Enoch’s society so little evil remained and good so dominated that the purposes of mortality were transcended and God translated the whole society to a different state (Moses 7:21).

Agency to choose good or evil will only increase as we gain the increased power and knowledge associated with exaltation. Even as we become gods, our God will not, and cannot, force us to use the power attained for good. Choice is always

before us. We must learn by our own experience to choose good because we deeply understand and value it, and not simply because it is the godly “thing to do.” This earthly realm is apparently the only one in which sufficient uncertainty permeates our existence to allow us to make our choices based on what we have truly learned to value, rather than on the reigning paradigm of whomever has the most power—even if that is God. Such values are forged in the fires of our own experience and observation of the consequences of good and evil in human life.

These values are apparently of such import that God conspicuously resists interfering with our choices while in this probation, even when they have remarkably painful consequences in the lives of innocent others. However, his plan ensures that the innocent can ultimately be freed from those consequences through the Atonement, and that our eternal fate will be determined by our own intentions and choices and not the unconsciously acquired transgressions of our parents, our ancestors, or our cultures.

Perhaps when we consider the repeated scriptural warning that the sins of the parents are visited on the heads of the children to “the third and fourth generation of them that hate me” (Exodus 20:5), it is not accidental that we are specifically enjoined to begin our genealogical research by completing work for the four generations immediately preceding us. Nor is it accidental that family history, not genealogy alone, is the recently reiterated goal of our research. Our assigned task does not consist in simply completing temple ordinances; we are to keep journals, write family histories, and pass such information on to our posterity. By so doing we begin to recognize the patterns in our lives that echo the sins and blessings of our parents’ lives, that we humbly share credit for our moral successes, and awaken awareness of our learned predispositions for moral failure. Thus, even though the consequences of our parents’ sins are visited upon us, we can be assured that the responsibility for them will not be. “The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin” (Deuteronomy 24: 16).

JUSTICE AND MERCY

JUST as baptism can occur as an initiation or a culmination of the process of being born again, so participation in ordinances of baptism for the dead does not presume that we have completed (or even begun) the process of making peace with our ancestors and repenting of sins learned from them. The “mighty realities” represented by baptism for the dead rightly “belongeth to my house” (D&C 124:30) because they are celestial principals of considerable magnitude.

Where our parents have been righteous and emotionally healthy, making peace with them may be a reasonably straightforward process. Where there have been more serious problems, releasing parents from spirit prisons of our own and their making can be strenuous and painful—a task not for neophytes in things of the Spirit. This “graduate course” in

intra- and inter-personal relations appropriately belongs to the spiritual university of the House of the Lord. Nevertheless, the command to repent goes to all, for all humans are "lost, because of the transgression of their parents" (2 Nephi 2: 21).

People who struggle with intergenerational conflict seem to follow a consistent path in identifying and resolving the sins of their ancestors. Two great milestones along this path can be identified as two vital characteristics of God and godhood: justice and mercy.

The principle of justice requires an honest appraisal of our current symptoms and the realities of our pain. It requires a gathering of evidence about the impact of parental actions on our lives. Sometimes the damaging consequences of parental transgression are fairly easy to identify and feel. At other times the transgressions are more subtle and difficult to define. Looking for repeated patterns of problems in our own lives and examining childhood memories assist us in identifying painful emotions that provide clues to the nature and extent of parental transgressions. To forgive prematurely can close the doors to the important realities that painful affect can open. It is by experiencing the painful consequences of the sins of others that we shape our own values and clarify our efforts not to repeat them.

Justice requires us to fully acknowledge a balanced perspective that mediates our own contributions to problems and the contributions of others. Justice further requires that we not assume responsibility for sins we have not committed, that we not assume power to control decisions we cannot control, and that we not exonerate others' actions when they are dangerous and destructive. To attempt to be merciful in the absence of justice is to deny the characteristics which make God God.

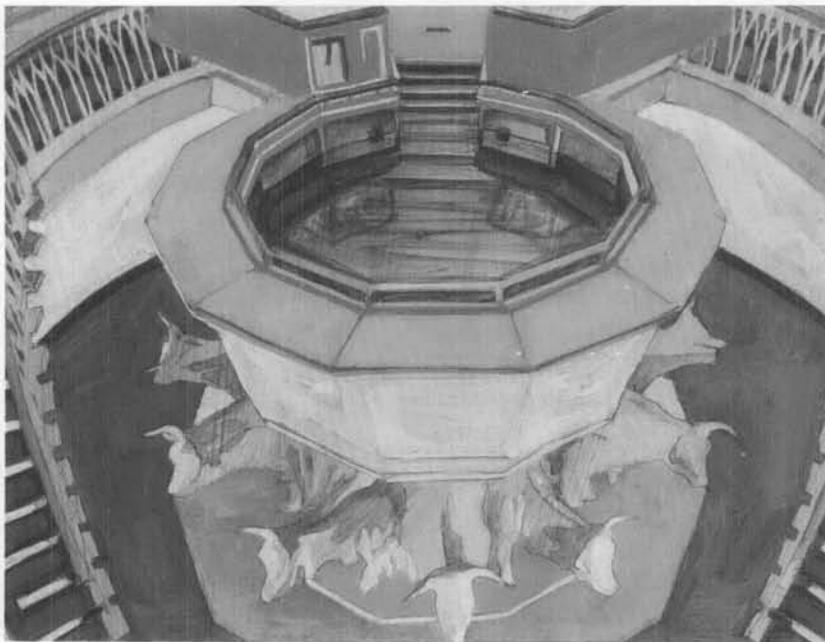
The principal of mercy follows the principal of justice, but cannot rob it. To forgive others in a merciful fashion is not to condone their sins or place a vote of approbation upon that which causes pain and dysfunction. To forgive is to trust in

God's ultimate justice for wrongdoing, and to believe that he, also, condemns the sins that have caused us wrongful suffering.

Mercy further assists us in taking responsibility for our own lives, encouraging us away from the safe but powerless domains of blame or one-sided perspectives. Mercy allows peace to come to the forgiver as she enlarges her understanding of all contributors, takes action on her own behalf, and extends to others the mercy she would claim for herself through the atonement of Christ.

The forgiver leaves to God the sorting out of responsibility and intentionality, acknowledging others' circumstances and agency, and accepting any and all good consequences that have come from his relationships, just as he has acknowledged the evil.

The milestones of justice and mercy mark a path to intergenerational peace that parallels the path of repentance in our own lives. Both paths include the steps from initial denial to confession, acknowledging the pain we cause, experiencing regret, learning to forgive ourselves, and renewing our covenants.



Baptism for the dead represents the critical, celestial process of repenting for, and forgiving, our ancestors sins in our own lives. By participating in this ordinance for our own families or others we both make the Atonement available to them, and personally accept the Atonement for our ancestors' sins which have been visited on us.

DENIAL- CONFESSION

P EOPLE sometimes recognize that

problems they struggle with have roots in parental injunctions; however, many minimize or bury painful feelings in order to proceed with life. We may blame ourselves or our circumstances, citing the apparent success of siblings or acquaintances from similar backgrounds as evidence that the "true" problems lie not with our parents' sins, but with our own eternal nature. Increased awareness of painful consequences of our parents' choices, as expressed through anger, anxiety, depression, may feel to some like a betrayal of our parents.

A variety of defenses protects us from this increased awareness, or this betrayal of our parents. We may deflect the feelings in the numbing effects of activity, excitement, alcohol, or lethargy. We may bury unpleasant memories that have little

obvious relevance to the present. We may divert the pain into excessive and senseless anxiety or depression. Alternatively, our acknowledgement of pain may include excessive or one-sided blame, retaliation, or rejection, that also can serve to protect and blind us to the full and “just” reality of complicated familial relations.

For healing to begin we must understand that we repeat the patterns of the past when we do not see them.³ We relinquish our agency to ignorance and fear. The purposes of mortality are thwarted because we do not grow in our understanding of good and evil when we are unwilling to taste the bitter. We cease to be free agents, and, despite our best efforts, continue to pass to our children the negative paradigms under which we blindly operate. While many aspects of our lives may be undermined, the greatest negative effects occur within our families. Efforts to change our dysfunctional behavior are thwarted. Even if we change outward behavior, deeper thoughts and beliefs continue to subtly but powerfully influence our interactions. Buried feelings leak out in ways that appear mysterious, but are in fact quite predictable. Family therapists have long recognized that among the most powerful forces affecting family life are the conflicts and secrets that are never discussed.⁴ Acceptance of the reality of our parents’ choices is a first step in making peace.

For example, Sara, a young woman with three children, approached me for a consultation on how to handle her son, Scott, age eleven, and the oldest child. Scott’s behavior was creating considerable turmoil for his entire family. He was frequently abusive to his siblings, hitting them, threatening them, and yelling at them. His moods dictated the emotional tone of the home. Everyone walked on eggshells to placate Scott and ward off his temper outbursts.

“When you are angry with the kids, how do you express it?” I asked his mother. “What do you do with your anger?” She thought for a moment and then responded somewhat sheepishly, “I probably yell, and then I threaten him, and if that doesn’t work I guess I hit him.” She then acknowledged that she had not previously recognized a connection between her expression of anger and her son’s.

Exploring further, I asked, “Whom in the family does Scott most remind you of?” She said that Scott reminded her of her father, to whom she had been very close before his death ten years previously. The resemblance in her mind included both Scott’s tender, spiritual qualities, admired in her stake president father, and Scott’s temper. Although Sara had never been the recipient of her father’s outbursts, she had seen him send her older brother flying into a wall on one occasion, had observed him hit another brother in the face, and had frequently heard angry comments that were belittling, cruel, and rejecting. Yet Sara became very uncomfortable when I labeled these behaviors abusive. “It really bothers me to hear you call my father abusive,” she stated. “He was a wonderful man with so many good qualities. I’ve given you the wrong impression.”

Despite Sara’s recognition of the many spiritual qualities of her father, her unwillingness to accept his sin of abusive anger is perpetuating a continuation of abusive patterns in her own

family and in successive generations. Although Sara may believe she is not as “hot-tempered” as her father was, her distorted perceptions of her own and others’ anger colors her interpretations and responses in contexts arousing anger. The sins of her father are visited upon the heads of his children and grandchildren in part because they are not being confessed, but denied.

ACCEPTANCE and “confession” of the sins of our parents is no more a betrayal of our parents than is acceptance and confession of our own sins a betrayal of ourselves. In both cases, confession is simply the first step in the process of overcoming the sin. It is an act of maturity, love, and honoring of that desire which is most deeply held by all true parents: that their children will succeed where they have failed. It is not focusing on the mote that is in another’s eye while failing to regard the beam that is in our own; rather it is to fully acknowledge the beams in our own eyes, grown there in response to the motes of others that distorted their perceptions and influenced their vision of us.

Prophets remind us of the importance of understanding our historical roots when they emphasize reading the scriptures, studying history, and doing family history research. When I read the Old Testament I used to be confused by the favoritism, deceit, and dishonesty occasionally observed in the lives of the great prophets and their wives. I assumed that these faults were either being represented as virtues, or were being excused because of the status of the perpetrators. More recently I have come to the conclusion that these details are included so that we might learn from the failings of our righteous forefathers as well as from their spiritual triumphs. I find great comfort in the fact that these individuals are not represented as one-sided, faultless beings to whom I cannot relate. I am thrilled to discover that God speaks to, and ultimately accepts, such fallible kindred spirits. Just as reading the Old Testament forces the thoughtful reader to struggle with the sins and injustices of our spiritual forebearers in ways that expand our understanding of the gospel, struggling with the sins of our personal forebearers expands our understanding of ourselves and the values we will choose and will live by.

Even when we decide it is time to think about the past, this process is often hampered by poor recall of our early years. If our early life has been marked by trauma, or is very difficult to recall, a competent psychotherapist can provide needed support and facilitate insight. If our memories are fairly intact, it can be valuable to record our emotional life history in writing or by sharing it with a trusted friend in a recorded oral history. I have found it helpful to divide my life into chapters characterized by a predominate emotional theme or climate. I give each chapter a title, then describe a few personal experiences from that time period that seem to represent my struggles or experiences. Finally I let myself feel deeply the emotions that went with those experiences, and think about the conclusions I drew at that time about myself, my relationship to others, my abilities, my weaknesses, and my feelings.⁵

A useful format for unveiling some of the forgotten feelings

of childhood has been developed by Gestalt therapists. One version is to sit alone in a quiet room. Across from you, put a chair in which your parent—in imagination only—is seated. This is an opportunity to tell the parent in full candor about your feelings and thoughts as a child about an important event or some aspect of your relationship. Because you are speaking for the child you once were, realism, fairness, and humility are not necessary here. The goal of the exercise is to uncover the viewpoint and feelings of the child, as fully as possible.

Once this is complete you may wish to switch chairs, and give the voice of the parent an opportunity to be heard. After both sides have had full expression, you assume a mediating role of an objective adult whose job is to fully support and confirm the feelings of the child and parent, negotiate a version of reality which meets the legitimate needs of the child, and consider the impact of what has been uncovered on the present and future.



DOUG HANDEL

Family therapists have long recognized that among the most powerful forces affecting family life are the conflicts and secrets that are never discussed. Acceptance of the reality of our parents' choices is a first step in making peace.

RETASTING THE BITTER—PRIZING THE GOOD

MAKING peace with painful experiences from the past requires us to fully experience these feelings, to identify them, to correctly associate them with their original perpetrators, and to accept and learn from them. The atonement of Christ involved the suffering of an innocent individual for the sins of another in order that those sins might not have eternal consequences. In like fashion, we become saviors on Mount Zion when we are willing to suffer again as innocents the feelings of despair, pain, rejection, and anxiety inflicted during our childhood, but which we found too overwhelming at that time to integrate. To do this we must emotionally "become as little children . . . submissive, meek, humble, patient, . . . willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father" (Mosiah 3:18-19). We re-experience that pain against which we felt no choice but to psychologically defend when young.

Re-experiencing the pain plays an essential part in releasing ourselves, our parents, and our children from the spirit prisons

of previously unattended ancestral sins. It is no wonder that we shrink from such a task and wish to avoid it. I believe the atonement of Christ included this kind of pain—a bitter cup from which even Christ wished he could shrink and not partake. Yet he partook "and finished" that cup (D&C 19:18), experiencing fully the soul-tearing, God-forsaken, and totally undeserved anguish of the innocent for the sins of all parents, in all ages of time. He invites us to share a taste of that experience with him as we repent for those who have gone

before—repentance literally meaning "being in pain again."⁶

If the pain we uncover is extensive, we deserve help. One of my clients, Andrea, had a difficult time role-playing herself during a reenactment of a childhood memory because she felt uncomfortable when the early feelings of despair and worthlessness intruded. We decided to role-play the situation together, and I took her role. She played her punitive, rejecting mother. She had much less difficulty staying with this role, which she had fully internalized. I felt totally rejected, hopeless, and worthless against the onslaught of disdain and criticism she poured forth in the role of her mother.

As I acknowledged to her that in playing her role I felt near tears with painful feelings of helplessness and despair, she was surprised, having assumed that her own feelings were unwarranted and inappropriate. As we tried the role-play again she was more willing to stay with her own role, rather than attempting to deflect and intellectualize. She began to identify the eternally fallacious but situationally warranted conclusions she had drawn about her own powerlessness and unlovability during such interchanges as she monitored the thoughts associated with the feelings.

We must re-experience our early emotions so that we can more fully comprehend the consequences of our parents' sins. The purpose of tasting the bitter is not simply to have the experience. These bitter fruits help us learn the outcomes of evil so that we can draw valid conclusions about what we value and claim as good.

John spent almost a year working through painful feelings

associated with an abusive, neglectful mother and stepfather. He experienced enormous guilt for his “judgments” of his parents and his resentful feelings toward them. Re-experiencing the negative emotions helped him realize that his parents’ behavior had produced in him pain and misery that were tangible. As John contrasted these painful fruits with the warm, secure feelings he experienced from his grandfather and others, he could clearly identify that the attitudes and actions of his mother and stepfather resulted in evil. This did not mean, however, that his mother and stepfather were evil people. By seeing this contrast John could see himself as a free agent who could choose with confidence between the two courses of action exemplified by his parents on the one hand and his grandfather on the other.

As John re-experienced the negative early events, he realized that he hated his mother and stepfather, feelings he immediately condemned. These feelings caused him to feel extremely guilty and reinforced his self-perception of badness. He assumed these feelings represented reality. While role-playing this situation John reported to me what the critical voice in his own mind was telling him about himself:

John (critical parental voice speaking to John): You are overreacting to this entire situation. We are good people. You are entirely too sensitive to normal discipline.

Me (as John’s self-advocate): I am very sensitive about this situation, but that is because it has been very painful for me. What you did was not normal discipline—it was emotional and physical abuse.

John: What right do you have to judge us?

Me: I do not have any right to judge you, and I am not judging you. I have an obligation, however, to judge your behavior. That is the purpose of my mortal life—to learn from my own experience good from evil. I make judgments about whether an action is good and evil based on the long-term consequences. I judge your behavior to be evil because it has caused me lifelong pain, has caused my siblings pain, and has led us to come to conclusions about ourselves that have interfered with our growth and spirituality. I judge these abusive behaviors to be bad.

John: You and your siblings just don’t have the internal fortitude to deal with a little discipline. It is not our fault, it is yours.

Me: We do lack internal fortitude. I believe this is because we were not treated with respect, patience, and kindness. I have evidence for this. When people do treat me with respect and kindness I can feel the difference in its impact on me.

John: How dare you judge us. I am an important man in the Church, and the name of your mother’s great-grandfather is in the Doctrine and Covenants.

Me: Christ said he could raise up from stones children of Abraham. A person’s name and lineage are not important to the Lord. “They are not children of Abraham who bear his name, but who do his works” (see John 8:39). The same is true today.

At this point John interrupted the interchange, tearful as he felt the truthfulness of this scripture. “This is right. This is the Lord’s way. I feel that the Lord makes the same judgment of my

parents’ evil behavior as I do.” He realized that the Lord agreed with his assessment of their behavior, and did not require him to say that they were right and he was wrong in order to forgive them.

This stage generally takes many months, and even years, of hard work to achieve. When “forgiveness” is achieved around painful issues without a lengthy period of labor, the result is usually an abortion rather than a rebirth. Patient submission to the labor pain is necessary. Like labor, the pains of rebirth are not constant but intermittent, and they are often worst when the process nears completion.

Unlike labor, the pains of rebirth can be cut short by an unwillingness to endure them, with the individual rushing to an intellectual forgiveness of the parents that lacks integrity. Alternatively, the individual may retreat to the dull pain of past patterns, running from the intensity rather than working through it. When successful, the outcome is the death of the “natural man” who is fused with the sins of the parents and the birth of a new creature in the truth and integrity of Christ’s divine parentage and eternal perspective of us.

REGRET

REGRET is an important element in the repentance process, whether we repent of our own or inherited sins. When working through the pain of ancestral sin, we must deal with our grief, or regret, for all we have lost as a result of that sin. We must see clearly the ways the sin has contributed to our failures, robbed us of opportunities, or skewed our vision of reality. These losses are real, and grieving for them is an important step for many people. Often this grief is keenest when we begin to see more clearly our influence on our own children.

Ellen struggled for years to improve her tense relationship with her overly critical father. While she had come to understand many aspects of this relationship, and had no difficulty being aware of the negative impact of his criticism on her life, a dramatic experience of grief over the price she had paid for his criticism helped her take the relationship in a different direction.

Ellen’s boss was usually a caring individual, but he was something of a perfectionist and frequently pointed out minor shortcomings in her work, making Ellen feel very defensive. She recognized at one level that she was probably overreacting to this criticism, but this was not enough to defuse the alternating anger at him and devaluation of herself she experienced whenever she perceived unanticipated criticism. On one occasion when she was particularly vulnerable from other stress she began crying when her boss offered his suggestions on a report. Ellen was humiliated by her tears.

Ellen returned to her empty house, racked with frustration over her own excessive sensitivity to criticism, which she blamed on her father’s excessive disapproval. Having worked on this issue in therapy, she gave full vent to her feelings, sobbing at her absent parent for the crippling effect he had had on her self-esteem. She grieved for the opportunities she had

let slip away, panicked by the risk of failure. She grieved for the humiliated child inside who cried over a trivial correction. She grieved over the many times her fear of criticism had caused her to be critical of her own children out of fear of what others might think of her if they were imperfect. Feeling deeply her grief and expressing it fully were new experiences that helped Ellen accept her losses and let go of her resentment.

Although she never shared her experience with her father, it marked a turning point in their relationship. Having fully heard her own voice and felt her own grief, she became newly able to hear her father's unspoken self-criticism and underlying love. She could see things in the complex family relationship that she could not have seen before. The bitterness left. Over time Ellen acquired an appropriate assertiveness with her father that both curbed his criticism and buffered her self-esteem from his attacks. She also became more sensitive to the pain her children were experiencing at her hand, and became more successful at curbing her tendency to criticize them.

MANAGING JUDGMENT

ALTHOUGH Ellen acknowledged that her father's behavior was evil, having an honest and truthful perspective on this entire situation allowed her to separate his agency from her own. She recognized that she was not responsible for her father's bad choices and stopped personalizing his behavior.

She also recognized that perhaps her father was not entirely responsible for his behavior either, but that he too could have been victim of the unrighteous choices of others. She was able to judge his choices as evil without judging him. Judgment of him as a person she could gladly leave to the Lord. She felt confidence in the mercy, justice, and judgment of God, confident that no one's eternal life would be permanently altered because of the choices of other people, but only because of their own choices. Having experienced the loving acceptance of God in her own life, she was ready to forgive freely what had been in some ways her worst enemy—a loved member of her own household.

Although it is still difficult sometimes for Ellen to imagine that her father would care much about her perceptions or

forgiveness, Ellen is confident that she is at a place of peace with him. She is able to pray for her "enemy" with real intent, and see more clearly other elements of family interactions.

As Ellen continued the process of working through her painful relationships, she was occasionally judgmental of herself. Repeating the negative parental messages she had received, she berated her lack of accomplishments and obedience. A simple question helped Ellen place her own inadequacies in perspective. Ellen asked herself what the world would be like if everyone in it were like her. At first she responded only with the inadequacies the world would experience, but

then Ellen began to acknowledge that the world would be free of murder, war, drug abuse, theft, and jails. She began to weep as she acknowledged that the world would in fact be a rather nice place overall, and that some of these positive traits were also learned from her father. This simple question is very helpful in increasing the integrity of our judgments of self and others.

COVENANT PEOPLE

THE final challenge for individuals working through intergenerational pain is to stop the cycle of sin

from continuing in interactions with others. Having come to our own conclusions about good and evil, and having experienced fully the consequences of both in life, we are in a position to more freely choose our course. This is not always simple, but the compulsive repetition of previous patterns, or the compulsive avoidance of some aspects of previous problems, has less hold.

Bev's extreme pain over her mother's adultery and divorce when Bev was an adolescent was close to the surface. The resulting rejection from her mother made her mother's behavior even easier to reject; however, it was difficult not to reject her mother as well. After Bev experienced the strong pull of temptation from a meeting with an old boyfriend during a stressful period in her own marriage, Bev was more forgiving of her mother's choices, and more determined to stop the cycles of sin begun by her adulterous grandmother. Although this increased tolerance helped Bev make peace with her mother, it also made her feel, although briefly, that the adultery



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was not so bad. As Bev remained firmly in touch with her own pain as an adolescent, that pain helped her choose and live her values.

Although Bev's mother is dead, Bev felt it was time to release her from the spirit prisons of her own anger. She determined to complete the process of repentance for her mother, and to facilitate her release from the spirit prison of her inability to correct or influence those she had hurt and taught by her negative example. Bev wrote an extended letter to her mother over several weeks, recounting her experiences, her feelings, and her conclusions. As she wrote, she stopped to feel deeply whatever feelings began to emerge. Leaning into these feelings helped her work through them and feel heard—by herself. Although Bev is now more responsible for her own behavior, she is also much closer to fulfilling the purpose of her mortal life. She is taking the risk of choosing her own behavior, becoming an independent agent of her own growth.

“FOR OUR OWN SINS”

THE statement that we are punished for our own sins and not for Adam's transgression is profound. It is also precise. We are, in fact, punished by our parents' sins. However, in the eternal perspective, thanks to the atonement of Christ “wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world” (Moses 6:54), we are not subject to the lasting consequences of others' choices. We are not punished for these sins.

Likewise, this article of faith applies to our children. As parents we can be comforted in the knowledge that our children will not reap eternal consequences for our failures. Trusting in the justice of God, we can be assured that our children, too, will be judged for what they did with what they had to work with. As we teach them repentance and live exemplary lives of emotional integrity and courage, they will be better able to make the most of their mortal probation by learning from their own experience and cleansing further our common lineage. Although we do not wipe out sin in one generation, guilt we experience from our own parenting failures will not haunt them eternally, thanks to the atonement of Christ.

Baptism for the dead is a uniquely Mormon doctrine among modern Christian faiths. The great truths represented in this doctrine bear further testimony of the divine inspiration of the prophet who revealed and emphasized it. Joseph Smith is attributed with saying that a “correct idea of [God's] character, perfections, and attributes” is essential to our having faith in God.⁷ The principal of baptism for the dead also testifies of the consummate justice and mercy of those whose plan for our salvation we strive to follow, and whose good and healing characteristics we strive to emulate.

NOTES

1. John A. Widtsoe, “Temple Worship,” *Utah Genealogical Magazine* 12:62.
2. C. Broderick, “The Uses of Adversity,” in *As Women of Faith*, ed. M. E. Stovall and C. C. Madsen (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989).

3. M. Bowen, *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice* (New York: Jason Aronson, 1978); A. Hartman and J. Laird, *Family Centered Social Work Practice* (New York: Free Press, 1989).

4. Bowen; Hartman and Laird.

5. See Patricia Love's and J. Robinson's *The Emotional Incest Syndrome: What to do when a Parent's Love Rules Your Life* (New York: Bantam Books, 1990) for additional valuable exercises in recalling and working through the past.

6. D. E. Klimek, *Wisdom, Jesus, and Psychoanalysis* (Ann Arbor, MI: Winsted Publications, 1991).

7. N. B. Lundwall, comp., *Lectures on Faith* (Salt Lake City) lecture 3, point 4, 33.

COMMUNION

We come to each other
empty, but not clean—
like unrinsed bottles,

sides clouded
with yesterday's film.
We can't keep secrets

except in diaries
or photographs; our task
is to refill and return.

“The reward,”
He says, “is work itself.”
There is no end to it,

only the empty bottles
cause us to return.

—WILLIAM POWLEY

THE WEDDING QUILT

For a wedding gift
my grandmother
gave to me
a wondrous quilt,
with a pattern of interlocking circles,
with no beginning
and no end,
set on a field of white.

This morning,
lying musing
under my grandmother's quilt,
I felt a thread tickling me.

I pulled the thread,
and it came out
long and gray,
no thread but a hair,
still with the curl
on the end,
from a lady dead now
for twenty years.

—D. CHENEY

To argue that Mormonism can be understood only through its own language, categories, and truth claims, denies all possibilities of rational discussion.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON NEW MORMON HISTORY AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF A “NEW” TRADITIONAL HISTORY

By Malcolm R. Thorp

IN THE LAST DECADE AN IMPORTANT DISCUSSION has occurred about the appropriateness of certain methodological assumptions underlying what has been called New Mormon History. The discussion has allowed historians to reflect on the use of such assumptions and the ideas which underlie historical representation, in spite of the fact that much of the discussion has been marred by personal attacks (including raising the bogey of “atheism”) and resorting to strategies similar to sectarian pamphlet warfare. “The constructive task of the philosopher,” said Oxford University philosopher of history Patrick Gardiner, “lies in sympathetic analysis rather than in justification and condemnation.”¹ Seldom has this admonition been followed.

David Bohn, a professor of political science at Brigham Young University, stands out as one of the most constructive critics in this debate. In two articles and a letter in *SUNSTONE*,² he raised important considerations about the problems of objectivity. He points out, “What the historian has access to is not the past but only texts and text analogues. The information they provide is fragmented, incomplete, unrepresentative and ambiguous.”³ Like the counterpart “representative,” so with the characteristic of “unrepresentative,” it cannot be proven one way or another that texts are “unrepresentative.” Otherwise, few historians would quibble with Bohn on this point.

Bohn’s adherence to a hermeneutic which rejects the “false sense of legitimacy and rigor” found in objectivist historical accounts is sensible. But are historians as neolithic as Bohn implies? To be sure, objectivism is alive and well in American academia,⁴ although the process of serious reevaluation is already taking place within the discipline, and there are few

“positivists” left, at least in the mainstream of the profession.⁵ More important, Bohn’s response to the presence of objectivist language in historical accounts represents an overreaction to a problem of some significance, but perhaps not of the magnitude that he would have us believe. For, while objectivism and its resort to arguments falsely grounded in a reality that is independent of the historian as creator cannot be defended on ontological grounds, this still provides no reason for de facto rejection of such histories. Objectivist accounts still must be seriously considered on the basis of their contribution to the discussion and not summarily dismissed as methodologically defective.⁶

Most historians would also agree with Bohn that historical facts do not speak for themselves, for it is the historian who ultimately decides on the selection as well as the interpretation of sources.⁷ While this may seem self-evident, there is a time lag in the minds of some historians who cling to deeply entrenched ways of understanding history. Hans Kellner described this reluctance to consider all of the implications of making statements from facts alone:

The historian’s sources are, as we have been taught, those particles of reality from which an image of the past is made; while few historians object to the ideas that histories are produced, most will assert that the guarantee of adequacy in the historical account is found in the sources. If the sources are available, scrupulously and comprehensively examined according to the rules of evidence, and compiled in good faith by a reasonably mature professional, the resulting work will more or less “image” reality.⁸

However, most practicing historians, even those who have abandoned the quest for historical certainties, will undoubtedly find difficulty with Paul Ricoeur’s assertion (which Bohn

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ascribes to)⁹ that history takes on the same characteristics as the novel.¹⁰ Such an assertion does not take into proper consideration the extent to which historical arguments are shaped by textual readings, a point not always developed in theories comparing historical narratives to patterns of literary representation. The texts themselves remain important, even the dominant, determinants in historical construction, although there are also non-textual sources at work in writing history.¹¹ Kellner asserts that any story must arise out of an act of contemplation. "To understand history in this way is not to reject those works [which seemingly Bohn does] which make claims to realistic representation based upon the authority of documentary sources; it is rather to read them in a way that reveals that their authority is a creation effected with other sources, essentially rhetorical in character."¹² It logically follows that this resort to a-textual, rhetorical devices in the construction of narratives also applies (as we will see) to the methods of historical representation employed by traditional Mormon historians.

Bohn is also undoubtedly correct in pointing out the historian's use of models in the process of historical construction, as no thinking can take place without such devices. According to him:

As historians begin to ask questions of the past, as they begin to craft their story, the very questions they ask and the very tools they use will in part determine how the past will be understood. As they introduce or accept an already existent chronology—cross-cutting categories of psychology, economy, politics, religion, culture, etc., and the related theories which map out those categories—the historian becomes more and more the creator of the past which will be remembered and not the midwife who lets the past tell its own story.¹³

Yet textual readings play a more significant role in historical construction than Bohn is willing to admit. Moreover, these "other sources" (i.e., models and literary strategies) likewise affect the outcome of traditional historical accounts, which are therefore not quite so "up front" in methodology as Bohn led his readers to believe.¹⁴ While traditional LDS historians might be more forthright in proclaiming the Restoration, there is no recognition of the implicit objectivism of their works, nor is there a comprehension of the rhetorical devices used in framing their narratives. The proclamation (*kerygama*) serves literary functions in such accounts and provides a sense of certainty to such histories that must be recognized as authorial perspectives and not necessarily historical reality.

What Bohn does not tell us is that the undercutting objectivist assumptions do not lead to a democratization of scholarship in which every man or woman is his or her own historian and every interpretation holds the same significance. While most historians would agree that there is not a single "right" interpretation of historical phenomena, in that each account is conditioned by the situation of the interpreter and must include methodological and historiographical considerations, still, there will always be stronger and weaker formula-

tions that will arise out of rigorous criticism of sources and the significance of interpretation.¹⁵ Of course, this process of evaluation is hardly new to historians. And, as is also the current practice, historical accounts that stand out as insightful will be those which raise new and meaningful questions, or which make available new or significantly different readings of familiar texts, thus carrying the discussion further.

The hermeneutical position developed by Hans-Georg Gadamer (which Bohn uses in his critique)¹⁶ is an ecumenical endeavor aimed at clarifying the process in which understanding takes place; it is not an endeavor that creates battle lines between radically different approaches. As Gadamer says, mediation makes insightful sharing possible, thus throwing light on the conditions of understanding in all modes of thought.¹⁷ Bohn, however, seeks to divide, not to bring about reconciliation and multi-perspectival understanding.

THE TEXTS AND NEW MORMON HISTORY

BOHN's definition of "New Mormon History" does not represent how these historians describe themselves. Indeed, while some New Mormon Historians are products of the large American graduate schools, and obviously some of these scholars use models from the social sciences,¹⁸ the *raison d'être* of this approach lies elsewhere. New Mormon History arose out of new access to LDS sources in the 1950s and 1960s and an awareness of the possibilities for new questions and interpretations that were not possible within traditional approaches to the Mormon past. Indeed, there was a feeling that the traditional accounts, which were characterized by objectivist certainties, could no longer be entirely maintained, and that many of the "truth claims" of this tradition were in contradiction with archival sources. Thus, what has characterized New Mormon History from its traditional counterpart has been the importance of texts and an openness in interpreting such sources for new ways of understanding the past.¹⁹

Bohn misses the point when he asserts that by asking new questions New Mormon Historians were necessarily calling for "the wholesale abandonment of categories of self-understanding internal to the community in favor of a new set of standards external to the faith."²⁰ Bohn does not precisely explain what this "wholesale abandonment" is all about. Is he suggesting that such historians have denied the revelatory experience within the Mormon past? Simply stated, there is no evidence for this. Although pluralistic in composition, the general tenor of New Mormon Historiography has never been to destroy faith, but to increase understanding of Mormon themes and experiences.

If Bohn is accusing historians of relying on external vocabulary and environmental explanations,²¹ it can be argued that these have only enriched, not diminished, our understanding of the Mormon past. Mormonism did not arise *in vacuo*; it has always been seen as part of the American religious experience. Our understanding of the movement is conditioned by this obvious fact. Such categories as millenarianism, seeker, identity crisis, myth, primitivism, and even magic, are not indige-

nous to Mormonism, but are used by a wide variety of scholars, including traditionalists. In addition, one need not go very far to find environmental explanations in support of the cause, such as the argument that social, political, and religious conditions made society "ripe" for the harvest by Mormon missionaries. To argue that Mormonism can be understood only through its own language, categories, and truth claims, denies all possibilities of rational discussion.

Bohn further contends:

The head of the discussion rightly involves underlying assumptions and methodological commitments which determine the direction of historical inquiry, grounding the criteria by which questions are asked, theories selected, information is gathered, and conclusions are reached and validated.

And all of this occurs, he argues, "in advance, before the historical record is even touched!"²² Here Bohn is at least half right. Tradition and methodology are determinants, but not the only ones. Not a practicing historian himself, all this only demonstrates that Bohn has no practical understanding of how archival research is actually done by historians. He shows no comprehension of the possibility that scholars' minds are influenced by the texts they read, that new approaches are made possible by such readings that completely change the direction of one's thought, even breaking with previous historiographical assumptions. Bohn's position, taken to a logical conclusion, rests on an anti-historical bias, or at least on a low regard for the historian's craft. Consider, for example, this statement:

There is a strange fascination with the "new" as opposed to the traditional, and a tendency to exaggerate the importance of recently discovered material against the preponderance of "evidence" in the established record; thus, a line in a letter here, or a rumor written down there become the justification for a radical

revision of traditional accounts.

Historians are not the only ones to come under fire; archivists are depicted as pandering to the whims of the historical profession, building collections and processing texts to please their trendy-minded clientele.²³

Any academic discipline is interested in recently discovered sources as well as in new interpretations of existing sources.

There is hardly anything sinister about this. But do historians really ignore the rigorous methods of textual criticism developed by their craft, and, moreover, are they really collectively guilty of manipulating texts for their own self interest? This is a serious charge, but Bohn does not prove the case. Rather than provide allegations related to the role of historians in the Mark Hofmann forgeries,²⁴ clearly an exceptional case, Bohn should have provided concrete examples, over a broad spectrum of writers, to prove his point. To be sure, there is shoddy work in history, just as there are shoddy efforts in political science and philosophy.

His remarks suggest a certain nostalgia for the past, a fear that images from "the record" and "the story" will be destroyed by wolves in

sheep's clothing, hidden secularists ("cultural Mormons"), whose real intentions are to undermine traditions. These fears are hardly new; the only thing original is the strange connection to new critical methodologies, the purpose of which is to provide avenues for revisionism!

REFUGE WITHIN A CLOSED SYSTEM

THE traditional Mormon history has been aptly diagnosed by Peter Novick. Using Thomas Kuhn's model of an internal paradigm, he describes how objectivist claims have become self-validating. Novick's concluding point was to raise the issue: Do New Mormon Historians really want to work within the confines of a contained objectivist paradigm, with its narrow strictures and implicit authoritarianism?²⁵

While Bohn accuses New Mormon Historians of reaching conclusions before the examination of sources, this is a more appropriate criticism when applied to traditional Mormon history, where the story line has been long established, and interpretation is concerned largely with finding props.

While Bohn accuses New Mormon Historians of reaching conclusions before the examination of sources really begins, this is a more appropriate criticism when applied to traditional Mormon history, where the story line has been long established, and scholarly interpretation is concerned largely with finding props for an existing interpretation. Like such accounts, Bohn's version of history within the community of faith implies that there is "a story," which in itself presupposes that there is an objective, verifiable past.²⁶ The preservation of this story, with its authentic language and categories, constitutes his avowed purpose.

Bohn does not tell his readers that this "story" was never brought down from Mount Sinai, or revealed in a sacred grove, but was crafted by scribes and early historians, including Willard Richards, George A. Smith, Wilford Woodruff, Orson F. Whitney, and B. H. Roberts. Like all historical writings, they reflect the age in which they were written, including positivist assumptions that were well entrenched into nineteenth-century American culture.²⁷ While these early accounts are of historiographical value to us today, they hardly represent the final word for historical understanding. Yet, along with their twentieth-century counterparts, such as Joseph Fielding Smith's *Essentials of Church History* (1922), they continue to supply one of the "other sources" for traditional historical representation.

Because such traditional accounts tend to be repetitive, Lawrence Foster asserted that such histories are "boring," one way of saying that they are predictable.²⁸ Despite Foster's unfortunate choice of words, he never implied that the subject matter of interest to the believing Mormon community was either trivial or inconsequential.²⁹ Simply stated, Foster was asserting the obvious, that the bulk of traditional histories tend to be dependent on the same sources and do not cut new ground.³⁰ Consequently such accounts fail to open up new avenues for understanding.

Bohn's statement that traditional historians are more "honest" and "up front" than New Mormon counterparts is one of the most controversial aspects of the on-going debate.³¹ In one sense, Bohn is correct. It is indeed easy to discover the ecclesiastical perspective of such writers. But in another sense he is wrong. Can he really claim that traditional historians have been as open and receptive to texts and the possibilities that are contained in such sources as their New Mormon counterparts have been? Moreover, is traditional Mormon history (either as now practiced or as Bohn would have it established) a serious encounter with the available texts bearing on the Mormon past? Bohn never really indicates what he would have traditionalists do with such sources—especially those that do not conform to preconceived images of reality. It is one thing for Bohn to say that historical accounts should be "up front" and not be "public relations" jobs in which everything turns out "rosy."³² It is quite another to argue for a dialogical encounter along the lines advocated by Gadamer in which a multi-perspective encounter with texts becomes the objective of scholarly interchange.

Nor does Bohn really explain who is to maintain historical

standards within "the community of faith." Indeed, how can historical purity be maintained within a church committed to precepts of human freedom and the right of individual choice? There will always be Winston Smiths in this world—people who will probe into the discrepancies between the "faithful history" told by the closed community and discordant texts that inevitably make their way into our present world (memory holes have not yet been invented). Given the impossibility of such a task, perhaps the best solution is the present one: let historical pluralism flourish, recognize that there never was "a story," but many stories open to a multiplicity of interpretations.

One may wonder, however, if Bohn's version would be satisfactory to Mormon traditionalists. Paradoxically, his advocacy of history rising above image-making undoubtedly would be unsettling to some. For Bohn's version would not only exclude faith-promoting homilies, but would encourage probing into human cupidities, even in high places. It would also seemingly tie history to a doctrine of human nature, for, in his view, humankind displays a "general unwillingness" to choose the good and, consequently, to adhere to a moral life.³³ This, of course, sounds suspiciously like Calvinism. Yet one of the attractive features of Mormonism has been its exalted view of humankind and the possibilities for eternal development.

The problem for the practicing historian is not so simple. Human activities are so mixed and muddled that history cannot be often described as a straightforward struggle between good and evil. This is especially true in dealing with collectivities such as nations and religious communities.³⁴ Thus, to take but one example from the Mormon past (which Bohn raises), can the Mountain Meadows Massacre be seen from this simple right-versus-wrong paradigm, or would it be more appropriate to view this incident as a tragic predicament in which motives were so twisted and tangled on both sides that no mere historian will ever be capable of a moral assessment? All that is possible is for the historian to construct a narrative of events (recognizing even the finitude of this endeavor) based upon all the sources at his or her disposal.

Of course the idea of the historian as a moral judge has a long (and unfortunate) tradition. It was Lord Acton who most fully developed this attitude in the late nineteenth century. He took this task seriously, even to the point of asserting that we should weigh historical characters on the scales of justice, and, if found wanting, they should be defamed for time immemorial as lasting examples for other reprobates. If the scales failed to tilt, but remained at a position of equipoise, the individual should still be consigned to outer darkness so that firmness be shown, thus demonstrating a commitment to morality.³⁵ It is safe to say that few scholars today would want to delve into the murky waters of moral judgments. Most would undoubtedly agree with the admonition to judge nothing before its time (1 Corinthians 4:4-5).

Perhaps the most problematic aspect of Bohn's model, however, is his advocacy of viewing history "as the stage upon which the power of God will pour forth to abolish in one last and final conflagration the confines of mortality and the forces

of darkness."³⁶ While millennial prophecies are part of the Mormon beliefs, one can reasonably ask why historians should be committed to futuristic projections (chilastic or otherwise) when the subject matter of history is the past, not the present or the future. Bohn's contention certainly suggests that somehow historians should know about how God has shaped the past and will shape the future. But, how can one really know, for example, what role the Holocaust played in the divine scheme of history? While it is acceptable to argue that God is in all human events, it is not for historians to assign divine significance to those events. Without resorting to wild historicist speculations, we can only say that God's purposes are woven into the texture of history, even though this is invisible to mortal eyes.

We are left to wonder about the validity of Bohn's "other-worldly" approach: "the fundamental understanding which guides the faithful historian's reading of the historical record is always sure precisely because it does not derive from everyday discourse, but from genuine spiritual experience grounded in God's power to confirm and reveal truth."³⁷ Does this mean that all "inspired"

historians will interpret the past the same way? If God reveals truths about the historical past to the faithful historian, is this not objectivism (i.e., revealed truth or "surety" about what actually happened)? If history can be written from the perspective of revelation, why the need for rational discourse, including post-structural methodologies?

Indeed how does Bohn reconcile his advocacy of history as revelation with his espousal of post-structural methods? Bohn must realize that such approaches often lead to disturbing, evening frightening results, far more unsettling than the rather calm, rational objectivism of some New Mormon Historians. If historical studies are tied to post-structuralist methods such as Derridean deconstruction, with its avowed purpose to tear apart structures of thought, reveal displacements in language, and question the effects of tradition on shaping interpretations,

where will this lead Mormon studies? Using such a methodology, truth becomes multi-perspectival, not monolithic—a fact that has bothered many in religious studies.³⁸ For in Derrida, interpretation becomes nothing more than a game or *jeu*.³⁹ Thus, we find such results as Carl A. Raschke's statement: "Deconstruction is the dance of death upon the tomb of God; it is the tarantella whose footfalls evoke the archaism of the

Great Mother, who takes back with the solemnity of the Pieta her wounded, divine son." He then continues into an area of contemporary deep concern to LDS church leaders:

Deconstruction, therefore, can be seen as a kind of Bacchic fascination with the metaphysics of decomposition and death, with the murky undercurrent of modern discourse; in this respect it serves as a simile for the return of the repressed feminine in the predominantly patriarchal academy.⁴⁰

From the perspective of post-structural criticism, one would also have to concede the possibilities of Foucaultian probing into historical discontinuities in Mormon history, as well as investigations

into how structures of power have manipulated individuals.⁴¹ It is not my purpose here to shock, only to suggest that these are real possibilities within such methodologies. Is Mormonism ready for this?

THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

ALL language is essentially naturalistic (evolutionary) and historically situated. This indeed is at the root of one of the most serious problems in Bohn's essays. He assumes, because terminology employed by historians (and, for that matter, all other scholars) often originates from positivism and naturalistic disciplines, that language use remains within the original mode of understanding. This is clearly not so, for language changes in meaning and context, and hence in

While it is acceptable to argue that God is in all human events, it is not for historians to assign divine significance to those events. Without resorting to wild historicist speculations, we can only say that God's purposes are woven into the texture of history, even though this is invisible to mortal eyes.

scholarly usage. Moreover, the use of secular vocabulary does not necessarily presuppose any ontological grounds for belief or disbelief.⁴²

If I were to use the term “myth” to describe Genesis 1, would this tell the reader anything significant about my religious convictions? One dictionary definition of myth is “a commonly-held belief that is untrue, or without foundation.”⁴³ But if I adopted Eliade’s definition of myth (as does Jan Shipps)⁴⁴ this would likewise reveal only that I find such a concept useful to my understanding of Genesis. I could still be either an atheist, agnostic, or a theist. I could hardly be accused of dualism in thought (such as Bohn accuses faithful LDS historians who write as professional historians),⁴⁵ because there is no hidden ontological significance to my choice (other than confirming my belief in the value of models in human thought). Indeed, I am no different than Bohn, who must also rely upon secular modes of understanding and language.⁴⁶ This quest for discovering hidden meaning in language use is indeed disturbing. For example, Lawrence Foster stated that it was his purpose as an historian that “as much of the evidence as possible be investigated before conclusions are reached.” He then explained that the perspectives one brings to historical inquiry only partially predetermine one’s conclusions. He believes that the historian “who is sincerely interested in determining what happened in the past will continually test out different hypotheses and seek new evidence in attempting to explain and understand events.”⁴⁷ Foster has attempted only to describe his research strategy, nothing more. On this flimsy pretext Bohn concludes that Foster is really a closet “soft positivist.” But Foster disavows such connections, which would seem to suggest that Bohn somehow knows Foster better than Foster knows himself! Certainly if Foster were a positivist, his article would contain references to either attempts to discover governing laws in history or statements concerning the historian’s ability to recover the reality of the past. But we find neither.

Bohn’s position is that Foster and other New Mormon Historians “use methods, evolve categories and develop explanations that presuppose objectivity.”⁴⁸ To him, Foster is a “soft positivist” because, while conceding that an objective account of the Mormon past is not possible, he continually “tests” various hypotheses against the evidence. In common language, Foster says that he wants to carefully evaluate and analyze his sources to make certain that they are consistent with his explanation. Essentially Bohn’s conclusions about Foster rest on the old logical fallacy of if A is found to exist, then it is *assumed* that B must exist.

Bohn, however, is correct in his assertion that New Mormon Historians use the vocabulary of secular historiography and the underlying language of modern social sciences. But what other possibilities are there? If, in addition, Bohn means that the imposition of models derived from the various humanistic disciplines somehow distorts the conceptualization of traditional stories, he should be up front in recognizing that many of the same social science and environmental explanations are likewise used by traditional Mormon historians and apolo-

gists.⁴⁹

Bohn assumes that there is an “other worldly” language as well as modes of understanding that are unique to Mormonism and not to other religious traditions. In his view, efforts at understanding LDS religious phenomena somehow become degraded if scholarly language and models are applied to Mormonism. In this he assumes a strange dualism that could be eliminated by the realization that “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness therein” (1 Corinthians 10:26).

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY OF FAITH?

UNFORTUNATELY, Bohn never defines what a “community of faith” means. Instead, he resorts to a rather vague metaphor about the “sacred” and the “profane,” in which the profanators are seemingly the outsiders of the temple walls who look scornfully at proceedings within. “To be *outside the temple* is not to have access to that which is most sacred.”⁵⁰ Presumably, “sacred” history is to be written from the inner sanctum, and this accounts for why “secular” historians write about the Mormon experience as something merely human.⁵¹ Certainly we might question if Gadamer, who does refer to communities of scholars with common methodological views, ever intended such communities to include only “true believers.”

As we have observed, the purpose of hermeneutics is to make dialogical discussions possible between scholars of differing interests and approaches. Gadamer asserted that his version of textual explication demanded the suspension of faith as well as prejudice in order that the horizons of the text and that of the interpreter might come closer together.⁵² Gadamer refers to the necessity of a “loss of self” which is crucial to theological hermeneutics. He compares hermeneutical understanding to a game, in which each player “conforms to the game or subjects himself to it, that is, he relinquishes the autonomy of his own will. For example, two men who use a saw together allow the free play of the saw to take place, it would seem, by reciprocally adjusting to each other so that one man’s impulse to movement takes effect just when that of the other man ends.” Gadamer then goes on to say that “absorption into the game is an ecstatic self-forgetting that is experienced not as a loss of self-possession, but as the free buoyancy of an elevation above oneself.”⁵³ Of course this applies to all of the traditions engaged in understanding the Mormon past. But it has special relevance to this argument because there is an explicit ecumenism in hermeneutical understanding that is apparently denied by Bohn and his counterparts. Like the high priests of old who rigorously protected their own self-interest, those excluded from the temple of understanding would be all “secular” historians, cultural Mormons, and even faithful Latter-day Saints who do not understand Mormonism in quite the same way as Bohn, or who use naughty language.⁵⁴

I question whether this “community of faith” corresponds at all to the community that one joins at the local chapel on Sunday. As demonstrated by a recent study, LDS wards are hardly monolithic communities of idealized Saints.⁵⁵ Rather,

they more often than not resemble a motley collection of human beings similar to the characters in John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," some striving to reach the gates of the Heavenly City, but many bogged down in life's problems along the way.

History cannot concern itself exclusively with the celestial, but must move outside of the inner sanctum into the terrestrial world. For, to believers in Providence, God reveals his purposes in all places and at all times.

WHERE DOES THIS LEAD US?

IN conclusion, does Bohn's argument open up the possibilities for a New Faith-Promoting History? The answer must be an ambiguous one. He certainly suggests that the horizon of Mormon texts needs to be more fully understood, including transcendental experiences that speak to us in our present situation. This is an important point that should not be overlooked. For the speakers from the past carry messages of profound significance for us, confirming the premise that God continually reveals truth to the Church as well as to individuals. Although this does not mean that historians are not free to go beyond the textual horizon in their quest for understanding, such messages deserve to be understood on their own terms.⁵⁶

Unfortunately, however, Bohn does not apply his hermeneutic to a faithful history, at least not consistently. Traditional LDS history is based on the certainty of an objective past, and by speaking of "a story" Bohn seemingly gives justification for this approach, but not to New Mormon versions—some of which are likewise objectivist. What is even more confusing, however, is how he has also linked various modes of post-structural methodology with personal revelation as a method of textual explication. Bohn needs to explain how in practice he can advocate doing history by combining these seemingly incompatible elements into a workable synthesis.

NOTES

1. Patrick Gardiner, *The Nature of Historical Explanation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 24.

2. David Earl Bohn, "No Higher Ground," *SUNSTONE* 8 (May-June 1983): 26-32; "The Burden of Proof," *SUNSTONE* 10 (June 1985): 2-3; "Our Own Agenda," *SUNSTONE* 14 (June 1990): 45-49.

3. Bohn, "Burden of Proof," 2.

4. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

5. For an example of continuing tradition of positivism in history, see Robert Fogel and G. R. Elton, *Which Road to the Past? Two Views of Scientific and Traditional History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983). According to Novick, "The book constitutes a mutual nonaggression pact between two hitherto warring positivistic schools." Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 610.

6. See, for example, Dominick LaCapra's critic of G. R. Elton's approach to sixteenth-century English history. Elton is considered to be the premier objectivist historian of his generation, and his handbook, *The Practice of History* (London: Fontana, 1969), stands out as the most significant practical defense of "soft positivism" among historians of today. LaCapra, the most forceful exponent of post-structural approaches to history in America, sees Elton's method as too restrictive and unresponsive to the demands of intellectual history. But, otherwise he recognizes the importance (as well as the objectivist limitations) of

Elton's work. See Dominick LaCapra, *History & Criticism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), 136-39.

7. One can also agree with Bohn that "the historian can only encounter the past from within history through his own time's way of understanding the past." Bohn, "No Higher Ground," 27.

8. Hans Kellner, *Language and Historical Representation: Getting the Story Crooked* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 9.

9. Bohn, "Our Own Agenda," 45.

10. Kellner, 3-25; 325-33. He ultimately modifies Ricoeur by averring the "deepest respect for reality," but at the same time recognizing the function of rhetorical devices on the historical imagination. There is an interplay of both in historical representation.

Hayden White stands out as the most important American historian who attempts to impose literary models on historical writing. See *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). For general reactions to White, see Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 624-25.

11. See Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 121-134.

12. Kellner, 10-11.

13. Bohn, "Our Own Agenda," 45.

14. Bohn, "No Higher Ground," 31.

15. David Couzens Hoy, *The Critical Circle: Literature, History, and Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 68-72.

16. Bohn, "No Higher Ground," n. 23, 32.

17. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* 2d rev. ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1990), xxiii.

18. Bohn seemingly ignores that his description would also characterize such traditional historians as Milton V. Backman and Richard Anderson, as well as Hugh Nibley, who are all products of large American universities, and who likewise apply models from the social sciences. Indeed, is there a current intellectual writing on Mormon history who has completely avoided the use of such models?

19. For a useful summary of the historiography of New Mormon History, see Louis Midgley and David J. Whittaker, "Mapping Contemporary Mormon Historiography" (book in progress, draft of 6 November 1990 is available in Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. Chapter 3 is an annotated bibliography of discussions on Mormon historiography since 1958). This work must be used with some care, however, because the annotations are often misleading.

20. See especially Bohn, "Our Own Agenda," 47-48.

21. Bohn asserts that secular historiography "has no vocabulary for authentic spiritual experience and no words for the genuinely divine." This flies in the face of the long tradition of both biblical historical studies. Many of these scholars participate and publish in forums sponsored by Brigham Young University. See, "Our Own Agenda," 47.

22. Bohn, "Burden of Proof," 3.

23. Bohn, "No Higher Ground," 47.

24. The one example used by Bohn to demonstrate this is the Mark Hofmann forgery affair, in which Bohn contends that the prosecution in the case found it difficult to persuade the New Mormon Historians to give up belief in the Hofmann forgeries. This was true, at least until physical evidence on the forgeries was made available.

I was present at the BYU lecture given by George Throckmorton in which he demonstrated how the Martin Harris "salamander" letter was shown to be a forgery. I discussed Throckmorton's presentation with my university colleagues, including a number of prominent New Mormon Historians. Not one scholar said that they still believed in the Hofmann forgeries, although questions were raised about why the FBI forensic experts had earlier authenticated the document. Of course, historians were fooled by Hofmann and this points to the need for more careful standards. But this does not, in itself, prove that historians do not conscientiously try to be critical of their sources.

25. Peter Novick, "Why the Old Mormon Historians Are More Objective than the 'New'," typescript of address given at the Sunstone Symposium, 23-26 August 1989, Salt Lake City, Utah.

26. Bohn, "Our Own Agenda," 46.

27. See Howard Clair Searle, *Early Mormon Historiography: Writing the History of the Mormons 1830-1858* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1979); Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington, *Mormons and their Historians* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988).

28. Lawrence Foster, "New Perspectives on the Mormon Past," *SUNSTONE* 7 (January-February 1982): 41-45.

29. Foster's lampooning efforts to quantify the visits of angels is not an attack on the revelatory experience. He merely questioned the relevance of such statistical information.

30. An excellent example of this is in V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter, eds., *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles 1837-1987* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Corporation of the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987). Chapters 3-5, the crucial chapters in early Mormonism in the British Isles, were largely written from printed sources, such as Orson F. Whitney and the compilations of Andrew Jensen. The archival sources behind such stories were never consulted; nor were a wealth of material from diaries, journals, and reminiscences.

31. Bohn, "No Higher Ground," 31.

32. Bohn, "Our Own Agenda," 46.

33. Bohn, "No Higher Ground," 46.

34. Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man in Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (New York: Scribner's, 1932).

35. See Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (New York: Norton, 1965), 107-32.

36. Bohn, "Our Own Agenda," 46.

37. Bohn, "Burden of Proof," 3.

38. See Kath Filmer, "Of Lunacy and Laundry Trucks: Deconstruction and Mythopoesis," *Literature and Belief* 9 (1989): 55-64, as well as other articles in this issue, which is devoted to new methodologies and belief.

39. Hoy, *Critical Circle*, 83.

40. Carl A. Raschke, "The Deconstruction of God," in Thomas J. Altizer, et al., *Deconstruction and Theology* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 28-29.

41. For an introduction to this approach, see Raul Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

42. A good example of such thinking is provided by Gary F. Novak who, in assessing Marvin S. Hill's studies on early Mormon origins, has "discovered" hidden sources of "atheism" in Hill's remarks: the "'models from the social and behavioral sciences' from which Hill draws—social stress theories of revelation, the cultural connections of teaching in the Book of Mormon with the Calvinism of Joseph's immediate environment—all involve implicit assumptions about such questions as the existence of God." Rather than atheism, such lines of reasoning can only be described as a *non sequitur*. See "Naturalistic Assumptions and the Book of Mormon," *Brigham Young University Studies*, 3 (Summer 1990): 33 and passim.

43. *Chambers Concise 20th Century Dictionary* (Edinburgh: W & R Chambers, 1985), 640.

44. Jan Shippis, "The Mormon Past: Revealed or Revisited?," *SUNSTONE* 6 (November-December 1981): 55-58.

45. Bohn, "Our Own Agenda," 49, n. 17.

46. Hayden White has written, "Historical events, whatever else they may be, are events which really happened or are believed really to have happened, but which are no longer directly accessible to perception. As such, in order to be constituted as objects of reflection, they must be described, and described in some kind of natural or technical language." Hayden White, "New Historicism: A Comment," *The New Historicism* ed., H. Aram Veaser (New York and London: Routledge, 1989), 297.

47. Lawrence Foster, letter, in Readers' Forum, *SUNSTONE* 8 (November-December 1983): 4-5; Bohn, "Burden of Proof," 2.

48. Bohn, "Burden of Proof," 2.

49. See, for example, Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resounded: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio 1830-1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983). Backman uses such terminology from the social sciences as seekers, primitive Christianity, revolution, as well as economic models and environmental explanations for persecution and internal dissent. This in no way casts aspersions on Backman's book, but to demonstrate that even traditional writers cannot (and should not) avoid such categories and modes of explanation.

50. Bohn, "Our Own Agenda," 47.

51. The basic meaning of profane seems to mean to desecrate or defile. Such things as the altar, the Sabbath, the sanctuary, and the name of God could be profaned. It also has the more modern meaning of showing contempt for sacred things. Can it be argued that collectively New Mormon Historians have really shown contempt for sacred things? Is there evidence that New Mormon Historians argue that LDS history is "merely human"? Thus, the appropriateness of Bohn's analogy of sacred and profane must be questioned.

52. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 277-307. Also germane to this discussion is Gadamer's contentions concerning the possibilities of historical understanding of

the New Testament and its authors. He maintains that the kerygmatic meaning of the New Testament "cannot ultimately contradict the legitimate investigation of meaning by historical science." See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophic Hermeneutics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 209-11.

53. Gadamer, 51-56.

54. See especially "Our Own Agenda," 49, fn. 17, where he asserts, "Some committed historians seek to resolve the dilemma by clearly stating in advance that they accept the truth claims of the Church. Although this brings the dilemma to the reader's attention, it does not resolve it. In the measure that the historians rely on naturalistic language to account for fundamentally prophetic phenomena, they will offer explanations which are essentially at odds with the claims of the Church. As a result, the believing historian is forced to compartmentalize his understanding of the Church into seemingly unbridgeable categories of the *spiritual*, accepted on the basis of faith, and the secular, rooted in naturalistic explanation." This becomes a serious matter, because he is suggesting that this is sinful (making statements at odds with the claims of the Church) to use naturalistic language to describe religious experiences. Of course, naturalistic language is commonly used in discourse through the Church and is rooted in all human language. Perhaps what is needed is a new vocabulary (God-speak, perhaps) to keep us from such pharisaic sins!

55. See Stan L. Albrecht, "The Consequential Dimension of Mormon Religiosity," *BYU Studies* 29 (Spring 1989): 57-108.

56. For an approach that is critical of historians who "mine" texts for "facts" and advocates a broader dialogical reading, see LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History*, and his *History and Criticism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985).

ON BECOMING A HIGH PRIEST

It's childish, I suppose, to feel
A sense of loss already—
As if another's hands could slight the real

Lineage extending back to birth
And blessing, through baptism, into Deacon,
Teacher, Priest, and Elder. The worth

Of ordination should not be counted
By the hands, the power of Priesthood
Not established by who mounted

First the summit of my head,
Pressed fingers into rough-combed hair,
And, pausing for the Spirit, said

The words that changed me from mere boy
Into a vessel-implement of God.
I should not feel a loss. This is no toy

To be distorted by who held it last;
This is more. And memory,
That warns me I should hold on fast

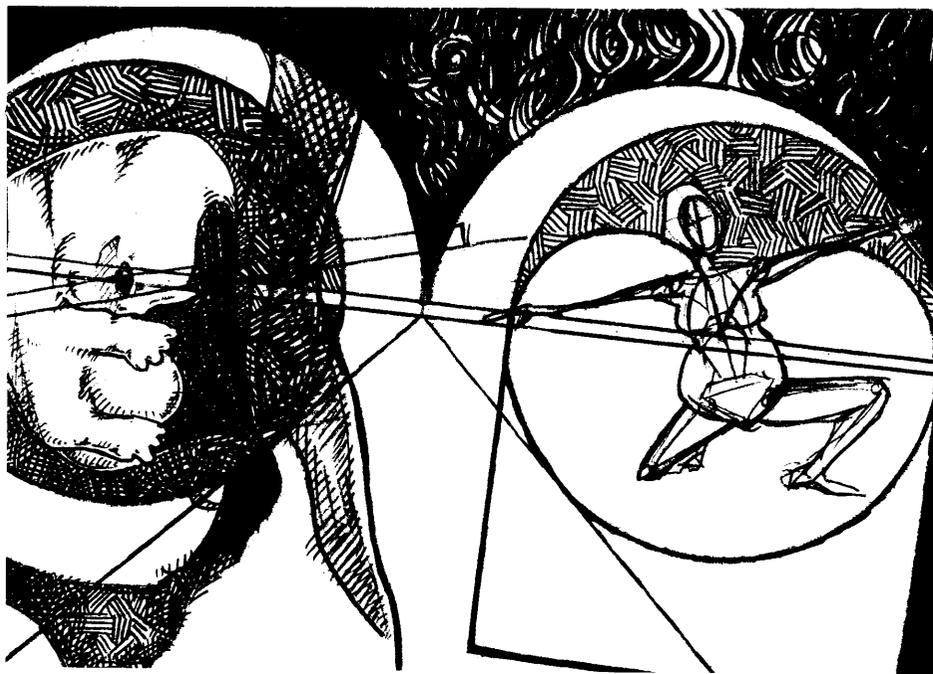
To that one lineage, must fall before
Understanding—for if
My father's hands are still and can no more

Press down their priesthood weight,
Another father's might; and lift
Me with my father to a higher state.

— MICHAEL R. COLLINGS

JEWISH PERSPECTIVES ON ABORTION

By Edwin Firmage Jr.



What makes the Jewish attitude toward abortion meaningful is that it illustrates how the biblical world-view, which at least conservative Christians accept as normative, could be construed to defend a woman's right to have an abortion.

LIKE SO MANY heated controversies before it, the current debate over abortion appears to pit against each other parties and world-views between which there can be no compromise. On the one side are pro-choice advocates who contend that the foetus, or at least the early foetus, is not a human being. On the other are those who oppose abortion on the grounds that right-thinking, religiously minded people simply cannot in good conscience condone the killing of the

foetus. Proponents of this view identify the foetus not just as a life form, but as an unborn child, endowed from the moment of conception with a human soul. To take its life is nothing short of murder. The most extreme statement of this view holds that even contraception is akin to murder—the official position of the Catholic Church until 1915.

While pro-choice advocates may despair of ever convincing their religious opponents, there are in fact religious traditions which are not monolithically opposed to abortion. It may surprise many to learn that one of these traditions is Judaism, which is at once characterized by its high-regard for the sanctity of human life and for its relative tolerance on the issue of abortion. Judaism holds that the most

basic of God's commandments to humankind is that of procreation, that children are a blessing, that life is sacred—even non-human life. It takes the biblical prohibition against taking even animal life seriously. And yet, this same tradition allows abortion in instances where even liberal Christian clergy today would perhaps have serious misgivings. What makes the Jewish attitude toward abortion meaningful in a largely Christian debate is that it derives from the same biblical matrix as Christianity. It illustrates how the biblical world-view, which at least conservative Christians accept as normative, could be construed to defend a woman's right to have an abortion.

The rabbis of the Talmudic period, many of whom, like opponents of abortion today, believed that life begins at conception, held that the foetus in the womb is nevertheless not a person (*nefesh*), and that it therefore has no standing in law. Only at birth does the foetus become a person; only then is its destruction tantamount to murder. Although, as noted, many rabbis believed "life" to begin at conception, they regarded the nature of the embryo as belonging to the "secrets of God," i.e., that the question of its humanity was in the end unresolvable. Such ultimate theological questions had no bearing on "the practical, jurisprudential issue of foeticide versus homicide."¹ This point is worth underscoring. What the rabbis argue in effect is that the point at which "life" begins—the issue around which the modern debate so often revolves—is irrelevant to the legal issue, which is simply one of legal standing.

The foetus's lack of standing in Jewish law had legal consequences beyond the issue of abortion, which are worth considering. For example, if a woman was convicted of a capital offense and was subsequently found to be pregnant, no special provision was made for her to bear the child. She was to be executed in accord with the principle in all capital cases, that quick execution avoids unnecessary suffering for the criminal. Even here, concern for the woman's feelings is paramount. Compassion for the condemned woman overrides any interest which the state might have in preserving the life of the foetus, even in a religious state which placed the highest spiritual value on procreation.

Concern for the woman's feelings had even more interesting consequences in the determination of whether an abortion was licit. If a woman had asked the rabbinic court to approve an abortion to save her own life, she would likely have been turned down on the grounds that one does not trade one life for another. If, on the other hand, she had argued that the physical or psychological pain was

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more than she could bear, she would likely have been granted the abortion. In the U.S. today, where abortion is restricted, precisely the opposite is the case. The woman's feelings are totally ignored, but abortion is allowed to save the mother's life or her health.

Flying in the face of Christian America's all-too-comfortable assumptions about the use of religious considerations on the issue of abortion, the rabbinic tradition demonstrates that religious persons may continue to affirm the sanctity of life and yet tolerate abortion. Rabbinic tradition casts the abortion problem in terms that are readily understandable today. The issue for the rabbis was not whether "life" begins at conception or even whether abortion is a sin in the eyes of God, but whether the foetus has recourse to the legal machinery of the state. In spite of deeply held beliefs about the sanctity of life, the rabbis ruled that the foetus had no such right. In a society such as ours which is built on the premise that matters of religious belief and matters of state must be kept separate, the conclusion of the rabbis is even more compelling.

Even supposing that "life" begins at conception, the question for members of the local religious community and for the courts is simply whether the state has any grounds for compelling a woman to bear a child she does not want. In other words, is the foetus an entity which has rights under the law? I would argue that at least prior to the twentieth week of pregnancy it does not. It has no standing because it is not yet by any standard a person. We do not acknowledge it as such with a name until it is born, or, if it is stillborn, until the pregnancy is relatively far advanced. Most parents choose not to name a stillborn child unless it is well beyond the twentieth week. When a foetus dies prematurely, we do not acknowledge its death with a death certificate prior to the twentieth week of pregnancy, nor do parents generally acknowledge its death with the ritual of burial until well after the twentieth week. In all of these respects, our society refuses to accord the foetus even the most basic legal and social recognition as a distinct person prior to the twentieth week of pregnancy.

The mother, on the other hand, has undisputed right under the law. She has the right not to be deprived of control over her body by state legislation. Against this indisputable right must be weighed the rights, if any, of the foetus as a non-person. If prior to the twentieth week and even much later, society does not recognize the foetus as a person, or as a legal personality, and if, as seems likely, society would generally give precedence in

matters of such consequence to human versus non-human interests, then it is unconscionable that the state in the name of the "rights of the unborn" should prohibit a woman from choosing to have an abortion before the twentieth week of pregnancy. The example of the rabbis shows that such legal common sense is

something even ardent defenders of the sanctity of life can accept.

NOTE

1. David Feldman, *Birth Control in Jewish Law* (New York: N.Y.U. Press, 1968), 273. Here, as elsewhere in the article, I follow Feldman's analysis.

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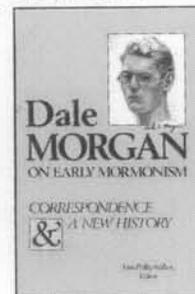
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REVELATION, HIERARCHY, AND DIALOGUE: A RESPONSE TO TODD COMPTON

By Matthew Stannard



Obedience and skepticism entail each other; the person who listens only to the pronouncements of Church authorities is skeptical to anyone who disagrees. The skeptic who listens to no voice is obedient to the command of a distorted, radically individualist view of human reason. Only ethical dialogue can close the gap between ourselves and others and keep learning—revelation—alive in us.

OUR ORTHODOX CONCEPTION of religious truth seems incapable of separating revelation from the group of leaders whom we sustain as prophets. We assume that these

leaders are responsible—often exclusively so—for receiving revelations concerning both the principles of the gospel (this includes interpretation of old scripture and the creation of new scripture) and the policies of the Church as an institution.

With respect to revelation, we seem to have adopted the following premises:

1. Prophets are called and sustained only through “legitimate” or institutional channels.
2. Only such institutional prophets may receive revelation concerning the institution or community as well as Church doctrine.
3. Those not in the institutional hierarchy may receive “personal” revelation concerning their lives only.
4. Those not in the hierarchy who claim to receive revelation of a higher significance are not telling the truth.
5. Those not in the hierarchy who question legitimate revelations are not in good standing with the Church.

Most criticisms of these premises tend to focus on the absolute nature of the pronouncements. Are prophets *only* found in the hierarchy of the Church? Are they the *only* ones who can receive revelation concerning gospel truth? Is it *impossible* for those not in the hierarchy to receive significant revelations? Similarly, does disagreement with the institution always constitute bad standing or apostasy?

Todd Compton (“Counter-Hierarchical Revelation,” *SUNSTONE* 15:2) is one writer who takes issue with the absoluteness of orthodox exclusivity. His thesis is that revelation “received by someone comparatively low in the hierarchy, or not in the hierarchy,” can possibly be legitimate and desirable. He cites a number of historical examples which illustrate that such revelation has been “accepted by someone higher in the hierarchy”(34).

Compton uses language which assumes that the hierarchy can occasionally give way. He cites a case of Peter and Paul in which leadership “flowed from below to above”(35). In several other examples, Compton reassures the reader that the hierarchy was still intact, and only strengthened by its lenient recognition of occasional exceptions. In case we have missed this point, one of Compton’s concluding remarks is that “counter-hierarchical revelation does not *negate hierarchy*”(40, emphasis added). I gather that “negate” might mean anything from undermine to utterly destroy.

Compton urges Church leaders to “take seriously” the various revelations of “those hierarchically beneath us,” and to “accept revelation wherever we may find it”(38). But this caveat is qualified by the language which calls occasional “upward” revelation merely “a necessary escape valve” which institutional leaders ought to “make use of . . . on occasion”(40).

The problem with Compton’s position, however, is that his qualifications prevent his

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counter-hierarchical revelation from fulfilling its intended purpose. The reason such non-traditional revelation must (as opposed to “may”) occur is that Church leaders occasionally fail. Ideally, counter-hierarchical revelation would help solve such problems and strengthen the leadership of the Church. But all of Compton’s examples ultimately illustrate only that Church leaders ought to be open to suggestions concerning their leadership. In his view, no counter-hierarchical revelation can exist *as such*, because whatever the source, it is the leadership which finally rubber-stamps the revelation, or fails to do so.

Compton’s insistence that non-standard inspiration be “non-threatening”(40) is curious, given that much genuine revelation is almost always “threatening,” as it calls people to repentance and warns them of the error of their ways. I deduce that he refers to the *manner* in which the message is presented. But shouldn’t all such relations in a gospel community be non-threatening?

Similarly, Compton suggests that as long as, and only if, one retains obedience to authority, even to the extreme of foolish or dangerous behavior commanded by authority, then all will be well; schisms will be avoided and the structure will remain intact. But strictly speaking, the gospel itself provides an alternative to schisms, and requires that both sides, not just the non-leaders, be willing to submit to each other.

The “schizophrenic” nature of Compton’s argument can be illustrated in his vision of the ideal Mormon community. It is a community, full of checks and balances, where important inspiration can come to anyone who is in tune, not just a few (*though Church leaders have a responsibility to conduct the business of the Church*). (40, emphasis added.)

The latter portion of the passage begins with “though.” To paraphrase (given the context of the essay), anyone can have revelation (or “inspiration,” presumably a “weaker” form of revelation), *but* it is not necessarily the responsibility of “anyone” to receive revelation concerning Church doctrine or policy. This softening renders Compton’s prescription inadequate. For if it is true that leaders are fallible; that revelation can occur through non-institutional individuals; and that the acceptance of such revelation is vital to the strength of the community, then acknowledging these contingencies while maintaining the authority of a few given the right to “decide” revelation cannot solve the problem outright. Leaders are still fallible and still predisposed

to discounting and discouraging the inspiration of those not in the hierarchy. At the same time, few would suggest abandoning the institution itself, inasmuch as it is necessary to fulfill the primary mission of the gospel, organizing and gathering all of God’s children into a community.

To find our way out of this problem, we return to Compton’s assurance that “counter-hierarchical revelation does not negate hierarchy.” Compton says this to counter an objection that a danger exists that each individual will decide for himself or herself what the truth is. But the objection assumes that only the hierarchical institution can guard against radically individualistic relativism. Compton answers that this will not happen because the authority of the hierarchy is still intact, still the final word.

However, the implication that institutional authority is the only alternative to individualism, that the only genuine community possesses absolute leadership, is open to serious doubt when we consider the primacy of the community in our world view—a world view based on progression rather than on static perfection, on ethical obligations to others being prior to institutions or rules. In short a world view where the community is more than simply the institution, its hierarchy, and its subjects.

Both the orthodox view demanding absolute obedience and the moderate view characterized by Compton’s article assume that hierarchy is absolutely necessary, or at least unavoidable. But it seems to me that the gospel urges us to move beyond all states of qualitative, artificially established inequalities governing our treatment of one another. To be sure, given our incessant use of power relations throughout history, such an abandonment would be difficult. But I don’t think it would be impossible, and I cannot help but feel that it is very important.

In a sense, the unquestioned assumption of the need for leadership (at least the kind of absolute authority which discourages dissent from institutional pronouncements) is an admission of failure. The need for such leadership presumes that, left to our own democratic and cooperative accord, we will be unable to govern ourselves, that we will reach no decisions, or we will harm one another, or fail to submit to one another in the absence of institutional compulsion.

Again, the gospel itself provides a clear alternative. While not a guarantee against all disagreement and difficulty, living the gospel means that inevitable disputes will be addressed with the intent of satisfying all concerned community members. Ironically, if we

do not live the gospel, even the most stern authority will bring us no closer to the cooperation required in a saintly community.

Thus, if authority is offered as a plan to solve disagreements, misunderstandings, and problems that result from human agency, it not only fails in this intent, but also undermines the entire Christian mission.

Revelation begins within a non-institutional context. We acknowledge a person as the conveyor of revelation, and that person is God. Of course, we must not portray this being as completely unlike us. To an extent, we do not; though our discourse often swings precariously in that direction, God is better seen as a member of the community, and our concern with God’s contingency and temporality indicates that he is not the “origin” or maker *ex nihilo*, of the community. We welcome him, and he welcomes us, and we interact.

Revelation is dialogue. Answers are conditioned by questions. Questions result from specific situations. Those situations are the result of the interaction of humans in mutual projects. An ethical mode of revelatory dialogue, in which all community members participate in formulating the questions and interpreting the answers, is a desirable alternative to both oppressive, silencing hierarchy and to the mobocratic chaos that results from an unethical community.

Honest, revelation-based faith acknowledges all revealed things, opens itself up to questioning concerning the interpretation of its received information, and bravely faces the dangers of faith’s ambiguities. Recognizing that revelation occurs through diverse human sources, we must ask ourselves if it is necessary to appoint or privilege a prophet? At different times we are all prophets, and since we are always grounded in revelation as a community, it is the mutual cooperation of community-based decision-making which guides our journey.

HIERARCHY has governed most human relationships. Whether scarcity and the division of labor have necessitated efficient distribution of authority, or humanity simply has a drive to control others, few communities have been non-hierarchical and religious communities are no exception. Traditional religious thought illustrates even more blatant displays of power relations. In history, the church without “leaders” is the exception rather than the rule. The governing ideas of Western metaphysics—platonian “perfection,” static and unchanging truth, and a God who is the uncreated origin of truth rather than a revealer—have forced

themselves into our concepts and models of ethics, calling for allegiance to institutional hierarchy on the assumption that the more powerful a person is, the more perfect he or she has become. Though Mormon theology rejects these metaphysical assumptions, our models of ethics have yet to escape them. We haven't yet actualized our radicalism. At issue, I believe, is the question of hierarchy itself. Given the presence of power relations in nearly all our social projects, how can we ignore its infiltration of the one project we've built to house the gospel—a gospel which ironically calls for the abandonment of power relations in favor of mutual submission and love?

Historically, few prophets and prophetesses have been members of institutional leadership. This fact is not simply incidental to the history of revelation; it is part of the context in which revealed truths are found. Truth does not emerge from a metaphysical fountain or some supernatural being who makes up the rules as It goes along. Truth is revealed in a community of seekers and believers who share a language and a mode of discourse necessitated by mutual needs and desires. This community is the origin or truth; not vice versa. Mormonism is a community of spiritual kin who chose a particular plan in order to progress together. Challenges are to be overcome through mutual love; Christ's sacrifice emerges as an example of the best that this agreement can achieve, and all other relationships are best actualized following that example.

Significantly, since humanity is a family prior to our arrangement of institutions or rules, including religious ones, our ethical obligations to one another are prior to the demands placed on us by institutions. Just as we would call a civil law unjust if obedience to it required treating a fellow human cruelly, a religious law cannot take precedence over our spiritual obligations to one another. The "higher" law is not a law at all but is the origin of all law—our agreement, our social project.

Similarly, revelation is more primal than religious authority. This explains why revelation is so often received by non-authorities. The archetypal receiver of revelation is the community member who, pondering a question while at work in the fields or kneeling in the empty woods, receives a vision and rushes back home or into the town to share the revelation. Often, this prophet is lowly by the standards of the world; consequently, he or she is not a religious authority. Interestingly, religious authorities often lead the community in ridiculing, slaying, or excommunicating the prophet.

Such accounts remind us that revelation is more genuine and more important than authoritative pronouncements. If our responsibility toward each other must always override responsibility to titles, institutions, and even rules, then revelation does not occur within a hierarchical context but, instead, occurs as God deems necessary and as we petition him. Such giving and receiving through honest dialogue is the ethical essence of the community.

THE path of non-hierarchical revelation, no doubt, would be more difficult to tread than the comforting reliance upon authorities. And, unfortunately, such comfort often seems to be the sole objective of the call to obedience. Janice Allred has written a reasoned and moving plea for a more progressive, egalitarian method of spiritual discourse in the Church ("Do You Preach the Orthodox Religion?" *SUNSTONE* 15:2). Allred questions Church authorities' assumptions concerning the comfort of orthodoxy. "Orthodoxy craves certainty," and such a craving removes the burden of revelation from where it rightly belongs—on all who wish to receive truth (26).

When discussing such issues, one often is offered only one alternative to orthodoxy: skepticism. In response to the arguments of this essay, one might charge that I am skeptical of the pronouncements of Church authorities. If I am guilty of this, it is indeed damaging because I have little basis for rejecting the majority of revelations that have come from LDS church leadership. In fact, the very basis of my Mormon world view would have little support if I did not believe such pronouncements to be true. But I am not advocating rejection, or even skepticism,

concerning the ability of Church authorities to receive revelation. What I am advocating is a view of revelation more consistent with the very world view Mormons have adopted. Such a view requires neither orthodoxy nor skepticism but rejects both in favor of the far more difficult task of dialogue.

Of course it is easy to listen to others, believe them, and decide that the issue is closed. It is also easy to listen to no one and decide that truth simply does not exist. Both extremes entail an escape from responsibility. The responsible option—an ethical and open dialogue—is not found along these lines at all. One does not enter into a dialogue if one is always obedient, however easier obedience might be. Similarly, the overly skeptical person refuses to communicate and is willing to ignore the plea of another voice in favor of the comforting self-assurance of belief in nothing. Moreover, obedience and skepticism entail each other; the person who listens only to the pronouncements of Church authorities is decidedly skeptical to anyone who disagrees. The skeptic who listens to no voice is obedient to the command of a distorted, radically individualist view of human reason. Only dialogue can close the gap between ourselves and others. Only ethical, open communication promises to keep learning—revelation—alive in us.

No promises can be made about communication's power to comfort, or even that it will be successful. However, given that, in an earlier state of life, we presumably chose between a plan that would, through obedience alone, assure collective salvation and a more uncertain, but far more satisfying proposal, it would not be unreasonable to assume that we are continuing to make that decision every day. ☪

PSALM

THE FATHER AND THE MOTHER

Come let us praise The Father and The Mother
whose voices wrap around us in the night
whose arms enclose the darkest places of our hearts
whose tears ran on the mountains of Gettysburg and Seoul,
of Sodom and Chernobyl.
They are weeping for their children they are weeping love
small lures falling, waiting to be taken,
to be tangled in the piece of sun
given to their children
waiting for the cleansing fire to light the earth,
making it plain as the love by which we were conceived.

—CAROL CLARK OTTESEN

RESPONSE TO MATTHEW STANNARD



By Todd Compton

NOTHING IS SO annoying as to have written what one thinks is a radical article and then to have somebody accuse you of defending the status quo. Seriously, I was pleased to have a response to my article, especially one so thought-provoking and interesting. Stannard comes from a different area of expertise (which is all for the good) and works from different premises (again, good). Apart from that, we simply agree about some things and disagree about others.

First of all, Stannard's response is largely theoretical and seems, in true Platonic fashion, to be focused on the purely ideal. My article was in large part historical—looking at the past for relevant counter-hierarchical models. Why do I base my Church construct on history? Aside from the fact that I am fascinated by history and like good stories, I use history partially because historical examples have weight with a broad Mormon audience. Additionally, in the search for truth, I have a tendency to provide evidence and an aesthetic bias to “show, don't tell,” as my BYU creative writing teachers used to instruct. A historian shows with examples, stories, and footnotes.

With his background in philosophy, Stannard has a more theoretical standpoint than I do. He doesn't cite historical examples to show how his ideal Church would work; he doesn't need to. His audience is less targeted at the “Mormon in the street” than is mine. His philosophical terminology is to some extent unfamiliar to non-philosophers.

So much for premises. Here are some responses to specific quotes from Stannard's article.

“REVELATION begins within a non-institutional context” and “Often, this prophet is lowly by the standards of the world; consequently, he or she is not a religious authority.” The first statement is too sweeping for me. Always? What does he mean by “institution”? Is a community an institution? A church is an institution, and a church can be a community. Is it impossible for an institutional leader to receive revelation? What about a

non-institutional prophet who receives revelation, and thus has the gift for receiving further revelations, as is usual, and then becomes a leading figure in a community or community structure? In fact, the prophetic gift will often propel one toward leadership. Do we disallow revelations that come after he or she becomes a leader? It is noteworthy that often a revelation makes one a leader (though being a leader doesn't automatically confer revelation). For example, a visitation from the resurrected Christ was necessary for one to become an apostle in the early Christian Church (Acts 1:15-22; 1 Corinthians 9:1).¹ In addition, isn't a prophet always part of a community (an implied structure), even before he receives revelation? No one lives in a vacuum. He or she is always caught up in a web of family, tribe, neighborhood, church, community, and sometimes state. Stannard tries to disassociate revelation from any member of a community structure. From my historical and theoretical perspective, this simply does not work. I entirely agree that important revelation for the community need not be limited to a small group of leaders in the community, but the leaders cannot be excluded from receiving revelation either.

“IN [Compton's] view, no counter-hierarchical revelation can exist as such, because whatever the source, it is the leadership which finally rubber-stamps the revelation, or fails to do so.” What Stannard must mean is that I reject hierarchy-negating revelation, because I entirely accept counter-hierarchical revelation as I define it (revelation going up through the structure). As to leadership rubber-stamping grassroots revelation: Though I think that community is a more important word than leadership, leadership is still a crucial part of the community. I object to the attribution of “rubber-stamping” in this context (I used it in a different context); I like the idea of Emma Smith initiating a revelation (the Word of Wisdom) and Joseph completing it, each contributing something important.

“THE authority of a few given the right to ‘decide’ revelation.” In the Doctrine and Covenants (20:65; 26:2), the populace of the Church is given the final chance to reject a proposed leader or revelation (see note 17 in my article). So the people finally decide revelation and leadership. Too often we rubber-stamp Church leaders' actions. However, I think leaders are often (not always) representatives of the people, in a true sense, and so deserve respect for that reason.

“COMPTON suggests that as long as, and only if, one retains obedience to authority, even to the extreme of foolish or dangerous behavior commanded by authority, then all will be well.” This is the opposite of what I tried to express. In the example of Joseph F. Smith on the boat, he is directly disobedient to two apostles; the context shows that he was correct in doing this and that I accepted this. Toward the end of my article, I critique the idea that one should always, without exception, “Follow the Brethren.” I reject the idea of “my country right or wrong” applied to the Church. I believe that obedience in the Church, or elsewhere, is a good principle in many situations, but full of ambiguity (it is wrong in some situations). Only obedience to God is entirely unambiguous, though understanding what is obedience to God is often very difficult.

“COMPTON'S insistence that non-standard inspiration be ‘non-threatening.’ ” I said that non-standard inspiration can be non-threatening, not that it had to be. My contrast between Paul and Nephi is noteworthy. Paul used a very critical, public rebuke; Nephi used a subtle, private rebuke. Depending on the circumstances either could be correct. Intense rebukes, such as Paul's to Peter, can be threatening, especially if the rebukee is a leader who is insecure, touchy, and authoritarian in mentality. Evidently, Peter wasn't.

“ETHICAL obligations to one another [are] prior to institutions or rules” and “our responsibility toward each other must always override responsibility to titles, institutions, and even rules.” I'm concerned about this opposition of ethics to rules. “Thou shalt not steal” is a rule and also an ethical obligation. Many rules are inherently ethical. Oddly enough, they can be “kept” in unethical ways (letter-of-the-law observance); ethics is the “spirit” of the rule/law. Rules and institutions often exist because of our responsibility toward each other. So I see this as a false dichotomy. But, as Christ taught, rules can often be used

to subvert the intent for which they were created by people who pride themselves on their religiosity. Thus people who overtly seem the most "religious," who have made the greatest show of placing themselves firmly in a religious structure can often be the very people who understand ethics and love least. So Christ continually taught sincerity and sincere love in religious practice, without rejecting laws and commandments (rules) themselves (see Matthew 23:23).

STANNARD writes that because humans are unequal or power hungry, "few communities have been non-hierarchical." "The church without leaders is the exception rather than the rule." Here we are in profound disagreement. All communities (that I know of) have some form of leadership, i.e., structure. While I strongly dislike destructive, enforced, hate-generated inequality and strongly resent church or political or economic leaders who have repressive, judgmental sides, nevertheless in any collection of human beings, whether two or a thousand, there is structure and gradations rooted in differing gifts and specializations. However, in the ideal Christian community no one is better than another; are all equally valuable, even if they have different gifts (and, possibly, they should all be paid the same; see D&C 49:20). Each individual has his or her own gift and is therefore a leader in some way (see 1 Corinthians 7 at 12:4-31). Thus, a community always has leaders, always has structure (though it is more complex than a few leaders and many followers—all are leaders and followers, at the same time). There always is government of some sort.

However, does the structure have a hierarchy? The original sense of this word is exactly opposite from its current negative connotations: "-archy" (from *arkhē*) means "rule" (i.e., leaders and followers); "hier-" (from *hierós*) means "holy, sacred, consecrated." If we accept that there is "rule"—leaders and followers—in any community, and if we believe that communities can become sacred, then hierarchy refers only to such sacred communities. They have "rule," but it is "sacred," transformed.

One could look at structure/leaders-and-followers as a harsh necessity. I think this is wrong. If we combine the concept of structure with "hierós," structure in community can actually be beautiful, the community can be beautiful, the leaders can work in sacred, beautiful ways. Paul compared the Church to the body, and as the body can be beautiful and reflective of divine beauty, so the Church community can be beautiful, not despite its

structure, but through it (1 Corinthians 12).

But what is a holy community/structure/leader-follower relationship? It is radically transformed and unlike secular models (which have unfortunately appropriated the word "hierarchy"). When we say hierarchy we often mean unholy rule, evil rule, authoritarianism, rule by force instead of kindness and persuasion, an unthinking and uncaring bureaucracy. True *hierós-archy* is extremely paradoxical: without compulsion the "greatest" serves (as a table servant serves, doing repetitive, unglamorous duties) the "least." So Christ washed the feet of the apostles, though he was their ethical superior and was divine. Whereas, in unholy-secular-archy, the "least" is forced to "serve" the "greatest" in brute power (whose moral bankruptcy often makes the "greatest" the least in a moral sense). Christ taught this explicitly: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave" (Matthew 20:25, see Matthew 25:40, Luke 9:48). This concept is in the New Testament—"on the books"—but it is extremely hard for any of us, including Church leaders, to internalize. It does not negate community structure, but it does require "leaders" to have this paradoxical, loving, serving (in the sense of prosaic household servant, or even slave) spirit. There is no sense of forcing people to do things, of authoritarian attitudes, or a sense that some people are qualitatively better or more valuable or more loved by God than others, depending on how high they make it up a structural ladder.

Thus, an individual may have a gift for revelation and a structure might naturally coalesce around him as leader (this often happened in sacred history; Moses and Joseph Smith are good examples). If he or she has authentic revelation, he or she will have the paradoxical attitude toward leadership that Christ taught. I think of Moses, interceding with God, offering to give up his own salvation in order to rescue sinning Israel (Exodus 32:32).

Thus Stannard is correct when he writes that I believe that "hierarchy is absolutely necessary, or at least unavoidable." We simply disagree. He argues that the gospel, lived perfectly, would do away with "all states of qualitative, artificially established inequality." He suggests a Church community in which "all community members participate" in revelation. I agree with much of this, but

some of it I can only agree with after definition. In one sense, all humans are equal; God loves all equally. All are children of God. But in another sense, we are all individuals, and, thus, unequal in specific gifts. I type better than many, I am therefore a leader in that skill; I can serve non-typers through my skill. This is an inequality that enriches the community. All can receive revelation, but people receive it in different ways and in different intensities. Thus, it is valid to say that there can be leaders in revelation.

I like Stannard's idea of the entire community receiving revelation and communicating it with each other in dialogue. But in my view, there is still individuality and leadership in receiving revelation.

IN conclusion, the above may emphasize my differences with Stannard more than agreements, but there was a good deal that Stannard and I concur on (especially if we agreed upon some redefinition of terms), and there was much that I found intriguing in his response. I would like to thank him for further exploring my ideas and for encouraging me to do the same. □

NOTE

1. R. Schnackenburg, "Apostles Before and During Paul's Time," 287-303 in *Apostolic History and the Gospel*, ed. W. Gasque and Ralph Martin (Exeter: Paternoster, 1970), 292-93; Raymond Brown, *The Gospel According to John* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970), 2.973.

PASS

this handful of flowery twigs
too late in season
to respond to;
A rain-gnawed door keeping winter
in a dingy cookie tin,
an oil lamp, dry. Mason jars of smooth
pebbles fingered sleek against my veins.
These porcelain chips
from a bombed-out mosque,
this semiprecious glitter from grave-
dirt of an excavated cairn:
The guards are dozing.
This copper urn of Ganges waters
I was to sip just before I died
unread, unheard, unbelieved.

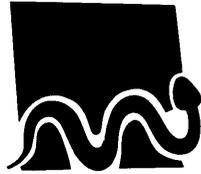
—SEAN BRENDAN BROWN

REVIEWS

THE DARKER SIDE OF SCHOLARSHIP

THE DARKER SIDE OF VIRTUE:
CORRUPTION, SCANDAL, AND THE MORMON EMPIRE

by Anson D. Shupe
Prometheus Books, 1991, 186 pages, \$22.95



Reviewed by Armand L. Mauss

ANSON SHUPE is a sociologist and author or coauthor of some good earlier studies in the sociology of religion, particularly on relatively new religious movements like the Unification Church ("Moonies") and televangelism. This is his second book on the Mormons. The first, *The Mormon Corporate Empire*, written with Utah coauthor John Heinerman, was published by the Beacon Press of Boston in 1985. He is sole author of *The Darker Side of Virtue*, published by a press well known for books that take a jaundiced view of organized religion. Shupe does not claim that these books are works of social science, for manifestly they are not. They are much closer to the venerable American tradition of exposé journalism.

THE THEME AND THESIS

EVEN more than *Corporate Empire*, the present book relies mainly on secondary sources, especially articles in newspapers and popular magazines; it uses a minimum of original data and does not resort to the considerable and more reliable scholarly literature on Mormons. Both books make much of "post-millennialist" theology that they attribute to Mormonism, namely that believers should prepare the world for the Second Coming rather than wait for the Messiah to come and change the world all by

himself.

The first book derived an ominous conspiracy theory from such a theology, implying that the Mormons have never really given up their nineteenth-century theocratic aspirations, but instead are infiltrating the major economic, governmental, and military institutions of the country for an eventual takeover. The present book concedes that post-millennialism is probably not as important to Mormons as it once was, but that it still "indirectly" influences the Mormons' proclivities to put their worldly economic and political influence at the disposal of Church leaders. Indeed, Shupe somehow "discovered" that post-millennialism even guides the Church's investment strategies (16-17).

Shupe acknowledges that Mormons have traveled a long way from their earlier disreputable image and, indeed, have come to exemplify many conservative American values like familism, patriotism, honesty, thrift, self-reliance, etc. The Church's effective public relations program is credited for this image change, but we must be careful, for "all is not as it seems . . . there is a darker side to many of these well known Mormon virtues. . . ." (10), and "That's what this book is about. It is a story of virtue gone astray, of . . . best intentions turning into calamity" (13).

The first chapter is introductory, with salacious chapter synopses leading the reader to expect some shocking exposés to follow. The concluding chapter reviews the hazards of involvement in worldly affairs by religious institutions, especially those like the Mormons with leaders who quash dissent and demand obedience. Much is made of the

1985 admonition by Apostle Dallin Oaks (taken out of context) against even justified public criticism of Church leaders; and with characteristic lack of balance the author quotes the dictum, "When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done," from a 1940s ward teaching lesson, without mentioning that the president of the Church immediately repudiated it (*Dialogue* 19:1/35-39).

The six topical chapters between the introduction and conclusion deal with the myths and machinations of Mormon missionary work, the scam and fraud epidemic in Utah, the Mark Hofmann forgeries and murder scandal, the Lehi child sexual abuse scare, the Mormon mafia in the FBI, and the Mormon implication in the space shuttle disaster.

The chapters on the business scams and the Hofmann scandal, though fair enough, merely rehash information from other books and articles. As embarrassing as scams and frauds have been to Utahns, no evidence is presented that this outbreak of greed and gullibility can be linked to the Mormon religion per se, "darker side" or otherwise. Indeed, Shupe eventually concedes that Mormons might not be especially "susceptible to fraud and come-ons laced with religious overtones" (164), at least by comparison with certain other conservative Christian bodies.

THE FAILURE OF SCHOLARSHIP

THE real mystery of the book is not the hidden LDS agenda or the darker virtues of the Mormons, but rather why any scholar of Shupe's manifest talents and accomplishments would write books like these. Not that a social scientist is obliged always to do social science; one is certainly entitled to practice journalism, even yellow journalism, or anything else one wishes. However, when a social scientist knows the standard methods and logic of the discipline, it is reasonable to hope that he or she will not totally abandon them, whatever the forum.

The determination of cause and effect is a complex issue in the reasoning of social science (or any science), and was certainly entitled to more meticulous consideration by this author. Considering that the main thesis is about how certain "virtues" gone bad cause Mormons to behave in certain ways, the evidence and reasoning offered in this book do not justify a single causal inference, not at least by the standard methods of social science. If we are to believe, for example, that Mormons exhibit a certain "virtue" (dark or otherwise) to an unusual degree, we must ask, "compared to what?" or "compared to

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whom?" Shupe presents no such comparisons, merely an accumulation of anecdotal "evidence" presumably intended to show that at least "a lot" of Mormons have the "dark" trait in question.

SELECTED CHAPTER CRITIQUES

The FBI and the Mormon Mafia

IN order to make the case that a "Mormon mafia" (chapter 6) has a disproportionate presence and influence in the FBI, then at least one must offer data showing that there are proportionately more Mormons in the FBI than there are in the U.S. population. That may well be possible to do, but Shupe does not. Also, one would have to introduce Mormon/non-Mormon comparisons based on education, on foreign language competence, and perhaps on other characteristics as well, in order to show that the putative Mormon over-representation is not simply an artifact of greater Mormon numbers among the college educated, the bilingual (from foreign missionary service), and so on.

Instead, what readers get is a salacious title and unsupported charges that this "Mafia" in the FBI "has systematically discriminated against non-Mormon minority-group agents who have been unwilling to convert" and has promoted the careers of Mormon agents at the expense of non-Mormon agents (12). The "evidence" rests mainly upon (1) an anecdotal account of bureaucratic heavy-handedness by the head of the Los Angeles division, who happened to be a Mormon, and (2) the charges made in a class-action discrimination suit by Hispanic FBI agents, although Shupe concedes that (a) the grievances of the Hispanic agents were not upheld by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and that (b) a later verdict in federal court found simply an *FBI-wide* pattern of discrimination against Hispanic agents, not a Mormon pattern, and specifically not *religious* discrimination. Where is the "darker side" of any Mormon "virtue" in this?

The Child Sexual Abuse Scandal

Even thinner fare, chapter 5 deals with the child sexual-abuse scare in the small town of Lehi, Utah. Despite the italicized reference in the chapter synopsis (12) to violations of Mormon children *by their own parents in Satanic rings*, the author eventually concludes that the Lehi episode was a case study in collective hysteria reminiscent of the Salem witchcraft scare. There never was a

child sex-abuse ring, satanic or otherwise; Church leaders did nothing to try to cover up evidence or prevent prosecution during the investigation; and the whole scandal was probably the product of the professional entrepreneurship of a key psychotherapist, whose arrival in each new community tended to be followed soon by the same kind of scandal (123).

Meanwhile, the chapter leads us through a maze of ad hoc data and expert opinion on child abuse in Utah in order to demonstrate that "Mormon households as a group are no more immune to the many sources of child-sexual-abuse than any other homes, however much the LDS Church would like to minimize the reality or Mormons themselves would prefer to disbelieve it" (111). This is an obvious "straw man," given that (1) no such Mormon claim to immunity has been introduced by the author, (2) no evidence is presented that the LDS church has tried to minimize the problem, and (3) no evidence is presented that rank-and-file Mormons are inclined to "disbelieve" that they have their share of child abuse (certainly not those in Lehi!).

The worst that can be said about the Lehi case is that it illustrates how dense social networks in small Mormon towns are just as effective as those in non-Mormon towns at spreading harmful rumors and hysteria. Although the author promises near the beginning of the chapter that the "Lehi episode dramatically showed how the flip side of virtue can be dark indeed" (110), the thoughtful reader is again left to wonder what virtue, why dark?

The Mormon Mission Myths

The "Myth of Mormon Missionizing," (chapter 2) seems intent on demonstrating two main points (11):

1. The highly touted, youthful missionary corps of the Church, with its familiar door-to-door strategy, is not really responsible for the large annual conversion rates. Indeed, the missionaries have "abysmally low" success rates, and they serve as mere "window dressing" for the real missionary work done by members ("home missionaries"), who ingratiate themselves with non-Mormon friends in order to make converts of them.
2. The Church's "real" missionizing accomplishments recently have come from "covert" campaigns in Muslim and communist countries, which have had the effect of keeping Mormon converts "submissive" to governmental authority.

On the first point, Shupe seems to think he has made a startling discovery about a missionary strategy well known for a generation to Mormon insiders and any casual outside observer. The strategy is no secret. It was laid out for all the world to see in the official Church magazine twenty years ago and analyzed by sociologists Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge in a 1980 article on the importance of interpersonal bonds in the conversion process. Shupe cites both of these articles, but he misconstrues the strategy. He seems unaware that the missionaries themselves do virtually all of the actual teaching of prospective converts, no matter how the initial contact is made.

The author characterizes this member/missionary partnership as a manipulative strategy (25), since Mormons are presumably not sincere in building friendships with those whom they refer to the missionaries as potential converts; but Stark and Bainbridge see the strategy as the skillful use of basic sociological principles in proselyting. Since the author is himself presumably well acquainted with those same principles, why does he choose to see them in such an unfavorable light in the Mormon case? What is the "dark side" of which virtue in all of this?

Shupe's second theme in this chapter is that the "real missionizing accomplishments" can be seen in the recent covert activities carried on in Muslim and communist countries. However, the minuscule number of converts ever acquired in all Muslim and communist countries combined hardly permits the characterization of "real missionizing accomplishments," as the author would have known had he even consulted the *LDS Church Almanac*; but Shupe's main concern seems to be the "covert" nature of the Church's approach in such countries.

He makes a passing reference to the 1985 opposition by Orthodox Jews to building the BYU Center for Near Eastern Studies in Jerusalem, implying, with no evidence, that such opposition derived in part from the Jews' discovery of illegal Mormon missionizing in Muslim countries (30). Shupe does not mention that the Israeli government itself found the Orthodox opposition to be groundless, or that no credible claim has ever been advanced that U.S. Mormons in Israel have ever violated their agreement not to proselyte there. Instead, our attention is then shifted to Saudi Arabia, where apparently some overzealous Mormon employees of ARAMCO foolishly got themselves and some of their converts into serious trouble with the authorities for covert (and illegal) proselyting and organizing small home-congregations,

mostly among other non-Saudi visitors.

No claim is made that this ill-advised effort was directed from Church headquarters as part of any mission strategy. Shupe's key allegations depend mainly upon "anonymous informants," and he makes the highly unlikely and totally unsupported assumption that "Saudi Arabia has been an especially intense target of LDS mission work since 1980" (31).

The chapter closes with a brief account of the official and more realistic Mormon relationships with East European communist regimes going back a decade or more. Because of the well-known traditional Mormon opposition to communism, the author somehow sees these relationships as morally compromising. Here again is the author's proclivity for considering Mormon behavior in a context of his own making rather than in a broader comparative perspective. The Catholic and the Lutheran churches, among others, have historically carried on pragmatic relationships with communist and other repressive regimes (both overtly and covertly) in an effort to maintain and expand church influence in such countries, and to protect, insofar as possible, the right to teach and worship. Yet Mormon initiatives are portrayed as "Machiavellian" (36).

The author similarly sees moral compromise in the Mormon teaching that Church members should obey the law and be good citizens in whatever countries they live, including the acceptance of military service, in "nearly any ruling order, communist or not" (38). Instead of seeing this as the historic and universal predicament for any and all religious bodies with international membership, in the Mormon case the author construes it as a "chameleon" strategy attributable to the "post-millennial" theology that all worldly governments are only temporary (38). He interprets the Mormon willingness to be "good citizens" in countries like Poland and East Germany as "support[ing] authoritarian governments" (38, 40). Does he expect those Mormons to start revolutions in the name of moral consistency?

The thoughtful reader is struck here by a kind of "inconsistency" of the author himself: In the Muslim setting, even though official Church involvement was not demonstrated, the "darker side of virtue" for Mormons apparently consisted in seeking religious freedom through *resisting or evading* repressive laws, while in communist countries "the darker side of virtue" can be seen in the *law-abiding* posture of the Mormons and their leaders. To Shupe there is a darker side *whatever* the Mormons do.

Mormons and the Shuttle Disaster

Chapter 7 uses the venerable device of guilt by association to "chronicle . . . the involvement of the LDS Church itself in our nation's worst space disaster [which] need never have happened were it not for a confluence of factors closely related to that Utah-based religion" (143). After referring to a book on the Challenger disaster by a science journalist (as though the book supports his allegations about Church involvement), the author promises "a story of white-collar crime that includes . . . the LDS Church, the head administrator of NASA, several U.S. Senators from Utah, and a Utah-based company that built the shuttle booster rockets" (142).

Church "involvement," as it turns out, consisted mainly of participation by a few high Church leaders, along with Utah businessmen, academics, and scientists, in "Pro-Utah," a business promotion organization that has been very effective for the past twenty-five years in Utah's commercial and industrial development. As the author concedes, most states and cities have comparable organizations, but in Utah the LDS church is particularly influential because of its sheer size and historic commercial holdings. Most readers would probably find this situation quite understandable in light of Utah's unique history. The author apparently finds this situation somewhat worrisome, again without any comparative references to the economic and political influence of, say, Catholic archbishops in cities and states having large Catholic concentrations.

Relying mainly on other journalists' accounts, the author traces briefly the history of political lobbying and pressuring from prominent Utahns that eventually resulted in bringing the booster rocket contract to Utah's Thiokol company. While LDS church leaders undoubtedly supported in every legal way the campaign for Thiokol, it is clear even from the author's own account that the main promotional efforts came from Utah's two senators, as anyone would expect in the time-honored American tradition of pork-barrel politics; but again such a comparative perspective apparently does not occur to the author. The fact that Utah's senators and other key players happened to be Mormons seems a sufficient basis for him to find a Church-directed conspiracy.

The same chapter makes much of the Utah and Mormon ties of James Fletcher, twice head of NASA. Yet the quotations (152-53) from Fletcher's own correspondence make very clear that Fletcher was

strenuously *resisting* pressure from Utah's senators and was keenly aware of his potentially compromising situation. Furthermore, a 1986 Government Accounting Office investigation found concerns about Fletcher's conflict of interest in the matter to be groundless and his record as NASA administrator to be "unblemished" (155).

In detailing Thiokol's failures that led to the Challenger disaster, and the efforts to defend Thiokol, the author makes regular references to Mormon connections, as though the Church were somehow the main culprit. Indeed, Shupe concedes (158) that his evidence is "circumstantial" (though "strongly" so). With the same kind of evidence, would the author have had the temerity to cite "Jewish senators" or a "Jewish lobby" if the episode had involved instead U.S. dealings with an Israeli company?

SUMMARY

THIS is a work of exposé journalism. Anson Shupe makes no attempt at balanced explanation or assessment of the role of religion in the behavior of the Mormons who are the objects of this book's "revelations." It is simply assumed that if Mormons are involved in anything unseemly, it must be *because* they are Mormons, and/or because of their presumed "post-millennial" beliefs, and/or because they are succumbing to covert controls from Church leaders who demand blind obedience. The book depends mainly upon anecdotes and secondary sources, and these sources are almost always journalistic instead of scholarly, despite the large corpus of respectable social science literature now available on Mormon life.

The evidence adduced is almost always highly selective, ad hoc, and circumstantial in nature, rather than systematic, thorough, or balanced. Shupe makes no attempt at appropriate comparisons that would put the behavior of Mormons in historical and sociological context, or that would make it possible to distinguish religious traits from other likely "causes" of Mormon behavior in given situations. The context is created instead through the use of loaded, salacious rhetoric which sets the reader up to expect the worst. These are all glaring violations of standard social science reasoning and methodology on the part of an author who knows that methodology all too well, no matter what he is writing. Why would a scholar with such good credentials write such a terrible book? Truly we see here the darker side of scholarship. 

CANADIAN SAINTS

THE MORMON PRESENCE IN CANADA

Edited by Brigham Y. Card, et al.

The University of Alberta Press, 1990, 365 pages, Paperback \$30.00.



Reviewed by Stephen Young

THIS BOOK RIGHTFULLY calls itself “the first multidisciplinary scholarly work on Mormons in Canada.” Although one can find several articles and the occasional dissertation dealing with Canada’s Mormon past, mainstream LDS historiography has generally treated the Canadian experience as ancillary—either a refuge for persecuted polygamists, or a foreign field from whence Church leaders were plucked or to where they were called to serve.

This volume collects seventeen papers presented at the conference, “The Mormon Presence in Canada, 1830, 1887, 1987: A North American Ethno-religious People in Canadian Cultures,” held at Edmonton, Alberta, in May 1987. From this initial conclave, inspired by the centennial celebration of the first Mormon settlers in Alberta, grew the Canadian Mormon Studies Association (CMSA), which sponsored a second scholarly conference at Lethbridge, Alberta, in June 1990.

The essays mainly represent the work of historians and sociologists, but also include other disciplines. Some authors are familiar to readers of Mormon studies in the United States; however, the balance of the contributors reside in Canada. While most of the essays deal with nineteenth-century topics, the recent past is also represented.

Although the story of early Mormon settlers in Alberta, who migrated from the Intermountain West of the United States, figure predominantly in Canada’s Mormon experience and in this book, attention is also focused on the Church’s earliest efforts elsewhere. Using Ontario’s religious history as a backdrop, Richard E. Bennett discusses the “meteoric flash” Mormonism displayed in

upper Canada prior to 1850. Its progress, however, was defeated by a policy of encouraging new converts to gather in the United States.

The province of Alberta aside, perhaps the most provocative essay is Dean R. Louder’s “Canadian Mormon Identity and the French Fact.” He divides the Canadian LDS population into four distinct regions. Both the West and the Maritimes are culturally sympathetic to their brothers and sisters southward across the “permeable” U.S./Canadian border—an attraction based on their close proximity to large Mormon populations in the United States and historic links to Utah Church administration. Ontario, on the other hand, displays a more independent nature borrowed from the political and economic autonomy of Ottawa and Toronto. The Brampton Temple dedicated last year should “reinforce a Canadian Mormon identity” to these cultural independents. But Louder’s main focus is the LDS population in Quebec, and is a call for modernization and cultural sensitivity in dealing with Quebec’s pluralistic society.

Understandably, most of this book focuses on the Mormons of southern Alberta who began settling there in 1887. Their history and sociology will always dominate the study of Mormons in Canada due to their numbers, success, and influence.

If Brigham Young is the American Moses, Charles Ora Card is Alberta’s candidate. His activities are considered in several essays. While stake president of Cache Valley, he was dispatched to the Canadian west to find a location for colonization outside the jurisdiction of U.S. marshals. He maintained his ecclesiastical calling in absentia, eventually becoming the president of the first stake in Canada. Brigham Y. Card, a grandson of “C.O.,” recounts the establishment of Mormonism’s first foothold in Canada.

Leonard Arrington discusses Mormon pioneer work habits and business ventures, particularly as they pertain to Utah railroad work gangs who assisted in building the Canadian Pacific Railway in the early 1880s. A. A. Den Otter similarly maintains that the Latter-day Saints were recognized for their conservative lifestyle and work ethic, and were readily welcomed to the southern prairie because of their economic contribution to the province.

Undeniably, the practice of polygamy was the major factor for initiating new Mormon settlements across the border. Jesse L. Embry’s comparative study of polygamy in Canada, the United States, and Mexico presents the thesis that the Canadian Saints were assimilated into their adoptive home more successfully than in Mexico, but that the Mexican Saints practiced a purer, less confined brand of polygamy. B. Carmon Hardy maintains that since polygamy was illegal in Mexico and Canada, the official Church position was to keep a low profile and, in fact, to deny its practice to the host governments. While Mexican authorities winked at the practice, Canadian legislators were more firm in demanding submission to the law, resulting in an underground mentality within the Mormon communities of each country which was perceived as “isolationist” by Gentile neighbors.

Maureen Ursenbach Beecher discusses the lifestyle and experience of Alberta’s feminine pioneers. Many of these women evidently found little pleasure in the venture, with loneliness being the chief cause of complaint due to isolation on their homesteads.

William A. Wilson suggested that the infusion of folklore into historical research “could do much to help us better understand the Mormon experience in Canada.” He urges the use of tape recorders and cameras to preserve contemporary and past events.

Keith Parry, the sole anthropologist represented (and one of the guiding lights of the CMSA), reveals that consideration of the LDS church as an ethnic group has proven “analytically useful” in his research, despite any strict definitions or arguments of its application. His investigation of doctrine, culture, and ritual as a tool of member/non-member segregation in southern Alberta underscores the social science utility and multidisciplinary directions of CMSA.

All in all, *The Mormon Presence in Canada* offers a varied sampling of current research dealing with Canadian Mormonism. Applause should be directed to the aims and goals of the fledgling Canadian Mormon Studies Association.

STEPHEN YOUNG is a Ph.D. candidate in immigration history at Wayne State University.

NEWS

LEAKED BISHOP'S MEMO SPOTLIGHTS LDS RITUAL SATANIC SEXUAL ABUSE

THIS FALL, the Salt Lake City Messenger published a twelve-page confidential memo written in July 1990 by Bishop Glenn L. Pace, second counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, on ritualistic child abuse among Mormons.

The memo, written to a general authority committee called the Strengthening Church Members Committee, summarizes over fifty interviews Bishop Pace had with females, males, and children who said they were abused in Utah, California, Mexico, and other locations.

Some victims told Bishop Pace that they were "baptized in blood" to cancel their Mormon baptism. Others were reportedly stuffed into plastic bags and immersed in water. Some said they witnessed or participated in human sacrifices.

The abusers reportedly included parents, Church leaders, temple workers, and members of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir—individuals the victims knew well.

Some victims reported that only when they went through the temple and participated in its rituals did they begin to have "flashbacks" of the similar satanic rituals they had experienced but had blocked out for years.

The public revelations of Bishop Pace's memo sparked strong discussion of ritual child abuse. Generally, more counselors, social workers, and psychotherapists—individuals who have interviewed the victims—believe that such abuse is widespread than do law enforcement officers and sociologists. Because of the lack of objective evidence to corroborate these experiences, police and social scientists often

suspect hysteria and other psychological defense mechanisms.

Neither Salt Lake City police investigators nor Salt Lake County Attorney's Office prosecutors have seen any evidence of ritualistic child abuse.

Brent Ward, U.S. attorney for Utah, said that he interviewed survivors of the alleged abuse, but could find no evidence to substantiate their claim that they were ritually abused. "To cope with the extreme brutality of certain experiences, such as sexual abuse, the mind is capable of severely distorting events," he said. "I believe there are elements of truth to their stories and there's a startling similarity in their accounts, but a lack of evidence causes me to doubt if heinous, satanic acts occurred."

After the initial report, the discussion of ritual satanic abuse and its religious causes and connections escalated in Utah's newspapers and among public officials and opinion leaders.

In September, before the Pace memo was broadly distributed, the First Presidency issued a statement cautioning members "not to affiliate in any way with the occult or those mysterious powers it espouses. Such activities are among the works of darkness spoken of in the scriptures."

The debate extended beyond the Mormon community. Rev. David Heikkila, pastor of Calvary Chapel in Ogden, Utah, said that he has counseled victims of satanic rituals for ten years and noted that these rituals affect all religions. On the other hand, a spokesperson for the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City said no one has ever complained to the diocese's office about ritual

abuse.

Utah Governor Norm Bangerter suggested that the state task force on Women and Families, which included the investigation of child abuse, should disband, but he also budgeted more money for investigators to follow up on complaints.

Some supporters of the task force publicly speculated whether the governor had been pressured by "influential people" in the state who are satanists.

University of Utah professor of psychology David Raskin said

he thought the state had become a pawn for those who believe in the existence of satanic ritual abuse, even though no evidence exists for it. He accused the task force of inciting mass hysteria.

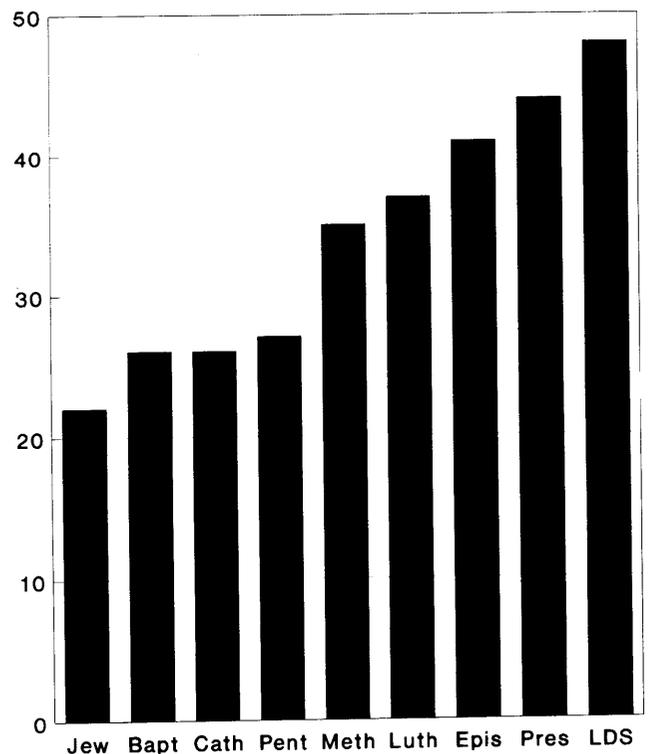
However, task force chair Noemi Mattis, a private therapist with a doctorate in psychology, responded, "I know that it is widespread. . . . All I can tell you is that my phone has been filled with people who are calling to say they are survivors or therapists who have patients who are."

PECULIAR PEOPLE

PERCENT REPUBLICAN IN VARIOUS RELIGIONS

THE NATIONAL Survey of Religious Identification (1989-90) identified Mormons as the most Republican among several major religious groups in America. Nearly half of adult Mormons identify themselves as Republican. Only Episcopalians and Presbyterians even come close to the Mormons, and Jews, Baptists, and Catholics are about half as likely to be Republican as are Mormons.

Percent Republican in Various Religions



Source: National Survey of Religious Identification, Graduate School, CUNY, March, 1991

THE ASSOCIATION FOR MORMON LETTERS will hold its 1992 annual meeting at Westminster College in Salt Lake City on Saturday, **25 January 1992**. Contact: Bruce Jorgensen, English Department, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602 (801/378-3205).

THE COMMUNAL SOCIETIES ASSOCIATION will hold its nineteenth annual conference at Nauvoo, IL, on **15-18 October 1992**. The association studies historic and contemporary communal societies. Send paper and session proposals to Robert P. Sutton, Department of History, Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL 61455 (309/298-1053).

NEW DIRECTION is a new periodical designed to "focus on the relationship between **Mormonism and being gay or lesbian**, religion and homosexuality in general, and informative articles on various aspects of the gay and lesbian identity." Its goal is "to present our readers with the best information available on these subjects." It encourages readers "to take the time and effort to study the issues and then seek answers from the Lord through prayer."

The maiden issue featured an article by an LDS single adult bishop on homosexuality, reprints of news stories on Boy Scouts and gays and matrimony, essays on revelation, homosexuality, and growing up in a gay home, and a review essay on books to help parents understand gay children. Submissions are desired. Subscriptions are \$25 for one year, \$45 for two; sample copy, \$5. Contact: New Direction, 6520 Selma Avenue, Suite 440, Los Angeles, CA 90028.

TOUCHSTONE is a Salt Lake-based resource, referral, and support network for **divorced LDS women**. Its purposes are to "promote a lifetime commitment to LDS values; provide spiritual, emotional, and social support through special programs; raise awareness within the LDS community concerning the experiences unique to LDS divorced women and their children; provide resource and referral information available within the LDS church and the larger community." Contact: Touchstone, 1078 East 700 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84102 (801/488-1064).

UPLIFT is a quarterly newsletter published by Latter-day Saints for Cultural Awareness whose mission "is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ through personal testimony; perfect the Saints by increasing their awareness of other ethnic groups through cultural awareness and faith-promoting history." Submissions that explore the culture of **LDS African-Americans** and other ethnic minorities are desired—short (under 1,000 words) historical articles, poems, personal essays, and artwork. Subscription: free. Contact: Uplift, Latter-day Saints for Cultural Awareness, 1723 South 100 East, Orem, UT 84058-7811

WILLIAM G. AND WINIFRED F. REES MEMORIAL AWARD of \$500 will be given to the person completing or publishing the best (material will be considered in this order) doctoral dissertation, master's thesis, or first professional book or article in the field of Mormon history. This year's award, based upon material completed or published in 1991, will be given at the Mormon History Association annual meeting to be held in St. George, UT, in May 1992. Deadline: **1 February 1992**. Contact: the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, 127 KMB, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602 (801/378-3691).

WASATCH REVIEW INTERNATIONAL, a new semi-annual Mormon literary journal that publishes short fiction, poetry, and personal essays for an educated and inquisitive Mormon audience, is

seeking literature that honestly and creatively explores all facets of Mormon culture. It will feature new talent and experienced authors. Submissions should be no longer than 7,500 words and include a self-addressed, stamped return envelope. Payment will be two copies of the magazine in which the author's work appears. Deadline for first issue: **1 March 1992**. Subscriptions: \$10 per year. Editor: Tory C. Anderson, 635 North 100 West Apt. F, Orem, UT 84057 (801/226-8824).

THE WOMEN'S RESEARCH CENTER, the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, and the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies are sponsoring "The LDS Relief Society and Mormon Women: Cross-Disciplinary Considerations" on Friday, **23 October 1992** at Brigham Young University. The conference is to commemorate 150 years of the LDS Relief Society. Scholars interested in Mormon studies, Mormon women's history, and women's voluntary and religious organizations are invited to submit proposals for single papers or for an entire session. Proposals should include topic, short abstract, and vita. Deadline: **1 February 1992**. Contact: Carol Tuttle, Women's Research Institute, 970 SWKT, BYU, Provo, UT 84602 (801/378-4609).

SUNSTONE LECTURES AND SYMPOSIA

1992 SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM WEST will be held on **6-7 March** at the Burbank Hilton. Proposals for papers and panel discussions are now being accepted. Volunteers interested in helping organize the conference are needed. Contact: Steve Eccles, 1482 Winston Court, Upland, CA (714/982-4763).

1992 WASHINGTON, D.C., SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM will be held on **10-11 April** on the American University campus. Proposals for papers and panel discussions are now being accepted. Contact: Don and Lucinda Gustavson, 413 Clearview Avenue, Torrington, CT 06790 (203/496-7090).

1992 SALT LAKE SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM will be held at the Salt Lake Hilton on **5-8 August**. Proposals for papers, panel discussion, stand-up comics, and musical numbers are now being accepted. Contact: Cindy Dahle, Sunstone, 331 Rio Grande Street, Suite 30, Salt Lake City, UT 84101 (801/355-5926).

1992 CHICAGO SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM will be held sometime in **October 1992**. Contact: Becky Linford, 961 Elm Court, Naperville, IL 60540-0348 (708/778-9551).



RESEARCH REQUEST

DAVID L. LAUGHLIN is researching "Mormons in Nineteenth-Century Texas," including the Lyman Wight colony and all other persons or places up to 1914. The Wight colony built their furniture, tables, chairs, etc., from the lumber cut from their sawmill. He would like to get pictures, or have access to take pictures, of any surviving pieces. Contact: David L. Laughlin, Reference Librarian, Texas A & I University, Campus Box 197, Kingsville, TX 78363 (512/595-3319).

FLYER ENERGIZES BYU FEMINISTS

NOTICE

Due to the increase in violence against women on BYU campus, a new curfew has been instated. Beginning Wednesday, November 20, men will no longer be allowed to walk alone or in all-male groups from 10 p.m. until 6 a.m.

Those men who must travel on or through campus during curfew hours must be accompanied by two women in order to demonstrate that they are not threatening.

Provisions have been made for men who need to be escorted home. Contact your BYU ward Relief Society Presidencies any time.



This VOICE flyer was distributed on the BYU campus and drew national attention.

IN RESPONSE to campus signs warning women not to walk alone at night, one group of BYU women protested that men walking alone—not women—were the problem.

VOICE: BYU's Committee to Promote the Status of Women posted the above flyer around the campus. At a rally the group announced that they wanted every Thursday to be a curfew for unescorted BYU men.

VOICE members became upset when BYU's *Daily Universe* advised women to take responsibility for their own safety and avoid such behavior as walking alone at night on campus. VOICE protested the implication that only women are responsible for combating rape and sexual violence. When the *Universe* wouldn't grant space in the paper's editorial section for the group to discuss their perspective, VOICE resorted to distributing the flyer.

"I want to be able to walk wherever I want, without being

attacked," VOICE member Jill Thompson told the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

The protest ignited a controversy on campus and brought national media attention as numerous newspapers carried story. Calls began pouring in. Even Phil Donahue explored the possibility of having VOICE representatives on his show—until he learned that their curfew proposal was only to make a point about gender discrimination and was not a serious demand. Other media

engagements, including appearances on national talk shows, are being negotiated.

On campus, the number of women reporting incidences of violence against women have increased, and other campus women's groups, as well as men, have been discussing the topic.

All in all, the incident capped a year of discussion of women's issues on campus. The *Universe* has featured numerous articles and essays, and there has been a debate among women as to who is a feminist and who isn't. The televised accusations of Anita Hill against Judge Clarence Thomas, closely preceding the VOICE protest, probably gave the incident more importance.

Long-time observers of BYU student life and LDS women's issues note that although the incident did not ignite the current discussion of feminist issues, it does indicate how widespread the feminist undercurrent is on campus and how it is becoming more activist if not radicalized. ☺

UPDATE

ELDER DUNN APOLOGIZES FOR INACCURACIES

THE 26 OCTOBER 1991 *LDS Church News* printed, with a one-sentence introduction, the following open letter from Elder Paul H. Dunn concerning the inaccuracies in his talks, which undoubtedly include his war and baseball exaggerations that were first reported by the *Arizona Republic* on 16 February 1991 and later discussed in the September *SUNSTONE*.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

Elder Paul H. Dunn has requested of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve the opportunity to send an open letter to the members of the Church. His letter follows:

October 23, 1991

I have been accused of various activities unbecoming a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I confess that I have not always been accurate in my public talks and writings. Furthermore, I have indulged in other activities inconsistent with the high and sacred office which I have held.

For all of these I feel a deep sense of remorse, and ask forgiveness of any whom I may have offended.

My brethren of the General Authorities, over a long period of time, have conducted in-depth investigations of the charges made against me. They have weighed the evidence. They have censured me and placed a heavy penalty upon me.

I accept their censure and the imposed penalty, and pledge to conduct my life in such a way as to merit their confidence and full fellowship.

In making these acknowledgements, I plead for the understanding of my brethren and sisters throughout the Church and give assurance of my determination so to live as to bring added respect to the cause I deeply love, and honor to the Lord who is my Redeemer.

Sincerely,
Paul H. Dunn

Elder Dunn's letter led all three Salt Lake local TV news broadcasts and was reported in the *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Tribune*, which attempted to explain the letter's meanings. According to some, other "inconsistent" activities Elder Dunn mentioned may include his questionable association with business schemes such as Grant Afflect's AFCO, his endorsements of products, and his inaccurate tax documents.

Elder Dunn's statement that for a "long period of time" Church leaders "conducted in-depth investigations" of his actions appears to contradict last February's First Presidency statement responding to the *Arizona Republic* story that it had "no way of fully or finally verifying the accuracy or inaccuracy" of the allegations.

Church spokesperson Don LeFevre told the *Deseret News* that the nature of Elder Dunn's penalty is "an internal matter, and we don't discuss such matters" publicly. Penalties the Church can impose on Saints range from informal disciplines such as probation to formal actions such as disfellowshipment or excommunication. A probation

may restrict or suspend a member's privileges, such as public speaking, partaking of the sacrament, or holding Church office. It also requires specific steps for repentance, including in some cases public confession of wrongdoing. In the October 1991 general conference Apostle Neal A. Maxwell said: "All sins are to be confessed to the Lord, some to the offended, and some to a Church official. A few may require public confession."

BYU sociology department chair Lynn England told the *Salt Lake Tribune*, "What pleases me is that Elder Dunn finally admitted his misdeeds. This makes it possible for us [church members] to forgive him because it puts his actions on a totally different plane."



Daniel Rector at the 1991 Sunstone Christmas party with Sunstone trustee Marie Cornwall (left) and former SUNSTONE publisher/editor Peggy Fletcher Stack.

SUNSTONE HIRES REPLACEMENT FOR PUBLISHER

EARLY LAST fall, Daniel H. Rector announced that he was stepping down as president of the Sunstone Foundation and publisher of SUNSTONE magazine to pursue other business interests. Rector will continue working with Sunstone on a part-time basis as president of the Sunstone Development Board.

After a search involving several serious and well-qualified candidates, the Sunstone Foundation Board of Trustees hired Linda Jean Stephenson to replace Rector in the retitled position of the co-executive director of the foundation and publisher of the magazine. Currently, Stephenson is employed as the special events director for the Meredith Design Group in New York City, which publishes *Metropolitan Home*, *Traditional Home*, and *Country House*. Since graduating from BYU in 1978 with a communications degree in advertising and marketing, Stephenson has primarily worked in Manhattan in advertising, sales, marketing, promotion, and event planning. She will join the Sunstone staff in mid-January 1992.

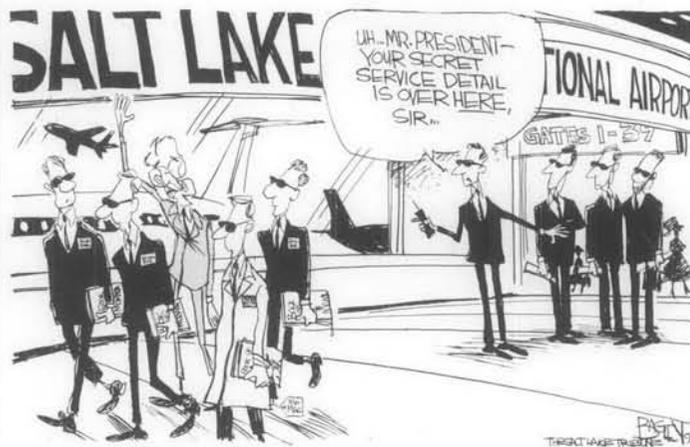
Elbert Eugene Peck continues as co-executive director of the foundation and editor of SUNSTONE magazine.

POLYGAMOUS MARSHAL CHALLENGES DECERTIFICATION

COLORADO CITY'S deputy marshal, Samuel Barlow, has filed a lawsuit to stop proceedings to revoke his peace-officer status because he is a polygamist. He says the proceedings violate his constitutional rights to privacy and religious freedom. In December 1987, the Arizona Law Enforcement Officer Advisory Council notified Barlow it intended to consider revoking his certification because he had "openly admitted the practice of polygamy." Under state law, a municipality must dismiss an officer who has been decertified by the council. Council standards for revocation include "any conduct or pattern of conduct that would tend to disrupt, diminish, or otherwise jeopardize public trust and fidelity" in the law-enforcement profession. In the suit, Barlow claims that his religious beliefs and practices were known when he first was hired in law enforcement in 1968 and that he works among people who share his religious beliefs.

ACLU MIXES RELIGION WITH POLITICS

MICHELE PARISH, Utah director of the American Civil Liberties Union, asked the legislative redistricting committee to consider religion when it draws up new voting districts for elected state offices this fall to compensate for underrepresentation of non-LDS and inactive LDS populations. Parish produced a map based on research by the University of Utah Research Center that identified areas where the majority of residents are non-LDS, active LDS, and non-LDS/inactive LDS. She cited the Voting Rights Act of 1982 which directed legislatures to create districts dominated by a minority population where possible. Parish acknowledged that the act was aimed primarily at racial and ethnic groups, but said there was a precedent for protecting a religion in a case brought to a federal court by a Jewish organization that claimed it was disenfranchised by district boundaries. Citing Utah's constitutional separation of church and state interests, the committee refused to hear Parish's presentation.



PRESIDENT VISITS SALT LAKE CITY

THIS SEPTEMBER George Bush made his first visit to Utah since he became president of the United States.

ONE FOLD

MEGACHURCHES TARGET BABY BOOMERS

MEGACHURCHES ARE the hottest thing in Protestantism, reports the *Wall Street Journal*. While most Protestant denominations are in slow but steady decline, megachurches are springing up across the country. Drawing average crowds of 2,000 or more on Sundays, megachurches offer as much in the way of activities and entertainment as they do religion. The Christianity they promote is mostly conservative and to-the-point, stripped of most of the old hymns, liturgy, and denominational dogma that tend to bore the video generation.

Most megachurches are primarily designed for a generation unversed in theology, essentially nonsectarian and unsentimental about the old neighborhood church. Megachurch attendees are pragmatic and pressed for time, and they care passionately about amenities and services—spotless nurseries, convenient parking, dazzling entertainment. Not only do such churches seat 6,000 for religious services, some, like Houston's Second Baptist Church, also provide space to do aerobics, lift weights, shoot pool, eat lunch, or catch a Broadway-style show with a religious message. According to management consultant Peter Drucker, "large pastoral churches are the healthiest social institutions in this country right now." He adds that the megachurches ask, "What do these people want that we can give?" rather than, "How can we preserve our denominational distinctiveness, our doctrines?"

Many megachurches intentionally create a secular feel. They avoid crosses and steeples and build lobbies with information centers, atriums, fountains, and restaurants. Rev. H. Edwin Young, pastor at Second Baptist, says he envisioned a place where "a totally godless, secular person can come . . . and not feel threatened."

Many religious experts think that megachurches are remaking the U.S. Protestant religious landscape. Rev. Lyle Schaller, a United Methodist minister and renowned church consultant, says the megachurch represents one of the "most significant changes taking place in American Protestantism in the second half of the 20th century." Robert Buford, chair of Leadership Network, asserts, "There's more similarity between a large Presbyterian, Catholic, Methodist, or even

a nondenominational charismatic church than there is between any of them and a small church in the same denomination."

One key to the success of megachurches is the creation of smaller-support communities of about ten people which meet about twice a month. Countering the possibility of alienation, these small faith, study, and support groups minister to each other. George Gallup Jr. observed, "At a time of acute loneliness and fragmented families in our society, small support groups serve as a powerful antidote to these social ills" and are "a vital tool of spiritual growth."

But even with small pastoral groups, the lack of intimacy in congregations 6,000 strong turns some people away. Some theologians are also troubled by the megachurch phenomenon. Fisher Humphreys, a professor of theology at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama, worries that megachurches dwell too much on the individual's personal needs and not enough on spirituality and community service. Of Second Baptist's \$12.1 million annual budget, \$21,000 is set aside to feed local poor people. About \$500,000 goes to various missionary endeavors. Just over \$1 million is spent on televising church services. (*Wall Street Journal*, *Emerging Trends*)

JEW, CHRISTIANS WORSHIP AT HOME

INCREASING NUMBERS of Jews and Christians are choosing to worship with friends informally at home in a quest for intimacy in a world of big schools, big shopping malls, big churches, and big synagogues, reports the *New York Times*. Most people involved don't quit their church or synagogue, and they remain active members. But many say that they occasionally choose to stay home in an environment that encourages spontaneity, egalitarianism, and intimacy. The groups are usually limited to no more than a dozen adults. In almost every case, participants bring food for a communal meal intended to reinforce the religious bond that people share. Some groups meet during regular worship hours; others meet on weeknights to avoid conflict with regular services. Most participants praise the practice saying they are free to share their feelings and concerns openly and honestly, receiving strong support and succor from the other members of the group. (*New York Times*)

RESULTS OF RECENT GALLUP SURVEYS

Consider Selves Religious Persons		Attend Church At Least Weekly		Average Ratings of Importance of God in One's Life	
Italy	83%	Ireland	82%	United States	8.2
United States	81	United States	43	Republic of Ireland	8.0
Ireland	64	Spain	41	Italy	6.9
Spain	63	Italy	36	Spain	6.4
Great Britain	58	West Germany	21	Finland	6.2
West Germany	58	Czechoslovakia	17	Belgium	5.9
Hungary	56	Ethnic Lithuanians	15	Great Britain	5.7
France	51	Other Lithuanians	12	West Germany	5.7
Other Lithuanians	50	Great Britain	14	Netherlands	5.3
Ethnic Lithuanians	45	Hungary	13	Hungary	4.8
Czechoslovakia	49	France	12	France	4.7
Scandinavia	46	Scandinavia	5	Denmark	4.4

MORMON MEDIA IMAGE

LIBERALS PUBLISH, STAY WITH FAITH

AN EVER-INCREASING number of liberal Mormon believers are publishing articles and essays about their faith in forums aimed at Mormon readership, reports the November 1991 issue of *Christianity Today*. Author Charles Carpenter, a former Mormon and board member of Ex-Mormons for Jesus, writes that LDS liberal thought departs from the more uniform thinking encouraged by Church leaders and, at times, results in tension between the liberal member and Church leadership. Carpenter quotes Church spokesperson, Donald LeFevre, who insists, "We have members of our church clear across the spectrum: from total believers, to middle-of-the-road, to inactive, to nonbelievers. Is there a place for them in the church? Of course there is." Carpenter writes that although many liberals hold unorthodox views, most remain in the Church because they experience Mormonism "less [as] a body of doctrine than" as "an entirely separate culture with its own unique world view." He also notes that liberal Mormons regard their personal spiritual experiences "as evidence of the truthfulness of Mormonism." Additionally, Carpenter notes, many unorthodox thinkers remain in the faith because they hold an "unbiblical view of sin and God's judgment." They believe that if they are good, moral people, God will be just; therefore, they don't feel a need to look elsewhere.

WILSON QUARTERLY FEATURES MORMON HISTORY

THE COVER STORY of the Spring 1991 *Wilson Quarterly* (published by the Smithsonian Institution's Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars) featured "The Mormons' Progress" by British journalist Malise Ruthen, which sketched the historical and theological development of Mormonism. Ruthen's generally balanced article was obviously informed by the best of the New Mormon History. It covered the sticky issues in early Mormonism—nineteenth-century parallels in the Book of Mormon, the clannish LDS polity, and polygamy—and noted how within a century Mormonism has almost completely converted to "All-Americanism." The article hosted several sidebars excerpted from other publications, a bibliographic essay by Jan Shipps, and a personal essay on "Mormonism and Feminism?" by former *SUNSTONE* editor Peggy Fletcher Stack, who concluded: "It is precisely my Mormon desire to reform the world into a 'kingdom' that makes me chafe at the typical Mormon view of women; it is my Mormon optimism that makes me believe that change, even heroic change, is possible. Indeed, it is my Mormonness that makes me a feminist and makes it hurt to be one."

A MEXICO MIX-UP?

THE FOLLOWING curious, brief notice appeared in *The News*, a Mexico City English language newspaper:

CHURCH MEMBERS FIGHT

PUEBLA—Two people were wounded Thursday during a confrontation between Catholics and Mormons in the Izucar de Matamoras Municipality, Marcelino Corona, sacristan for the Izucar de Matamoras Church, said Thursday.

The dispute broke out when the Mormons began protesting a religious procession of the Catholics down the town's main streets in honor of the Virgin Mary, Corona said.

COLUMNISTS RESPOND TO HAPPY VALLEY

ALTHOUGH *MONEY* magazine recently rated Utah's Provo the most livable city in the United States, at least two national columnists, having checked out the site for themselves, declared serious reservations about the "liveability" of Utah Valley.

Robin Givhan, of Knight-Ridder Newspapers, warned, "Don't arrive in late August without a hotel reservation." "Kids don't arrive alone at Brigham Young. They arrive with parents and siblings; this is a family town, and folks travel in packs."

She noted that entertainment, culture, and athletics center around BYU, and that the strong LDS influence means several things: "no alcohol, no caffeine, no smoking, lots of children." In practical terms, she said that meant the "no-smoking sections are large, and the coffee is lousy."

Changing tone, Givhan reported that even though everyone is friendly and everyone smiles, "walking around Provo is like strolling through the fictional Stepford. Everybody has the same expression (a smile), the same personality (helpful), and the same background (Anglo-Saxon). A little diversity would be nice."

She reported that local LDS people said Church values "make this a great place to live." "But," she noted, "those who aren't LDS say that often they feel like outsiders because so much revolves around the church."

"So what if this is supposed to be the best place in America to live?" Givhan asked. "There's something a little weird about living in an area known as 'happy valley.'"

In a more playful tone, the *Chicago Tribune's* Mike Royko admitted, "The luggage was packed, and I was ready to call the furniture movers," after he read about Provo's ranking. He fantasized about trading "the crime, social strife, potholes and nerve-jangling noise of Chicago" for Provo's "fine schools; plenty of clean, high-tech jobs; affordable homes; little crime; honest politicians; and decent folk for neighbors."

Then he realized *Money* magazine hadn't mentioned the number of taverns in the town. Royko gamely called the Provo-Orem Chamber of Commerce and was told by "a pleasant young man" that the two cities sported one tavern. The young man told Royko, however, that the tavern was "in kind of a run-down part of town, and it's not a nice place."

At this point, Royko's "wanderlust began to subside."

He called the bar and learned from the cook that the place did exist even if they had to fight to stay open. She said that the police waited outside to ticket patrons who left the bar and got in their cars to drive home. She also said the city had clamped down on the scantily clad dancers, mud wrestling, and hot oil wrestling that the tavern had promoted.

"After talking to her, I decided to unpack," Royko confessed.

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SUNSPOTS

CINEPRAY

NEXT SUNDAY'S double feature at the drive-in could be David and Goliath, or Samson and Delilah. Through the efforts of Twin Falls' First Christian Church, the Motor-Vu Drive Inn Theater is transformed into the Magic Valley Drive-In Church at 8 a.m. every summer Sunday.

The Rev. John Parish of First Christian describes the weekly gathering as a "rare and unusual type of worship service." Certainly, the pulpit and portable organ perched atop the theater snack bar are unique.

The service generally draws 20 to 25 cars. Church-goers listen to the Protestant non-denominational service via speakers placed on the car doors. Rev. Parish says the drive-in church is "moderately successful." "The informal setting is designed to attract ranchers and tourists," said Parish, who advertises the church by tacking up notes in motel lobbies and placing newspaper, radio, and television ads.

BAPTISTS WARNED TO AVOID SALT LAKE

THOUSANDS OF Southern Baptists will gather in Salt Lake City in 1998 despite warnings from an anti-Mormon publication saying that Baptists, "unschooled in Mormon doctrine," will be converted by well-trained Mormon missionaries.

Editors of *The Evangel*, published in Oklahoma by Utah Missions Inc., want the Southern Baptist Convention to rethink its decision.

"While no doubt many messengers [Southern Baptist delegates] will 'just say no,' experience shows that far too many, in trying to witness to the missionaries, will themselves become hooked by the deceptive [Mormon] message," *Evangel* editor Robert McCay wrote in an editorial in the magazine's July-August issue.

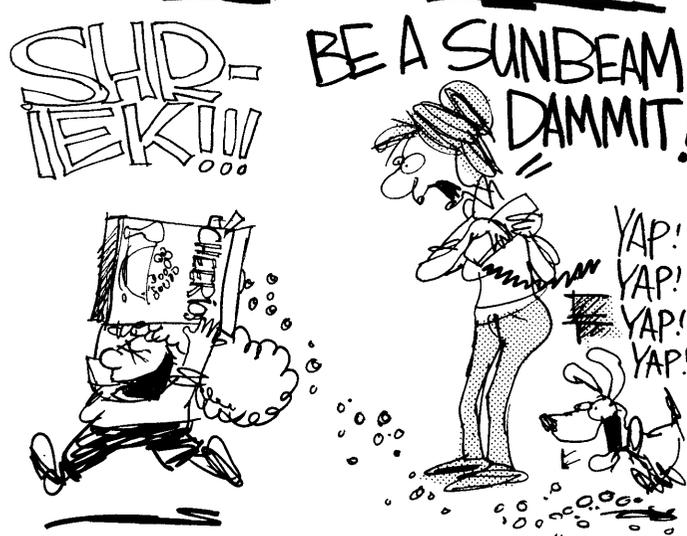
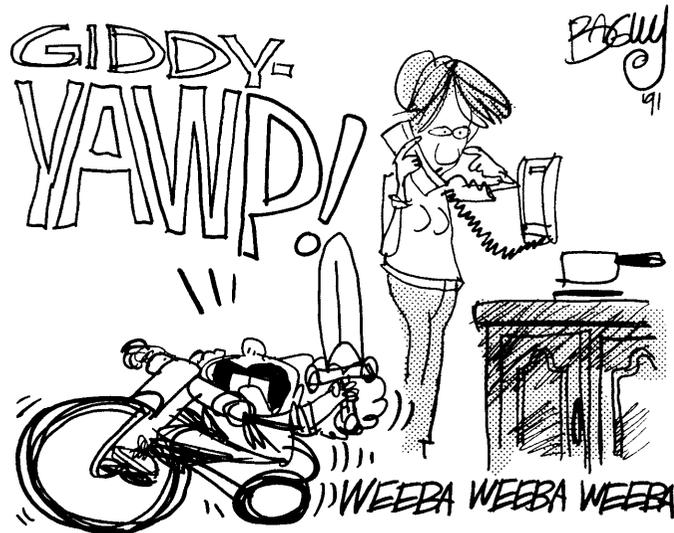
In the September issue, however, incoming editor Michael H. Reynolds maintains the convention should meet in Salt Lake in 1998 because meeting in Salt Lake will show support to Southern Baptists who live in Utah. He added that since the conference doesn't meet until 1998, Baptists will have time to prepare.

Herb Hollinger, vice-president for the Baptist Press, told the *Salt Lake Tribune*, "In every place we go for our annual meeting, we do quite a bit of visitation and witnessing on our own, so there will be a well-coordinated effort to share the gospel as we understand it with people in Salt Lake City while we are there."

AN ANTI-MORMON "TROYJAN" HORSE

THE AUGUST 1991 issue of Sandra and Jerald Tanner's *Salt Lake City Messenger* devotes ten of its fifteen pages detailing the unmasking of Darrick Evenson (alias Troy Lawrence) as a spy in their "anti-Mormon" organization. The most interesting aspect of the article was how the Tanners found out that their volunteer Troy was really Evenson. Upon discovery, Evenson admitted to having been a similar Trojan Horse to infiltrate the New Age movement and the Masons to discredit those organizations. He is quoted as saying he plans to do the same with the Catholics and Jehovah's Witnesses.

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