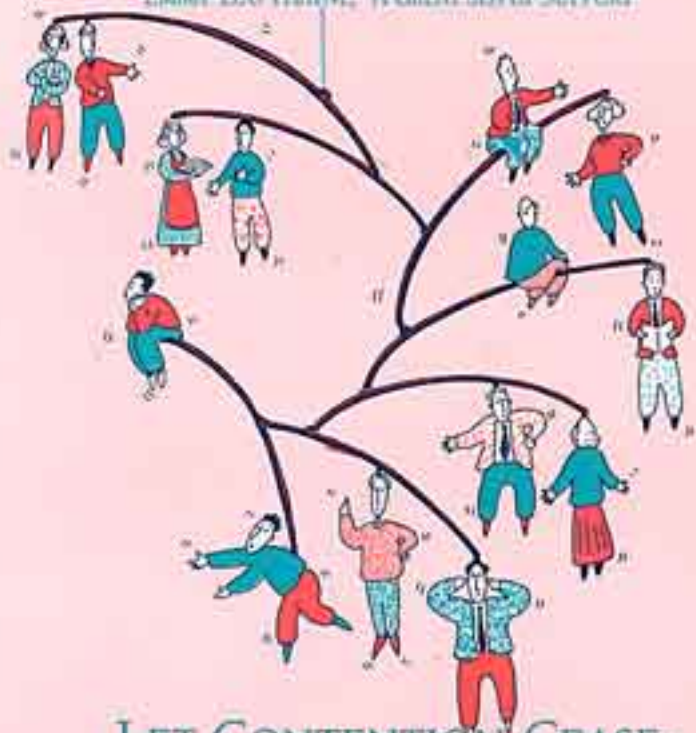


SUNSTONE

LAVINA FIELDING ANDERSON ON PERSONAL REVELATION

DAVID KNOWLTON ON MORMON MASCULINITY

EMMA LOU THAYNE, "A GREAT SEA OF SUPPORT"



LET CONTENTION CEASE:
THE LIMITS OF DISSENT IN THE CHURCH

BY J. BONNER RITCHIE



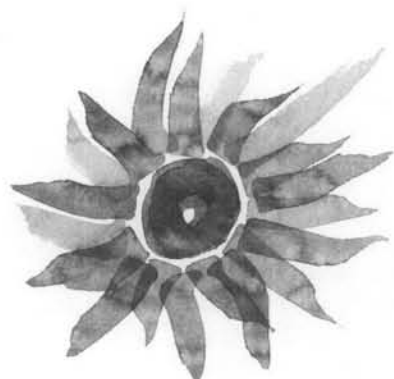
SUNSTONE

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READERS' FORUM

I REMEMBER VIRGINIA

I MET Virginia Sorensen Waugh (SUNSTONE 16:1) in the fall of 1990 at her home in Hendersonville, North Carolina, when I was doing research on women's writing in Mormon fiction. She was a gracious host. Waugh and I lapsed into "Mormon talk"—reminiscing about her youth in Utah, sharing stories about growing up in the West and in the Church, and enjoying the rewards from living not only in the shadows of the mountains, but also re-living the courage and faith of our shared pioneer heritage.

We taped a three-hour interview that reveals how much Waugh was still a member of the Mormon community. She said she had never read the "proper" Mormon books, nor "those articles in *Dialogue*," and she "wouldn't be caught dead in a discussion of Mormon doctrine or thought." Yet there was fondness in her recollections of Manti, energy in her family stories about polygamy, emigration, and homesteading, and conviction in and gratitude for the values and character she gained and the talents she developed in the Sanpete countryside and on the Provo campus, that I remarked that she sounded very "Mormon." She disagreed: "It's all so universal now. It's a universal concern, and thank goodness."

Waugh told stories that illustrate how connected she remained with the Mormon culture and religion. She said that before she got married to Fred Sorensen in the Salt Lake Temple, she admitted to a BYU instructor that she was nervous about the temple ceremony, and did not look forward to wearing the temple garments. This instructor assured her that his wife had felt much the same way, and that because it was the symbols or markings that were important, he advised her to do as his wife had done—cut the markings out and sew them on her underwear. This made perfect sense to Waugh, and so she did as the instructor suggested. Everything went fine until Waugh's mother-in-law, who lived with the newlyweds, saw her underwear on the clothesline. "And then all hell broke loose," laughed Waugh.

She smiled, and her eyes twinkled when she told of her marriage in Salt Lake. Waugh's father was a "Jack Mormon," so her parents could not attend the ceremony. She said her father used to make jokes about "Miss Cumorah Hill," but that when she and Fred were married he sent her a telegram saying,

"All is forgiven. Come home." Waugh worried that Fred didn't understand the Danish humor, but later at the Hotel Utah as she and Fred were about to go down to the wedding reception, Fred turned to her and said, "Let us go down." "I knew then I'd married the right man," she said. There was no irreverence in Waugh's voice as she shared these stories, no mockery or disgust or disrespect or disdain—only a bemused recollection.

In Waugh's children's book, *Plain Girl*, a young Amish man, Dan, returns to his family and community after spending some time away. He explains the reasons for his return to his sister who is also struggling with the conflict between the attractions of the outside world and the security and simplicity of Amish living: "The thing is," says Dan, "there are so many good things to keep! When you go away you begin to see them." There was a lot of Virginia Sorensen Waugh in that line. Waugh never forgot the many good things about her Mormon childhood. "I don't think there's any place in the world that provides a better childhood than a Mormon community," she told me. "They give them things to do, wonderful things. I remember being fairy queen in the Primary show, and that's an unforgettable thing. I remember going to the Beehive camp, girls' camp. Of course, it was kind of nice to be away from the boys a few days and own the mountain." She talked about writing verses in the tree branches outside her home, her close relationship with her sisters and Grandma Blackett, and quilting for days on quilts framed on tops of chairs. These are only a few of the many good things that I believe kept Waugh "active" in the Church.

I went to Waugh's home with the hope of discovering how she as a Mormon woman wrote. She did not have an answer for me. "I'm interested in how I write, too," she laughed. "I just wish I could learn it [writing] again. But I think it's a spirit, you know. It's not only a talent." She lamented, "After a lifetime of trying, writing shouldn't be this hard. It should stay."

Waugh was a good mother. I left her home feeling that despite her many books, travels, friends, experiences, and awards, it was her family, her children Fred and Beth, who meant the most to her, and she felt a continued responsibility for their care. "When you create a child," she said, "you want to see it through. The feeling remains all your life. And I believe that," she said. "I feel

I must maintain this little nest.”

Before I left, Waugh kissed my cheek and said, “I’ll count you as one of my friends.” She was a good friend to have. Her books are good friends as well; they bond me with others who struggled with their humanness—sometimes stumbling, often times triumphing—but they always affirm one’s commitment to interrelationships and care. Perhaps with her passing more members of the Church will reacquire themselves with both this remarkable Mormon writer and those “Mormon” elements still found in her work.

GRANT T. SMITH
Iowa City, IA

MERCY AND JUSTICE

EUGENE ENGLAND’S “Healing And Making Peace—In The World And The Church” (SUNSTONE 15:6) described a workable, though limited, stop-gap perspective. Here is a paradigm that suits us better if we are to, as Joseph Smith said in the King Follett Discourse, “learn how to become Gods.”

England would replace justice with mercy: “We should give mercy instead of

justice to enemies because that is the *only* hope to move them to give mercy back.” He even imposes this patronizing paradigm on Shakespeare.

However, most things can be taken to extremes and that’s what England has done. Early in his article he says, “the only lasting peace between enemies in modern times” has come from “two acts of mercy”: (1) the Marshall Plan to help rebuild the United States former World War II enemies’ economies; and (2) Anwar Sadat’s sacrifices, including the sacrifice of his life. Who other than England would describe the Middle East as “lasting peace”?

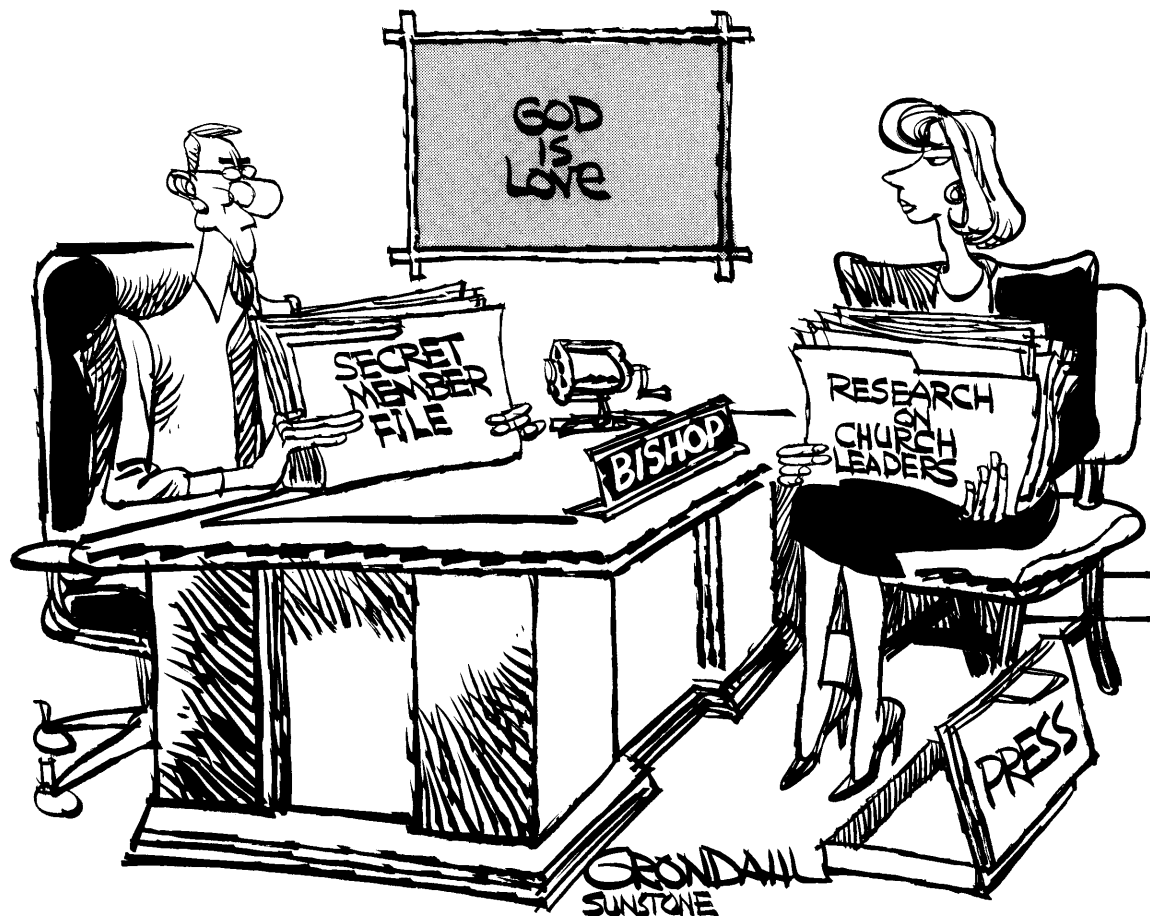
England should have thought further on the Marshall Plan. What created the opportunity for us to extend mercy after the war was that certain U.S. soldiers were willing to march under the “title of liberty” mentioned in Alma 46:36. Indeed we may say that they marched “in memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children. . .” (Alma 46:12, 36). Only after this physical and violent reproof could we sensibly “show forth afterwards an increase of love” (D&C 121:43). Don’t get the order wrong. An increase of love first toward the Pearl Harbor invaders, Auschwitz opera-

tors, and Mussolini would have changed the outcome of history.

There is wisdom and merit in *both* justice and mercy: “In peace there’s nothing so becomes a man as modest stillness and humility. But when the blast of war blows in our ears, then imitate the action of the tiger . . . disguise fair nature with hard favor’d rage . . . be copy now to men of grosser blood, and teach them how to war.” (Henry VIII.i.3-end.)

Finally, England argues that “force . . . almost always begets force.” This, too, is wrong. “He to-day that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother, be he ne’er so vile, this day shall *gentle* his condition,” said King Henry (Henry V IV.III.27-80). Similarly, the Nephites “were sorry to take up arms . . . because they did not delight in the shedding of blood . . . they were sorry . . . nevertheless, they could not suffer to lay down their lives, that their wives and their children should be massacred” (Alma 48:23,24).

Examining England’s paradigm, then, we find it wanting though sincere and passably workable. Now let me point to a paradigm I believe could be part of a “required course” in a school of the prophets. It’s a mixture of select gospel principles.



INTERPRETING TEXTS

I WAS INTRIGUED by Malcolm R. Thorp's invocation of the metaphor of reflection in his title, "Some Reflections on New Mormon History and the Possibilities of a 'New' Traditional History" (SUNSTONE 15:5). Historians tend to understand their role and task in visual terms—the historian acts as mirror, revealing the image of the past. David Bohn has challenged the New Mormon Historian faithfulness to the image of the "original." I was disappointed that, rather than responding to Bohn, Thorp sought instead to deflect Bohn's criticism ("[T]his is a more appropriate criticism when applied to Traditional Mormon history"), or even to turn it back against Bohn, going on the offensive. Almost entirely absent, however, is any attempt to salvage the truth and value claims of the New Mormon History.

Thorp's article is not utterly devoid of justification, however. He occasionally, without elaboration, alludes to the virtuosity of historians in archival research and of their ability to rigorously and faithfully read a text. Unfortunately, Thorp neither presents a theoretical defense of his reliance on the "historian's craft," nor does he demonstrate it. Thorp apparently expects the reader to take it on faith that the "texts themselves remain important, even the dominant, determinants in historical construction." It is all the more poignant that Thorp's reading of Bohn reflects a fundamental inability to interpret in good faith.

Thorp, for example, works no small violence on Gadamer when he describes Gadamer's hermeneutics as "an ecumenical endeavor aimed at clarifying the process in which understanding takes place." Since Thorp's Gadamer is thereby stripped of critical bite, Thorp reproaches Bohn for using Gadamer to critique the methodology of the New Mormon Historians. Even the most superficial reading of Gadamer, however, would allow one to discern that his "hermeneutical position" is not merely descriptive. Gadamer frequently criticizes historical positivism:

If we are trying to understand a historical phenomenon from the historical distance that is characteristic of our hermeneutical situation, we are always subject to the effects of effective-history. It determines in advance both what seems to us worth enquiring about and what will appear as an object of investigation, and we more or less forget half of what is really there—in fact we miss the whole truth of the phe-

First, God employs a principle of time and place: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1). Therefore we should be open to a time for both justice and mercy. Open to when mercy should "season justice" (The Merchant of Venice, IV.i.185-237). God employs both principles. So should we. In Ecclesiastes 3:3 it even says there is a time to kill, which England finds repugnant.

Secondly, Nephi teaches us that "all things must needs be a compound in one. . . ." He says, "If it should be one body it must needs remain as dead, having . . . no sense nor insensibility" (2 Nephi 2:11). Mercy and justice make a good compound, with only their relative proportions at issue. However, keep in mind that Shakespeare described mercy as seasoning justice, and not justice seasoning mercy (The Merchant of Venice, IV.i.185-237).

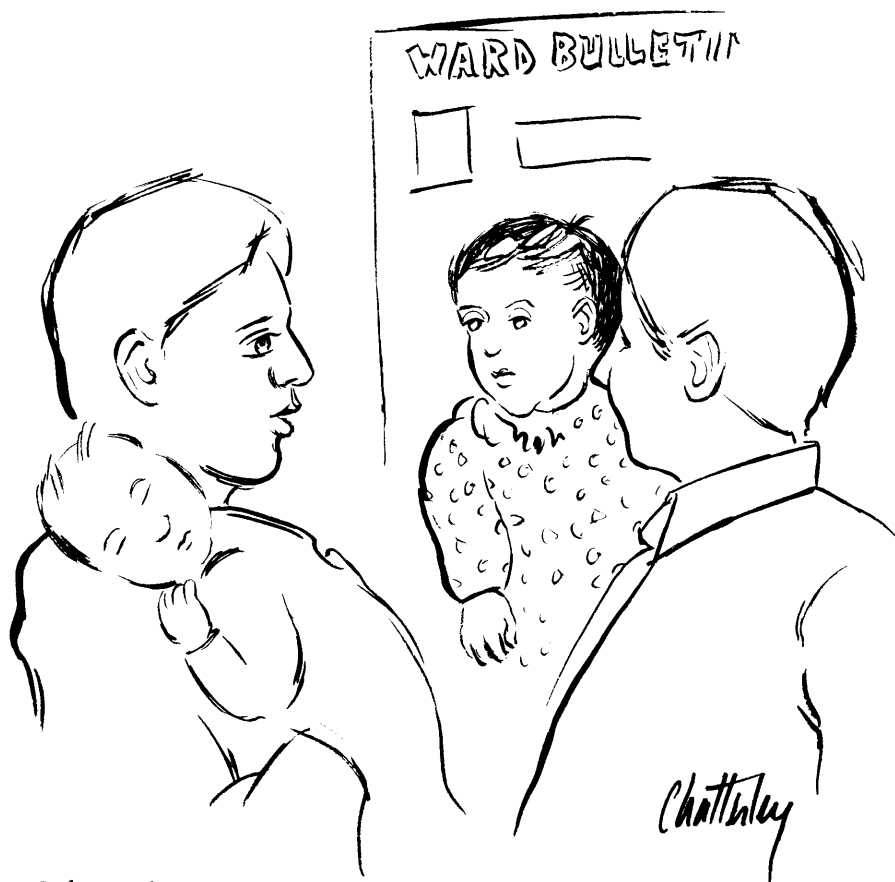
A third principle to employ, more frequently than mercy, is tolerance. A speeder cuts in front of us on the freeway; someone says they'll call us and they don't; a man bumps into us while we're standing in line. To say we're exercising mercy toward these

offenders is melodramatic; day-to-day living usually calls for plain old tolerance. Tolerance differs from mercy in that tolerance may assume that no offense was intended and that, therefore, no offense should be taken. Unlike tolerance, mercy connotes situations where fault may have already been determined and the offended party now decides appropriate action, such as justice or mercy.

"It mattereth not unto me" (D&C 60:5) reflects my fourth principle. We should also employ it frequently for more tranquil and peaceful day-to-day living. Call it a principle of appropriate indifference. There is more than one instance where this idea is expressed (see 1 Nephi 6:3; Jacob 5:8, 13; Alma 40:5, 8; 58: 37; 61:9; Mormon 8:4, 31; Ether 12:37; 15:34; D&C 27:2; 60:5; 61:22; 62:5; 63:40; 80:3; and 135:5).

As we review the lives of those we admire in the scriptures, they generally prefer peace. We should, too. Keep in mind, though, that they employed violence at *key* times, when it was required of them.

MICHAEL G. M. DANG
Costa Mesa, CA



I always thought of myself as naturally polygamous but, unfortunately, the Church makes no distinction between that gift and adultery.

nomenon when we take its immediate appearance as the whole truth. . . . Historical objectivism, in appealing to its critical method, conceals the involvement of the historical consciousness itself in effective-history. By the method of its foundational criticism . . . it preserves its conscience by failing to recognize those presuppositions—certainly not arbitrary, but still fundamental—that govern its own approach to understanding, and hence falls short of reaching that truth which, despite the finite nature of our understanding, could be reached. (Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* [New York: Crossroad, 1975], 267-68.)

Equally surprising was Thorp's assertion that Gadamer's hermeneutics demand the suspension of prejudice. Gadamer, to the contrary, recognizes that understanding *requires* prejudice (Gadamer, 245-74).

In an apparent attempt to preserve the New Mormon History's claim to value, Thorp cites David Couzens Hoy's *The Critical Circle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982) for the proposition that "there will always be stronger and weaker formulations that will arise out of rigorous criticism of sources and the significance of interpretation." Hoy does indeed use the phrase, but Hoy refers, however, to stronger and weaker formulations of *relativism*:

Certainly the humanistic, historical disciplines would be in severe straits if interpretation came down to saying "this is what the text means to me." . . . Yet not all positions short of absolutism are committed to such a radical relativism, and in order to avoid oversimplifications, stronger and weaker formulations must be distinguished.

In the case of relativism, two positions may serve as a start. (Hoy, 68.)

Hoy goes on to explain that a stronger formulation of relativism, which he names *contextualism*, would be one in which interpretation depends on its context, nevertheless leaving "the choice of the context for an interpretation . . . underdetermined by the evidence" (Hoy, 69). I concede that within a given context Thorp correctly notes that "stronger and weaker" interpretations of texts exist. Hoy's real issue, however, deals with whether the choice of framework or context itself can be justified (Hoy, 69).

Thorp never addressed this issue.

Bohn has argued persuasively against the framework that the New Mormon Historians have chosen to structure their account of the Mormon past. Thorp's "reflection" has done nothing to justify this choice—indeed it has, if anything, strengthened the force of Bohn's critique. The reading Thorp gives to Bohn's articles and the works cited therein are evidence of a readiness to bend the texts to his own purposes, and thus belies his insistence that the stories the New Mormon Historians tell are determined by the texts.

MARK WRATHALL
San Francisco

QUESTIONS FOR HISTORY

I WOULD LIKE to make two points in response to Malcolm Thorp's criticism of David Bohn.

First, a general objection: To characterize "post-modern" thought as "nihilistic" is a se-

rious mistake. Taking as accurate the word of contemporary European thought's detractors and of some of its more irresponsible adherents is much like taking as accurate a combination of the accounts of Mormonism given by the "Ex-Mormons for Jesus" and by the followers of Ervil Lebaron. In a couple of essays for SUNSTONE, I suggested ways of re-thinking some of the relevant philosophical issues, though not in the context of the question of history. I stated that the issue is not one of whether there is truth, but of how truth is understood. In spite of the fact that the dismissal of post-modernism has become as intellectually trendy as its mindless affirmation, I am hardly alone in rejecting the claim that it is nihilistic. Jacques Derrida himself consistently insists that he does not deny truth. (See, for example, *Positions* and *Limited Inc* for such discussions, or "Limited Think: How Not to Read Derrida," in Christopher Norris's *What's Wrong with Postmodernism*.)



Second, without trying to defend this or that detail of Bohn's work on history, let me offer, via the work of someone else, a defense of his general thesis. In *Feminist Thought and the Structure of Knowledge*, Emily Grosholz has given this *reductio ad absurdum* of the usual understanding of history, a critique that I think coincides reasonably well with Bohn's and that shows that Bohn is not offering us the devil's choice of either a return to the naive objectivist history of much traditional LDS history writing or a history where "anything goes":

Suppose, to hypothesize the opposite, that there is an Ideal Chronicle in which all events are recorded as they happen, in complete and accurate detail. Wouldn't such a chronicle put the squabbling historians out of business and bury the past where it belongs, in the vaults of necessity and exact description?

Suppose we allow that this chronicle is written in a language rich enough to include the way in which historians normally pick out, characterize, and link events. This language contains a whole class of descriptions that characterize people and events in terms of their future vicissitudes as well as terms like "causes," "anticipates," "begins," "precedes," "ends," which no historian could forgo without

lapsing into silence. But such descriptions and terms are not available to the eyewitness of events, who describes them at the edge of time on which they occur. The description of an event changes with time because the event comes to stand in different relations to those that come after it; and the new relations in turn may point to novel ways of associating that event with contemporary and antecedent events or indeed to novel ways of construing the components of a spatiotemporally diffused event as one thing. . . . Allowing a sufficiently rich language for the Ideal Chronicle violates the original supposition about how the chronicle is to be written.

Yet, if we then insist that the chronicle be written in a language impoverished enough to meet the stringent conditions of its writing, we find that it is reduced to an account of matter in motion; the subject matter of history, people and the events they figure in, has dissolved. Then the chronicle is no longer about history, and we are only doing a version of descriptive physics (if indeed we are doing anything at all). If we want to do history, events must be related to

their pasts and futures, must be construed as significant and therefore drawn into the circle of the essentially contestable. Then we are engaged in a process of deliberating about the past, and the past is alive in the present.

Once again, though history now appears as an endless process of deliberation, it is not therefore true that one can say anything at all about the past. This process, in which relations among events shift and are contested, exhibits an important kind of stability. We enter the debate only by locating ourselves with respect to previous historiography and the partly determinate, partly ambiguous physical record; the persuasive moves we make in this context are severely constrained by them. We argue within a shapely but revisable structure, if we want to make our novel construals of history effective and practical. ("Women, History, and Practical Deliberation," *Feminist Thought and the Structure of Knowledge*, ed. M. M. Gergen [New York University, 1988], 177-78.)

Bohn has been arguing for a position based on the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer, and this piece from Grosholz summarizes Gadamer's position well. As I understand it, Bohn asks several related and sometimes theoretical questions: What is the effect of the language in which we write our histories on those histories? What about the relation of our membership in the LDS church to the necessary construal of that history? How do we fit our novel construals of history into the context of previous historiographies? And, if Grosholz is right that our construals of history *must* change with time because they are matters of construing the significance of events, why not also assume that those construals must change with the background and history of the historian, given the importance of such things as beliefs and experience to significance? These are the kinds of questions that Bohn's critics have yet to take up, but they are the questions he addresses.

JAMES E. FAULCONER
Provo, UT



I'm sorry, bishop, I won't be able to teach Sunday School today, I just started the Book of Mormon and can't put it down.

KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

I WAS PUZZLED by the tone and argu-

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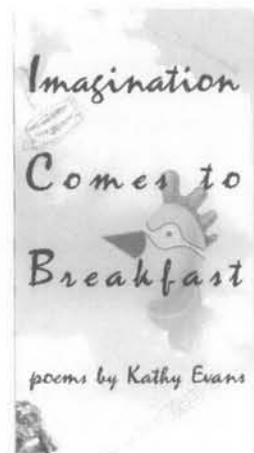
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The Secret (not Sacred) Recipes of Sister Enid Christensen

BY ROGER SALAZAR AND MICHAEL WIGHTMAN

"Sausage Souffle," "Spam Casserole," "Suppressor," and "Jesus-Fed-the-Multitudes Tuna Helper" are among the priceless, penny-pinching recipes reluctantly shared by this Utah matriarch. *No Man Knows My Pastries* chronicles a love affair with low-brow eating. Christensen illustrates favorite recipes and cooking hints with photographs. Shown here is author Salazar's alter-ego demonstrating her "Bubble Buns."

Salazar, a hairdresser, barbers Beehive perms for the cherished recipes of Utah matrons. Wightman, a Salt Lake artist, inherited family cookbooks from generations of zucchini-loving ancestors.

1-56085-028-0 100 pages. \$8.95.



The Rio Story.

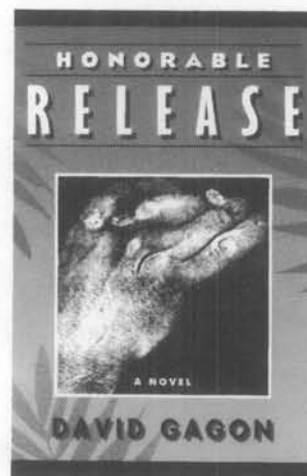
Honorable Release

A NOVEL BY DAVID GAGON

A madman bent on revenge rampages through Rio de Janeiro murdering American missionaries. A mystic combs the hillside gathering disciples. Their paths converge as a Yankee journalist and an amateur detective race to prevent a bloody showdown.

Gagon is a screenwriter residing in Salt Lake City.

1-56085-025-6 246 pages. \$14.95.



ment made by Malcolm Thorp. The source of my puzzlement comes from Thorp's (mis)understanding and use of hermeneutics in general and Gadamer in particular. Ultimately this misunderstanding undermines the main point that he wants to make in his argument: "let historical pluralism flourish, recognize that there never was a 'a story,' but many stories open to a multiplicity of interpretations."

Thorp argues that the hermeneutical position "is an ecumenical endeavor aimed at clarifying the process in which understanding takes places. . . ." Thorp then goes on to argue that such a position is not meant to create divisions but "reconciliation and multi-perspectival understanding." Based on this characterization, a hermeneutical position is a wise judge mediating disputes that occur between fractious litigants—in this case competing worldviews. Such a characterization also implies that the scientific process, implicit with its understandings about the causal ordering of the world, is simply one of many competing worldviews.

However, a scientific understanding claims to be, with its code of objectivity and its reliance on empirical data, not just another way of looking at the world, but the only correct way to look at the world. Interpretations that do not make the same assumptions about causality are dismissed as unscientific. A hermeneutical critique of the sciences, and this largely includes the social sciences as well, dispels the myth that there is only one language in which human endeavors can be disclosed. This is where Thorp makes his mistake.

Thorp uses hermeneutics to establish his case for "multi-perspectival understanding." But the rest of the argument simply denies the possibility that other assumptions about history or about the way in which individuals might think about the place of God in history can be carried out. Why is there a problem with these other possibilities? Because they do not make assumptions about knowledge that conform to the standards of rigorous and empirical research that Thorp contends are legitimate and important to the historical craft. This is most apparent when he discusses the possibility of new understandings of

historical phenomena. He writes 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." The point to be made here is that new approaches to history may still rely on the same epistemological assumptions. In this case, the new approaches would simply exist within an old framework of assumptions, not anything radically new. This is really not a "multi-perspectival understanding" at all since all of the perspectives rest on the same assumptions about cause and effect, etc. Hermeneutics provides a genuine multi-perspectival understanding by demonstrating that our history need not be disclosed to us in only one language. Therefore, history contains many possibilities other than just a scientific one.

I readily welcome such theoretical pieces by historians like Thorp. It demonstrates that there are actually historians who think about the thorny issues of knowledge and understanding. Too many historians arrogantly reject other genuinely new possibilities because they do not follow the proper methods. Although this article falls far short of rescuing the efforts of New Mormon Historians from the powerful critique of history that can be made using hermeneutics, it does demonstrate that dialogue on these issues with some historians may be possible.

KELLY D. PATTERSON
Wilmington, DE

NEW, TRADITIONAL, AND SPIRITUAL MORMON HISTORY

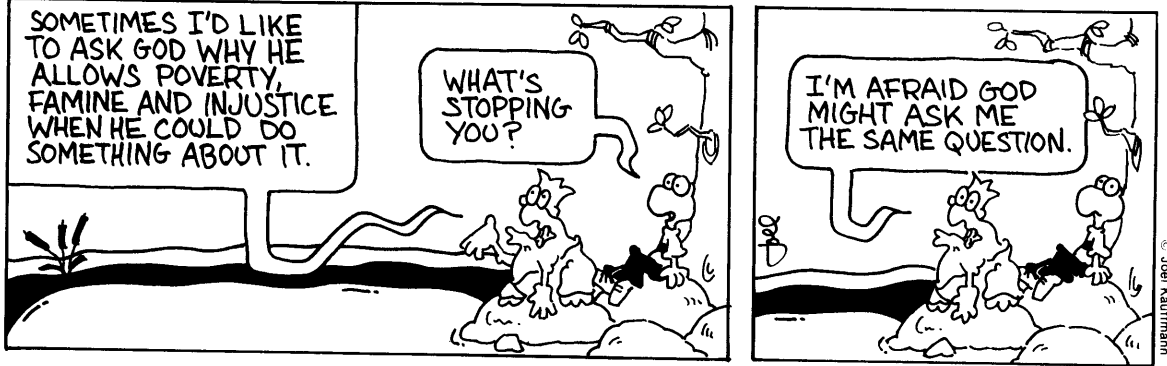
MALCOLM THORP'S recent response

to David Bohn's critique of the philosophy of the New Mormon History was a meaningful contribution to a debate that for years has resembled a political campaign more than a rational dialogue. Respondents on both sides have often been more shrill than sensible; and Thorp's side in particular has often seemed deliberately to be misreading opposing arguments. Reading Thorp's careful essay, though, makes it apparent that he and those he writes to support have never understood where and how post-modernist philosophy subverts their enterprise. I will try to clarify a part of the argument, though that will necessarily involve oversimplification.

Thorp maintains that New Mormon History is superior to Traditional Mormon History, in part, because of the standards of interpretation that define the limits of historical discourse. These modern historical methods are superior because they rely on carefully defined strategies for interpreting documentary (which Thorp thoughtlessly calls "textual") and physical evidence. When assiduously followed, these standards produce a rationally legitimate, limited, and controllable interpretation of past events. Some might even go so far as to say that such accounts accurately represent the past. According to such a view, the weakness of Traditional Mormon History is its unwillingness to adopt these standards and to wistfully rely on talk about the supernatural. Instead of relying on physical evidence and the rules of reason, the Traditionalists inject metaphysics into their work.

Post-modernist philosophy becomes directly relevant at this point of impasse. Post-modernism challenges the authority of claims to objectivity in an argument that parallels Thorp's rejection of the authority of Mormon metaphysics in writing history. It generally relativizes all claims to authority

Pontius' Puddle



based on scientific methods (objectivity, positivism, historicism, etc.) because science broadly defined is supported by a metaphysics of its own. I take it that, in their most radical form, post-modernist arguments maintain that authority of the sort respected by Thorp has no greater claim on the production of knowledge than the authority of religious metaphysics Thorp rejects. So it follows that there is no greater intellectual authority for either side of the argument in this debate. Post-modernism renders absurd Thorp's sentence, "it is not for historians to assign divine significance to those events . . ." because the system that validates the sentence's meaning is itself "divine." This means that the historical playing field is level for all versions of metaphysics. From that perspective, Thorp's claims to greater authority for his special metaphysics are groundless.

Does this mean that New Mormon History ought not to be written? Not at all. In fact, no post-modernist would demand that anybody stop writing anything. But it does mean that the dogmatic claims of the New Mormon Historians to an intellectually more correct methodology are hollow and empty. In fact, with the exception of claims of greater individual facility or creativity as writers, their claims have no more intellectual force than the claims of more traditional historians.

But the implications of this view for believing Mormons move at least one step fur-

ther. Since intellectual authority has been relativized, other forms of authority may attempt to fill the void vacated by naturalism's loss of status. And we should not be terribly surprised to see the traditional forms of God's authority vying for that place within the Mormon community. So some Mormon intellectuals, who are just as intelligent, honest, and sincere as their New Mormon Historian counterparts, wonder why it is so difficult to write Mormon history that openly supports, or at least accepts as legitimate, traditional claims about God's role in the restoration and building of the kingdom.

Thorp further confuses this argument when he maintains that the fundamental question at stake here concerns the ontological status of past events. Certainly some post-modern philosophers, especially followers of Heidegger like Gadamer and Jauss, have addressed the question of whether the past can exist in the present as the past. However, the post-modernist critique of the New Mormon History has focused on epistemology. It poses the question, "Does one methodology certify knowledge better than another?" Post-modernists deny all claims to better or truer knowledge by virtue of the methodology of any science or social science. For them, all methods are always already contingent and, therefore, not capable of producing any knowledge that can claim the universal force of Truth.

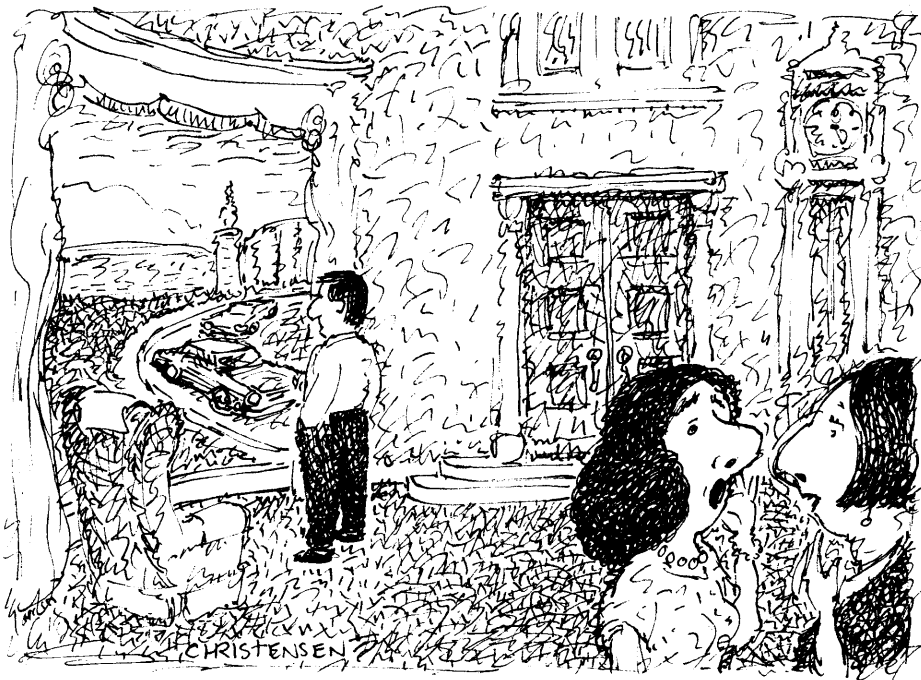
Thus, post-modernism puts both sides in an uneasy quandary. If you adopt a post-

modernist view, you can claim no special intellectual authority in historical matters, unless that claim might rest on a subjective category like the individual creative genius of a given writer. No historical paradigm or school can claim extraordinary epistemological authority. This means that the claims of Traditional Mormon History have no special *intellectual* or *rational* force either. I believe, however, that the non-intellectual grounds of *spiritual* authority can still have authority in the debate, even though that authority will not have any practical extension beyond the community of believers.

So, from this post-modernist/Mormon perspective, in matters of Mormon history, intellectual authority gives way to spiritual authority. And if there are spiritual concerns appropriate to the writing of interpretations of what happened in the Mormon past, those spiritual concerns will necessarily have to be articulated by people endowed with spiritual and probably also ecclesiastical authority. Thus, we cannot be too surprised that Elders Dallin Oaks and Boyd Packer, along with President Ezra Taft Benson, have addressed questions of historiography. Nor can we blithely assert that they have no authority or expertise in these matters. Ultimately, then, the argument seems to come down to which authority we expect Mormon historians to subscribe to: intellectual or spiritual.

But we all know it isn't that simple—spirit and intellect interact. Our task is to continue to try finding intellectually challenging and invigorating ways to write spiritual Mormon history. The large majority of New Mormon Historians are deeply sincere in their desire to write the Church's history as well as possible. Pure motives, however, do not inoculate them against intellectual and spiritual criticism, nor can they alone even be the best judges of the content of their work. Open publication will generate positive and negative, fair and unfair, response; that is the risk of scholarship.

In conclusion, I believe Thorp to be absolutely right about the tone of this debate. It has often been much too rancorous, paranoid, and deliberately slanderous. We need to adopt a more temperate, reasonable, and yes, Christian rhetoric and even admit room for give and take. I fail to see how we can talk so high-and-mightily about pluralism and then try as hard as we can to silence others through attacks in presses or the use of positions on editorial boards to keep ideas from reaching print. Until we all develop more maturity, even in the face of what appears to us to be utter stupidity, this important debate will continue to be characterized primarily



He's been like this ever since he read Nibley's "What is Zion?"

by bad will and bad faith instead of clear thinking and sister- and brotherhood.

NEAL W. KRAMER
Rexburg, ID

NIT-PICKY HISTORIANS

THANK YOU for sharing Malcolm Thorp's article on the writing of Mormon history. Frankly, I am tired of the nit-picky criticisms of New Mormon Historians by Traditional Historians. I understand their points that no text can be interpreted without a context that is unavoidably created by the biases and beliefs of the historian, and hence the paramount need for faithful historians to interpret Mormon history from the true vantage point of its faith claims. Nevertheless, the critical tools of professional historians go far in approximately recreating from the sources available a biography or history, and they do not presume to be complete or exhaustive.

For example, using documents and interviews with friends, a thoughtful and careful scholar could write a biography of me that after reading it I would say things like, "Yes, that's a close description of my life, although it misses some points and distorts emphasis," and, "You're probably right that those concepts influenced my career choices more than I had recognized." Without having to definitively identify the actions of Providence, my biographer could quote my own theological interpretation and understanding of God's work in my life to show his hand, as Richard Bushman did in his biography of Joseph Smith. If I were an important person, such a historical work, however limited, would be a genuine contribution, showing my human quest for God in a world of multiple causes and motivations. Who could ask for anything more?

Let's concede the significant, albeit inherently limited, contributions New Mormon Historians have made in the last three decades, thank them for their solitary pains, and encourage them to bless our lives with future works. Even if every nuance of interpretation is not perfect, the best of these historians will get it basically right and provide us with mortal models that we can better identify with and learn from.

SEAN JOHNSON
Los Angeles

MORAL SCHIZOPHRENIA

AS IF TO prove that tolerance of abortion is consistent with reverence for human life, Ed Firmage Jr. observes that rabbis "of

the Talmudic period" saw no inconsistency in acknowledging that a fetus is a human life yet affording it no legal protection ("Jewish Perspectives on Abortion," *SUNSTONE* 15:5). Far from legitimating Firmage's thesis (i.e., that a fetus *should* have no legal protection), the rabbis' reasoning simply ignored the legal implications of acknowledging the sacredness of human life and that a fetus is a human life.

If we know anything about the architects of the Jewish legal system, we know they had a great propensity for professing outward adherence to lofty moral standards while systematically violating the spirit and purpose of those standards (see Matthew 23; James Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 65). It is neither surprising nor probative that persons with a "biblical world-view" might condone abortion. Some people who profess a belief in the Bible, both Jewish and Christian, often condone a multitude of sinful practices. This does not mean that Latter-day Saints—with a much more extensive body of scripture as well as living prophets to guide them—should follow their example. Unlike the rabbis to whom Firmage looks for guidance, the real issue is whether abortion is a sin in the eyes of God.

Firmage suggests that Americans should affect the Talmudic rabbis' moral schizophrenia because, he says, "matters of religious belief and matters of state must be kept separate." He thus reveals a profound ignorance of the religious underpinnings of the American legal system. No competent legal scholar would suggest that our society's fundamental

legal principles are or even should be utterly disconnected from its fundamental moral beliefs. Certainly modern scripture contemplates a legal system both derived from and consistent with principles of religious truth (see D&C 101:77-80).

Firmage correctly observes that our society does not generally recognize an unborn fetus as a "person" in the sense of a full-fledged legal entity. However, he fallaciously assumes that only "persons" are entitled to any measure of legal recognition or protection. A legal system is entirely capable of extending varying degrees of protection to life in its various forms. The law might not equate abortion with murder yet nevertheless recognize the sanctity of fetal life while allowing it to be killed only where the life or health of the mother is at stake—never for the sake of a relatively less important value such as the mother's personal preference not to bear a child. Such a standard accords appropriate priority to the life of a "person" when weighted against the life of a non-person, yet recognizes that the life of a person-in-embryo has great value and should not be lightly disregarded.

KURTIS J. KEARL
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DEATH AND ATONEMENT

I REALIZE Wendy Ulrich wrote from the standpoint of a psychotherapist, not a theologian ("Not for Adams Transgression: Paths to Intergenerational Peace," *SUNSTONE* 15:5), but I couldn't help noticing her im-

THE TWELVE DOING THE WAVE FOR A STRETCH BREAK





MORMON ONE-ACT PLAY CONTEST

SUNSTONE

Since the first issue of Sunstone featured the complete script of Bob Elliott's *Fires of the Mind*, the Sunstone Foundation has been a patron of Mormon theater by annually publishing a Mormon play and by featuring productions at its symposiums. Now Sunstone is sponsoring the Mormon One-Act Play Contest. Contest winners will be awarded up to \$500 each and their plays will be premiered at the August 1993 Sunstone symposium in Salt Lake City.

CONTEST RULES

1. NEW WORKS. Entries must be new works that have not been published previously and have had at most limited trial productions. One playwright may submit no more than two entries.

2. CONTENT. Plays should deal in some general way with the Mormon experience or world view and may create real or fictional Mormons as characters. Settings in previous dispensations (e.g., Bible and Book of Mormon) are acceptable. Other historical, contemporary, or futuristic settings that are not explicitly Mormon may be used as long as the themes of the play clearly explore the LDS approach to life and God. All styles of theater are acceptable: realism, impressionism, absurdism, etc.

3. COVER PAGE. Each entry must have its own cover page. Each cover page must attest that the entry is the play-

wright's work, that it has not been previously published, that it will not be considered for publication elsewhere until the contest results have been announced. The cover letter must also give Sunstone one-time publication and production rights in the event the entry wins the contest.

4. FORMAT. Entries must be typewritten on single-sided 8 1/2 x 11 inch white paper and bound by staples only. The playwright's name must appear on the cover page only; the play's title and page number should appear on each page. The format should have the characters name on the left in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS: Followed by single-spaced dialogue. A blank line should separate different speakers. (Stage and acting directions should be put in parentheses.) Plays must be capable of being performed in under an hour, about thirty manuscript pages, depending upon the time taken by

stage directions. Plays longer than one-hour will not be considered.

5. JUDGING. Plays will be judged by an anonymous panel of expert Mormon playwrights, actors, and directors.

6. DATES AND DEADLINES. Entries must be delivered to the Sunstone Foundation between January 1 and January 10, 1993. Winners will be announced in early April 1993. All authors will be notified of the results by mail; entries will not be returned. Cash awards will be determined by the judges and may be up to \$500 for each play. Winning entries will be produced and performed at the Salt Lake Sunstone symposium in August 1993 and will be subsequently published in Sunstone magazine.

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PLICIT faith in the accuracy of the orthodox Christian idea of the Atonement wherein an innocent person suffers and dies for the sins of a guilty third-party sinner.

Orthodox Christians have yet to explain how Jesus' death did anyone, human or divine, any good. I can understand how Jesus' resurrection did much good for many, but not Jesus' death. If Jesus' death were necessary in order for God the Father to forgive humans of their sins, then God has a problem with moral forgiveness, since God apparently cannot forgive sin unless there be massive punishment for that sin. Why must God demand punishment for sin before he forgives sin? Human fathers do not require such massive punishment of their children before forgiving the latter for their sins, even grave sins.

And if God the Father demands heinous punishment for the evil of sinfulness amongst his human creations, how can God's punishment be faithful or just when directed against an innocent third party (Jesus) who was sinless?

For God to establish that human sin cannot be forgiven except upon the principles of personal human punishment, then to obviate that personal human punishment by providing himself a third-party strawman to act as the agent for punishment for all humans, is simply for God to play an immoral game at humankind's expense. Why can't God simply forgive the sin in the first place without the ritual immorality of punishing a totally innocent third party in the process? In common legal terms, this orthodox Christian procedure violates Jesus' due process.

Nor does it matter that Jesus concurs in the procedure. That the innocent third party allows himself to be punished for others' sins does not render the procedure moral in the slightest. It remains a wholly immoral procedure because the wrong persons are being punished.

Most orthodox Christians haven't begun to examine the gross immorality of their concept of divine Atonement. Mormon Christianity doesn't partake of this gross immorality, of the foregoing procedure. The correct Mormon Christian view of the Atonement is largely portrayed by John Hick, a Protestant professor of theology, in what he calls "Irenaean" as opposed to "Augustinian" theodicy:

Irenaeus suggests that man was created as an imperfect, immature creature who was to undergo moral development and growth and finally be brought to the perfection intended for him by his Maker. In-

stead of the fall of Adam being presented, as in the Augustinian tradition as an utterly malignant and catastrophic event, completely disrupting God's plan, Irenaeus pictures it as something that occurred in the childhood of the race, an understandable lapse due to weakness and immaturity rather than an adult crime full of malice and pregnant with perpetual guilt. And instead of the Augustinian view of life's trials as a divine punishment for Adam's sin, Irenaeus sees our world of mingled good and evil as a divinely appointed environment for man's development towards the perfection that represents the fulfillment of God's good purpose for him. (John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love* [New York: Harper & Row, 1966] 217-21.)

I suggest Mormons follow Hick's "Irenaean" view of Atonement, which involves no tragic "fall" at all but which otherwise must be recompensed in Christ's infinite atonement.

Once we realize that all humans—parents and children—are "only potentially perfect" in this mortal self-chosen process of opposition and refinement (or in Hick's words:

"moral development and growth"), we may come to see imperfection in parents as well as children to be the norm, hence no basis for "intergenerational pain."

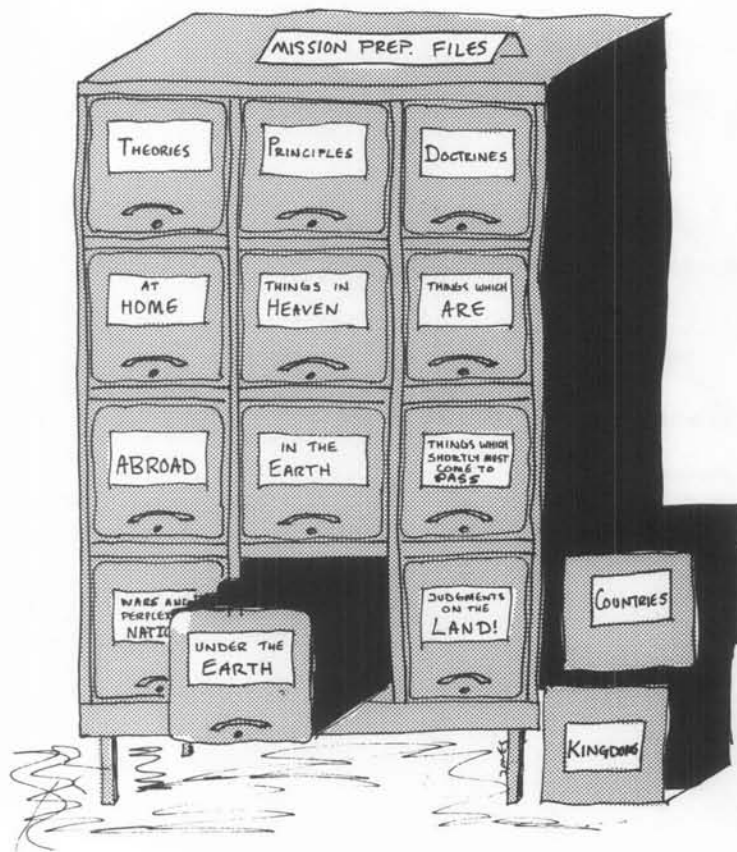
GERRY L. ENSELY
Los Alamitos, CA

JUST FOR THE ASKING

GOD WILL NOT reveal new scripture to us until we ask for it. We will not ask for it unless we become sufficiently frustrated with the present situation. I believe the lack of female references in the Book of Mormon (Peculiar People, SUNSTONE 15:6) was the result of deliberate instruction from God. God has in store for us further light and knowledge, but is waiting until we are ready to receive it.

SHIRLEY MILLER
Sun Prairie, WI

SUNSTONE ENCOURAGES CORRESPONDENCE. ADDRESS LETTERS FOR PUBLICATION TO "READERS' FORUM." WE EDIT FOR CLARITY AND TONE AND CUT FOR LENGTH AND SPACE. LETTERS ADDRESSED TO AUTHORS WILL BE FORWARDED UNOPENED TO THEM.



IN MEMORIAM

MAURINE WHIPPLE

By Veda Tebbs Hale

MAURINE WHIPPLE, author of *The Giant Joshua*, died in St. George on 12 April 1992. She was eighty-nine. She was born on 20 January 1903 in St. George and lived there most of her life. *The Giant Joshua*, a 637-page novel published in 1941 by Houghton Mifflin, celebrates the history of her Southern Utah city; the richness of texture, the vividness of its characters, and its forthright treatment of the rigors of both pioneering and polygamy have insured that it has never lacked for enthusiastic admirers during the past fifty-one years.

Maurine's serious writing began, she said, when she hitched a ride with a tourist to Salt Lake City to begin her college education with only her dreams and a cheap cardboard suitcase containing two middy blouses and one skirt. She grew up envious of girls who had social skills, financial backing, nice clothes, and important family names. However, her high school education, experience as the editor of the school paper, keen mind, and determination combined to help her graduate with honors from the University of Utah in 1926. She financed her college education by working wherever she could—laundry, housework, library, or cafeteria. Sometimes she held two jobs at once, sacrificing her social life.

In high school and college, she observed the romances of other girls and ached to find love herself. She was sure that it was her own inability to play insincere flirting games that stranded her on the beaches of unpopularity. This view often depressed her; but in other moments, she was willing to wait for the unusual man who would see and love her for her honesty. Her only diary, covering less than a year but describing her first year as a high school teacher, candidly records her bright hopes and dreams, most of them



dashed by the end of the school year. In fact, it concludes with her premonition that she would never find the love and marriage she so desired.

But Maurine did not become that staple of small-town society—the unmarried schoolteacher. She had trained as a teacher because teaching was the only profession her father could visualize for her, and his patriarchal opinions dominated the family. During the six years she did teach, she greatly enjoyed working with young people, idealistically rejoiced in helping them become their best, and delighted in imparting knowledge and seeing ideas strike roots. Unfortunately, whatever Maurine's skills with young people, her ability to deal successfully with her colleagues—and more particularly with her principals—shortened her career. With her strong, vivacious personality and original ideas, she was impatient with their conservatism and resentful of their heavy-handed imposition of authority.¹ When, for instance, one of her dramatic productions needed lighting that the principal said they didn't have, Maurine hitchhiked to a neighboring town and convinced J. C. Penny's to lend some they owned. On another occasion, the principal informed her that there wasn't any money for girls' gym equipment. Maurine organized a dramatic production, charged

admission, and made enough to buy what she needed. Former students remember her as "having red hair (hennaed), friendly and innovative, with great vitality and a good dancer."² However, none of her principals ever offered her a contract for a second year.

In 1928-1929, her third year of teaching, she taught in a two-room school in the tiny community of Virgin, Utah. She liked being free to organize in her own way, but it was a lonely time, a time of reflection. She was twenty-six years old, felt she had missed her chance to marry, and knew that she was overqualified to teach in a small rural school. She spent many hours sitting on the bank of the Virgin River meditating. She claimed that the germ of *The Giant Joshua* had been in her mind for as long as she could remember. Her despondent musings on her personal life beside the Virgin gradually turned to serious thought about the characters and the story line of her future novel.

The next year the students of the Virgin school were bussed to Hurricane, so Maurine went to California to do post-graduate work that summer. Supervised recreation was a new and popular profession across America then, and Maurine studied that field along with her specialty, dramatics. She remembers that summer as one full of promise. She lived near the beach and rapidly made friends with other young people, even having a boy friend; but the feeling that her mother needed her steadily grew.

Finally, the feeling was too strong to resist and Maurine went home. Her mother had, in fact, been wishing for her, lying on her bed saying her name over and over. And so Maurine was once again pulled into the continuing conflict between her parents—her father, strong, virile, harshly authoritative and selfish, was interested in a wider world; her mother, sweet, passive, and faithful to Mormonism, was content within the outlines of her culture steeped in Victorian attitudes. Maurine's fiction gave her tools to analyze her parents' unhappiness and also a way to distance herself emotionally from it. But she was never successful at effecting enough change so that she could move on. It may have been one reason why she did not

VEDA TEBBS HALE, a novelist with *St. George roots*, is editing Maurine Whipple's unpublished fiction and personal writings with the help of Lavina Fielding Anderson. Entitled *Maurine Whipple, The Lost Works*, this book is forthcoming from Aspen Books in 1992. She will then write Maurine Whipple's biography.

finish a sequel to *The Giant Joshua*, in which the protagonist was Jimmy, the son of Clory and Abijah MacIntyre, who was patterned after her own father, Charlie Whipple. Despite her resentment of her father, she understood that he grew up abandoned by his own father and forced at an early age to take on a man's burdens.

After Maurine finally abandoned teaching in 1932, she found a job in recreation management on the west side of Salt Lake City. She worked hard with disadvantaged children and received rewards and commendation for her efforts. But because of cuts in federal funding, her opportunity disappeared. It was a time of losing on every front as one romance after another ended tragically. By 1936 she found herself stranded in San Francisco contemplating suicide. But then she found her friend, Lillian MacQuarrie, from her St. George school days. Lillian, whose husband had left her for her daughter from another marriage, was also in the depths of despair and in the last stages of pregnancy.

Maurine postponed taking any self-destructive action to see her friend through childbirth. Between contractions, the two women discussed their options. Lillian had seen some of Maurine's early stories, and insisted that she attend the Rocky Mountain Writers' Conference held each summer in Boulder, Colorado. She later forced Maurine's hand by submitting a manuscript, "Beaver Dam Wash," that Maurine had written during the winter of 1928 while recuperating from an appendectomy in a hotel room in Pocatello, Idaho.³ Maurine borrowed the money for busfare and registration. This was the beginning of the events that led to her winning the 1938 Houghton Mifflin fellowship and much national attention. Not understanding that the prize was, basically, an advance against royalties and that the publishers would reap most of the benefits, Maurine, instead of writing a few more chapters to lengthen "Beaver Dam Wash," found herself committed to writing the epic she had been carrying in her mind for as long as she could remember.

Ferris Greenslet, her editor at Houghton Mifflin, soon recognized the importance of her efforts and gave her the attention, encouragement, and added time needed to bring this book to completion. Three agonizing years later, Maurine delivered *The Giant Joshua*. In many respects the book was her child. She usually referred to it as "he," for example, even though its protagonist was female. Like Margaret Mitchell, author of the South's great epic *Gone with the Wind*, Mau-

rine emptied all of her feminine energy into a self-consuming and sacrificial writing effort that gave the novel genuine power. But unlike Margaret Mitchell, Maurine received little financial reward and never acceptance by most of her own people. She claimed she never received much more than \$7000 in royalties spread over a forty-two year period.⁴ The money she did have she generously shared with her family, particularly with her younger sister whose husband was paralyzed.

The publication of *The Giant Joshua* in January 1941 came almost simultaneously with the release of the Hollywood movie, *Brigham Young*, which was given a hearty endorsement by Heber J. Grant, president of the Church. The film undoubtedly won many friends and even converts for the Church. Maurine's book did not receive Church endorsement, and she suffered from the fact. However, she kept hundreds of fan letters expressing admiration for the spirit of the Mormons in Southern Utah.

Also the publication of *The Giant Joshua* coincided with World War II, and the book's portrayal of the spirit of dedication amidst great hardship was appreciated by another generation fighting for freedom. Maurine, herself, threw her considerable energies into the war effort, lecturing in behalf of a national speakers' bureau of writers. She traveled as far east as Chicago and remembers that the groups to whom she spoke always asked for an encore. The lecture, an emotional appeal for greater unity, lent itself well for adaptation to different audiences.

In 1943, she set aside her work on the sequel to *Joshua* and began "The Golden Door," a vigorous attack on the futility of war, following that with "The Arizona Strip," a novel of romance and outlawry. She finished a detailed synopsis and two chapters for each, but received no encouragement from publishers. Somewhere in this time she also produced about two hundred pages of text for the sequel to *The Giant Joshua* called "Cleave the Wood." She also wrote numerous short stories. Two of the most interesting, "The Pickle Is a Dilly" and "The Time Will Come," deal with nuclear testing in Nevada and about a woman's rage at her son's attraction to war. Both themes sound surprisingly contemporary in light of today's interest about downwind effects, the peace movement, and differences between male and female perspectives. They were both turned down with the same kind of comments that came back on her war novel, which was that nobody wanted to hear that kind of peace rhetoric. It has often been said that Maurine

was fifty years ahead of her time.

In 1945, she published her only other book, a travel book for tourists called *This Is the Place: Utah*. Although it was a critical success outside the state, it was a financial failure because of her criticism of some Church policies. Maurine then turned to article writing, trying to make her association with other journalists compensate for her lack of companionship. She felt obligated to write more novels and hoped to provide an income that would allow her the freedom to write a novel in the long, painful way she knew. Particularly she felt compelled to write the sequel to *Joshua* because she had to end it before she had originally planned due to its length. Her editor assumed she could finish the rest of it in two more books, making a trilogy. But it wasn't to be, much to the sorrow of the many fans of *Joshua*.

Her national periodical publications include "Anybody's Gold Mine," an exciting account of possible treasure buried near Kanab, Utah, published in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1949; "The Arizona Strip, America's Tibet," in 1952, *Collier's*, a history of the area cut off from state government by the Grand Canyon; "Why I Have Five Wives," published in *Collier's* in 1953, the story of the massive and disastrous raid on Short Creek's polygamists by Arizona law enforcement officials with moral support from Utah government; and "Atlantis on the Muddy," a reminiscence with the people of St. Thomas, Arizona, after waters backed up by Boulder Dam covered their community.

Maurine's poor business sense combined with her ill health, her sensitivity to criticism, and her inability to attract long-term relationships meant that she was without a secure environment in which she could write in peace. As a result, after publishing *The Giant Joshua* when she was thirty-eight, she endured fifty years of disappointments, loneliness, and poverty, sometimes so paralyzed by despair that she was incapable of working.

It is ironic that Maurine did not benefit more directly from her one great success. *Joshua* was a best seller that at one time was ranked second only to Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, was translated into ten foreign languages and Braille, and was chosen as part of the Allied Forces library during World War II.⁵ It wasn't until 1983, when Maurine was eighty years old that she sold the movie rights. Sterling Van Wagonen and others paid a sum that gave her a few years of financial security. Although the movie has not yet been made, Van Wagonen has not abandoned his plans.⁶

TURNING THE TIME OVER TO . . .

Cole R. Capener

JUSTICE

Maurine contributed much to human understanding, Mormon culture, and especially Mormon literature; sadly these contributions were undervalued during her lifetime. Although she failed to completely realize her own ambitions for a Southern Utah trilogy that would capture the Grand Idea that she saw working itself out through Mormonism, she did leave her testimony that it could eventually be successful:

The dream of brotherhood is possible, though only time can tell. Meanwhile, all any member of the human race can do is to seek the Holy Grail amid the dream's debris—that despite what Thomas Wolfe said, I think you *can* “go home again”; in fact, you must. For “going home again” is a prerequisite to going anywhere else! Spiritually at least.⁷

In her last year, Maurine was gratified to find herself once more contributing to increased brotherhood. Before Christmas 1990, a mutilated copy of a Christmas story she had written in college was found. As a Christmas gift, Maurine sent copies of this story to friends; two of them, Curtis Taylor and Stan Zenk of Aspen Books, generated the idea of asking noted Mormon writers to contribute an original Christmas story to a collection and donate the proceeds of its sale to help children of the European countries struggling for democracy. *Christmas for the World* sold out in its first printing in 1991 and will be offered again in 1992 for the same purpose. They gave the credit for the idea to Maurine, and it is a fitting tribute to her. ☞

NOTES

1. She taught in Monroe, Utah (1926-27), in Georgetown, Idaho (1927-28), and then in four more Utah schools: Virgin, Nephi, Heber City, and Helper.

2. Interview 12 April 1992 with Roland Bee from Escalante, Utah; comments in the *Wasatch Nineteen Thirty One*, the yearbook for Wasatch High School, Heber City, Utah.

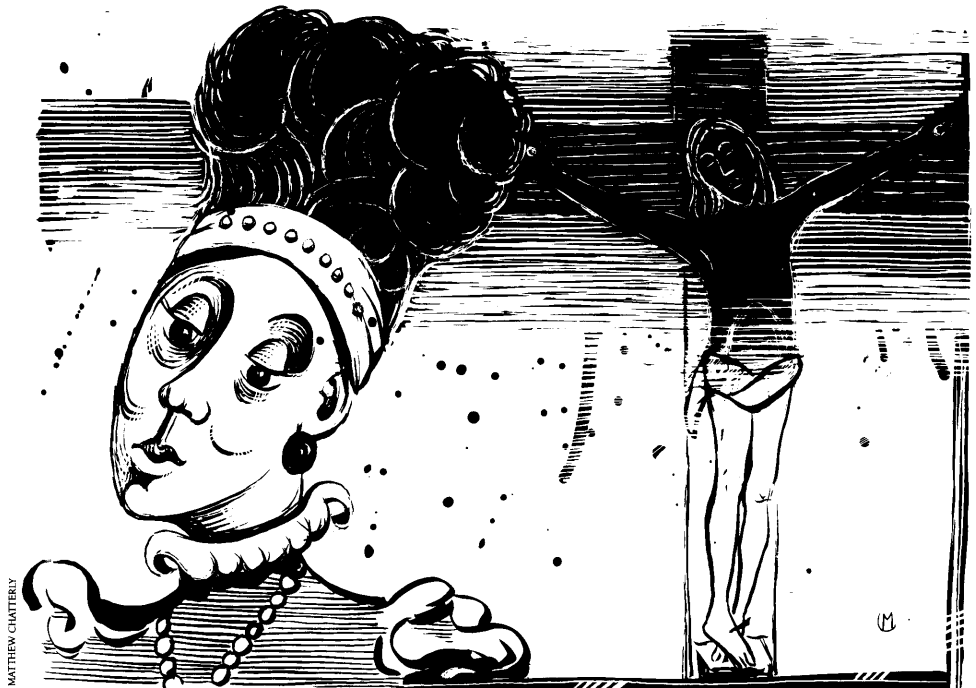
3. Unfortunately the complete manuscript has not been found; however, two versions of a synopsis and a much-altered short story, “Quicksand,” published by the University of Utah *Pen* literary magazine, are in the Maurine Whipple Collection, Manuscripts and Archives Division, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University Archive, Provo, Utah.

4. Maurine's summation in an undated first draft of a holograph letter to Norman Cousins in 1974, Whipple Collection.

5. *The Giant Joshua* placed fifth in Harper's *Poll of the Critics* on the Ten Best Books. For several months in the *N.Y. Herald Tribune's* best seller listed it was seventh out of twenty-one, ahead of Soroyan, Buck, Douglas. Once the *Herald Tribune* ran Roberts, Hemingway, Hilton, Cather, and Whipple, in that order. The *Denver Post* best-sellers listed Hemingway first, Whipple second, and then Roberts, Douglas, Cather following. From clippings in Whipple papers, Brigham Young University Archive.

6. Chris Hicks, “LDS Filmmaker Dreams of ‘Giant Joshua,’” *Desert News*, Metro edition, Weekend Section, Friday, 31 January 1992, W-3.

7. Incomplete and undated letter to Charley Steen, ca. 1961-62, Whipple Collection; photocopy in my possession.



There is an inextricable link between righteousness and economic quality. Reestablishing pioneer Orderville's on a large scale may not be realistic, but recapturing and teaching the spirit of egalitarianism is.

THE KING JAMES translation of the New Testament uses the word *judgment* as one of the weightier matters Christ chastised the Pharisees for neglecting (Matthew 23:23). However, the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, as does nearly every other modern translation, translates the original Greek (*crisis*) as “justice.” What did Christ mean by this word “justice”?

In our own religious tradition, and particularly in contemporary Mormon rhetoric, justice is virtually always portrayed as the

victim of a robbery perpetrated by mercy. This is regrettable. First, because I have always felt that like Robin Hood—or any good robber—mercy *can* (and should) rob justice. After all, that's what mercy does, doesn't it? Second, the two terms are typically juxtaposed in a false dichotomy to try, feebly and erroneously, to explain how or why the Atonement works. I have always found this usage unsatisfying since I believe, as did the heretic Abelard, that the Atonement is a process that occurs within the disciple of Christ rather than an event that purports to balance some abstract ledger book of the Universe.

I submit that Christ did not use justice in this balance-sheet sense. And even though my own legal training might prefer it, I do not believe Christ was referring to the legalistic sense of the word—justice here does not mean the determination of rights according to legal principles such as the axiom “an eye

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for an eye and tooth for a tooth.” Rather, Christ was admonishing the scribes and Pharisees to practice the justice expressed elsewhere in the Mosaic law.

Christ’s admonition to practice justice calls to mind those aspects of the Law that addressed socioeconomic inequality among God’s people. According to Professor Moshe Greenburg, professor of Bible at Jerusalem’s Hebrew University, a clear intent of the Law was to diffuse material resources more equally. (Greenburg actually argues that the whole purpose of the Law was to diffuse economic, political, and religious power so that such power would not be concentrated and abused, thus becoming a challenge to God’s authority.) The prohibition of interest on loans, the emancipation of slaves every seventh year, the commandment not to harvest crops so the poor could collect and eat the food, and the mandated celebration of Jubilee (once every fifty years) where title to parcels of land sold in the prior fifty years reverted to the original owner, all militated against economic concentration and grossly unequal distributions of income. Greenburg further reminds us that the Torah is also replete with references that God conveyed but a mere tenancy with respect to the land of Israel, a tenancy that could be revoked for failure to obey God’s law.¹

Catholic commentary on the Mosaic law is remarkably in accord. “Central to the biblical presentation of justice,” U.S. Catholic bishops wrote in a recent pastoral letter, “is that the justice of a community is measured by its treatment of the powerless in society.”² The Law and other writings of the Old Testament share deep concern for the proper treatment of these people. They are vulnerable and have no protector or advocate. “God hears their cries and the King, who is God’s anointed, is commanded to have special concern for them.”³

If this is Christ’s view of justice then we must recognize a new challenge. If we accept Christ’s exhortation to do justice we must, in the words of Mortimer Adler, commit ourselves to acts that “serve and promote the general welfare or the common good.”⁴ To be sure, we must broaden our horizons about what justice means. Not only must we rethink our definitions, we must also rethink our priorities. Christ unequivocally taught that doing justice was a *weightier* matter of the law. By choosing these words he established a pecking order of commandments beyond the two greatest. We are to pay tithes, of course, and obey the other commandments—but to do justice is *more* important.

The need to enlarge our vision of respon-

sibility is well illustrated in an insightful article by Professor Richard E. Johnson in *BYU Today*. Johnson criticizes those in the Church who lament the declining moral state of contemporary American society, saying they define morality too narrowly. “We might gain valuable insight,” he writes, “by broadening the measure of morality beyond the traditional sins (sex, crime, drugs and violence) to include such variables as poverty, homelessness and socioeconomic inequality.”⁵ To Johnson, the most powerful and consistent scriptural warnings given to those who live in the “last days” (especially those contained in the Book of Mormon) center around the evils of materialism, consumerism, worldly vanity, and socioeconomic inequality. When measuring morality by these less conventional measures, we do have reason to lament the contemporary state of America and the world. Despite the extravagance and wealth-creation in America during the 1980s—or perhaps because of it—the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. According to Census Bureau statistics Johnson cites, the richest one-fifth of American households now receive almost ten times the average income of the poorest one-fifth, the highest ratio of inequality since World War II. Moreover, the top one-tenth of U.S. households now own 70 percent of the wealth.⁶

In addition to widening income disparities, U.S. infant mortality rates are also rising and among America’s poor now exceed those in many Third World countries, far surpassing the rates in other Western countries. The percent of Americans in poverty increased significantly during the 1980s such that more than 33 million Americans now live in poverty. Many of these poor are single mothers and their children. In fact, almost one-fourth of *all* children in this country live in poverty. For many of these children, basic health care is lacking. Measles vaccinations for poor children in the United States now lag far behind other developed countries. The rate of homelessness also continues to grow. The traditional homeless—alcoholics, addicts, unemployables—have been joined by single mothers and their children, working poor, and deinstitutionalized mental patients: All of this in a country with massive material wealth.

In the world at large the injustice further abounds. Carlisle Hunsaker wrote that “at least fifteen million children under the age of five die of starvation each year (roughly one child every two seconds). Millions more will sustain physical and mental impairment because of malnutrition. Billions of persons

live in absolute poverty and the gap between the rich and poor is striking.”⁷

When I reflect on Christ’s admonition to do justice, to right moral wrongs, I cannot ignore these statistics of affliction, suffering, and inequality. I cannot help but rehearse Christ’s words:

Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord when saw we thee an hungered, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them saying, . . . Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. (Matthew 25:44-45.)

I also recall the words of N. N. Riddell who reportedly said, “Let no man count himself righteous who permits a wrong he could avert.”

I recognize that some might argue that inequality of income is beyond the scope of religious obligation and doing justice. To such people I would simply cite the remarkable yet chilling revelations found in the Doctrine and Covenants:

But it is not given that one man should possess that which is above another, wherefore the world lieth in sin (D&C 49:20).

In your temporal things ye shall be equal, and this not grudgingly, otherwise the abundance of the manifestations of the spirit shall be withheld (D&C 70:14).

For if ye are not equal in earthly things, ye cannot be equal in obtaining heavenly things (D&C 78:6).

These scriptures demonstrate the inextricable link between righteousness and economic equality. Indeed, it is no coincidence that in those few instances in sacral history when God’s people have reached a higher level of righteous living, in each instance their communities have taken action against poverty and inequality of income. Thus, the Book of Moses records that in the City of Enoch the “Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them” (Moses 7:18). And later in Jerusalem, after the Holy Ghost descended on the disciples during Pentecost, the Book of Acts informs us:

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. . . . And all that believed were together and had all

things common. And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need. . . . Neither was there any among them that lacked. (Acts 3:42, 44-45; 4:34.)

And finally, in the Western Hemisphere after Christ's visit, Fourth Nephi reveals:

And it came to pass in the thirty and sixth year, the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another. And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free and partakers of the heavenly gift. (4 Nephi 1:2-3.)

Having seen that Christ himself has admonished us to do justice, and noting the salutary effects on those communities of Saints who the scriptures record acted justly, it should be clear that it is our responsibility—both the Church as an institution and each individual member—to work for justice in this world. While the Church's activities cannot substitute for individual action, the Church should take a leading role in creating justice. It should be recalled that in Matthew Christ chastised the ecclesiastical leadership of his day, those who sat "in Moses' seat" (Matthew 23:2). It was they who were under obligation to observe the weightier matters of the religious law. The contemporary Church is subject to the same obligation. Regrettably, this critical element is omitted from the oft-expressed three-fold purpose of the Church: preaching the gospel, redeeming the dead, and perfecting the Saints. Doing justice or succoring the needy just doesn't seem to fit in any of these folds. A new fold is needed—at least a new wrinkle—to accommodate this paramount objective of the Church. Christ's own life vividly demonstrates that one of the Church's principal roles should be to combat poverty, homelessness, world hunger and malnutrition, and socioeconomic inequality, and to use its other influence, resources, and moral suasion to condemn and oppose these evils and other injustices throughout the world.

CATHOLIC ACTIVISM FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

IN this regard, we as a Church can learn much from the intellectual traditions of our Catholic brothers and sisters. The year 1991

marked the one hundredth anniversary of the first modern Catholic social teachings. On 15 May 1891 Pope Leo XIII issued the church's first collection of social teachings in a document entitled *Rerum Novarum* (*The Condition of Labor*), which addressed the then-pressing problems of industrialization and the oppression of workers. This tradition continued with Pope Pius XI's 1931 publication of *The Reconstruction of the Social Order* which responded to the impact of the economic depression by condemning unequal distribution of wealth and opposing both unrestricted capitalism and Marxism. More recently, in 1971 the Synod of Bishops released a significant encyclical entitled *Justice in the World* which declared: "Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a *constitutive* dimension of the preaching of the gospel."⁸

In the same encyclical, the bishops also declared that action for justice is a central part of the church's mission for the redemption of the human race and the church's purpose to liberate humankind from every oppressive situation.⁹ Noting the massive divisions in the world between rich and poor and the resultant marginal lives, illiteracy, hunger, inadequate housing, and patent lack of human responsibility and dignity, the Catholic bishops taught that the gospel demands justice for these people as an essential expression of Christian love. To love God is to love our neighbor and this love of neighbor cannot exist without justice.

Perhaps the finest example of Catholic social teaching in their rich tradition, is the U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1986 pastoral letter "Economic Justice for All." This letter cited many of the same statistics of economic inequality in the U.S., and concluded that "basic justice demands the establishment of minimum levels of participation in the life of the community for all persons." "Basic justice," or "biblical justice," as the Catholic bishops wrote, consists of three dimensions:

1. *Commutative justice*—which calls for fundamental fairness in all agreements and exchanges between individuals or private social groups—a call for fair wages and working conditions.
2. *Distributive justice*—which requires that the allocation of income, wealth, and power in society be evaluated in light of its effects on persons whose basic material needs are unmet—reflecting the Second Vatican Council's statement that "the right to have a share of earthly goods sufficient for oneself and one's family belongs to everyone."

3. *Social justice*—which implies that persons have an obligation to be active and productive participants in the life of society and that society has a duty to enable them to participate in this way. Or in the words of Pope Pius XI, "It is of the very essence of social justice to demand from each individual all that is necessary for the common good."¹⁰

LDS APPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

AS a church, we need to embrace the spirit of this Catholic social teaching. LDS bishops (who are responsible for the temporal welfare of the Church) should join together with Catholic bishops in teaching justice. How this abstract value can be translated into concrete practice is, of course, more problematic. Reestablishing pioneer Orderville on a large scale may not be realistic, but recapturing and teaching the spirit of egalitarianism is. The Church welfare system—as remarkable as it may be—can be used to create more justice, beyond helping our own needy. Perhaps the homeless and needy can be encouraged to participate in welfare projects in exchange for welfare and Church social service benefits wherever Church welfare facilities exist (instead of just Welfare Square). There are no doubt countless other ways in which the Church's welfare aims can be broadened. Indeed, over the last five or six years, at least one part of the institutional Church seems to share this vision. Under the direction of presiding Bishop Glen Pace and Apostle Thomas Monson, a small group within the Church welfare department known as Humanitarian Services has transformed the Church's aid program from isolated disaster relief aimed primarily at Church members to participation in a wide range of ecumenical humanitarian assistance and development directed at both disaster victims and the poor and homeless.¹¹ Christian international relief organizations that used to assume the Church would never work together on such relief projects now communicate and cooperate frequently. Joint efforts with local food banks, shelters, and literacy projects are common. Even non-proselytizing "service missionaries" are now being called to serve Peace Corps-like missions.

In addition to our responsibilities as a church, we as individual members face the challenge, as David S. King expressed it, of translating "our love for mankind [and desire to do justice] from a theological abstraction into a practical instrument for servicing human needs."¹²

First, of course, we must acquire the will to "bear one another's burdens," even the burdens of those unknown to us. Our resolve must project beyond our immediate families, congregations, and fellow citizens and indeed stretch to the ends of the world. Joseph Smith once said that a person "filled with the love of God is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges though the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race."¹³ As one who believes in the efficacy of prayer, I am convinced that making this a subject of our daily prayers is absolutely vital. Even as we expand the scope of our empathy, it is clear some may find it easier to work for a more just society by striving to eradicate poverty and homelessness in the local community. The efforts of Lowell Bennion and others like him are fine examples of this spirit of volunteerism at work. Others target their relief efforts at the victims of drought and famine in Africa. An outstanding example of a secular eleemosynary organization set up and run by Utahns of a variety of religious and non-religious affiliations is the Ouelessebouyou Utah Alliance which fights human suffering in the west African country of Mali.

Second, we must resist the sophistry that argues because we can't help everyone we should not act at all. Every little bit helps. We must personalize the problem and address it at all levels. For the ubiquitous beggar asking for work, money, or food, keep granola bars in the glove compartment, and, better yet, be familiar with the local community services available where he or she can find real help. For the homeless, consider, as we did in the Santa Monica II Ward, organizing a periodic "meals on wheels" night to deliver hot meals to the homeless. In Los Angeles, a voucher program has been established where one can purchase coupons that can be distributed to the poor and homeless who then can redeem them for food and clothing. For the starving in East Africa and elsewhere give generously of your financial resources. You can even help the Church's humanitarian relief efforts by giving on the "other" line of your tithing contribution slip. "Ye yourselves will succor those that stand in need of succor; ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need; and ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish" (Mosiah 4:16).

Third, even though we as Christians have a duty to assist the poor through acts of charity and voluntary action, these are not sufficient by themselves. Our direct individual efforts on a small scale must be corroborated by collective efforts on a large scale. We must, as the Catholic bishops have said "carry out our moral responsibility to assist and empower the poor by working collectively through government to establish just and effective public policies."¹⁴

Although government involvement in social issues may seem inappropriate to some Mormons, interestingly the 1939 Melchizedek priesthood study guide noted that all capitalist systems create inequalities of ownership and income and require public policy initiatives to correct such abuses. It specifically called for a system of progressive taxation "so that every one will contribute according to his financial ability." It also called for progressively higher estate and inheritance taxes to prevent the inter-generational transfer of wealth so that the "so-called idle rich who have been living on the earnings of past generations will be no more."¹⁵ This is but one way public policy might be adopted to address this wide-ranging problem. Other policy initiatives directed at ameliorating poverty, homelessness, and hunger demand our active support.

The prophet Isaiah proclaimed peace as the work of justice (Isaiah 32:17.)¹⁷ Let us strive toward the fulfillment of the words of the psalmist: "Mercy and truth have met together; justice and peace have kissed each other" (Psalms 45:10).

NOTES

1. Quoted in Cole R. Capener, "Aim of God's Laws to Curb Power, Seminar Told," *SUNSTONE* 10 (April 1985): 54-55.
2. "Economic Justice For All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy," National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1986, 26.
3. "Economic Justice for All."
4. Mortimer J. Adler, *Six Great Ideas*, (New York City: Collier Books, 1981), 237.
5. Richard E. Johnson, "Socioeconomic Inequality: The Haves and the Have-nots," *BYU Today* (September 1990): 49.
6. Johnson, 50-51.
7. Carlisle Hunsaker, "Mormonism and a Tragic Sense of Life," *SUNSTONE* 8 (September-October 1983): 32.
8. Quoted in Kenneth R. Overberg's "100 Years of Catholic Social Teachings," *Catholic Update* (November 1990): 4.
9. See also Cardinal Roger Mahony's "Sharing our Heritage in the Marketplace: A Pastoral Reflection for the People of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles," 28 November 1991. ("The central message is very simple—our faith is profoundly social. We cannot call ourselves "Catholic" unless we hear, heed and then embody the Church's call to serve those in need and work for justice and peace.")
10. "Economic Justice for All," 35-39.
11. For a sampling of Bishop Pace's thoughts on these efforts, see "A Thousand Times," *Ensign* (November 1990): 9.
12. David S. King, "The Principle of the Good Samaritan Considered in a Mormon Political Context," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 5(4): 13.
13. *History of the Church*, 4:227
14. "Economic Justice for All," 93.
15. Johnson, 49.
16. See also "Out of Peace, Justice" Joint Pastoral Letter of West German Bishops, in *Title of Boval*, ed. James V. Schall (Ignatius Press 1984), 33, 40-42.

HUEBENER



BY THOMAS F. LOGGERS

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on the Mountain Meadows Massacre

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a dramatic essay on unbridled passion

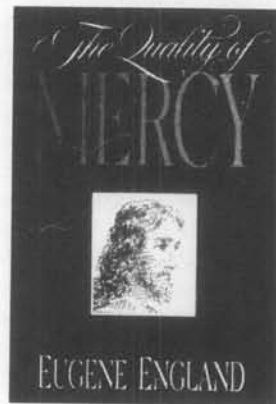
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In modern societies, the inconsistent and contradictory complexes about manhood create structural difficulties for individuals and cultures. Mormon masculinity is a manhood in conflict. The stresses and strains from this tension between Mormon and national culture form the background for our everyday lives as members of the Church.

ON MORMON MASCULINITY

By David Knowlton

WHAT IS "MAN"? THIS DIFFICULT PHILOSOPHICAL question, with a minor transformation, lies close to every male's heart. What is a man? we men ask as we endlessly compare ourselves and others with the norms of masculinity. We learn to do this as young children and continue to ask and compare into adulthood. Men carry a secret fear that we might not meet the lofty and rigid standards of manhood set by our culture. In fact, some analysts suggest that American masculinity is currently in crisis precisely because of the complications of our insecurity and our relationship with our very complex society.¹

In an insistent beating of drums, groups of men gather around the country to explore their manhood and resolve the complexities of their inner fears in relation to our demanding society.² They create rituals to get in touch with what critic Robert Bly calls the "wild man within."³ This rich, poetic image invokes the ideal man that many feel is missing in our daily experience. Furthermore, they argue, our society lacks rites of passage that are necessary to transfer the knowledge and sense of masculinity from one generation to another.

Anthropologically, these gatherings of men suggest that the traditional discourses of masculinity no longer work so easily to justify and explain men's roles in society vis à vis each other and women. Bly and his fellows create ritual almost *ex nihilo* in order to justify their changed relationship to themselves and to traditional discourses of masculinity. To do this they draw on our heritage of myth, poetry, and the anthropological concept of rites of passage. But they misdiagnose their modern situation as the lack of validating ritual instead of the result of the shifting and changing gender relations in a complex society of multiple and contradictory discourses and roles.

We live chaotically in our modern American society. In her beautifully titled book, *Composing a Life*, Mary Catherine Bateson writes:

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In a stable society, composing a life is somewhat like throwing a pot or building a house in a traditional form: the materials are known, the hands move skillfully in tasks familiar from thousands of performances, the fit of the completed whole in the common life is understood. . . . Today, the materials and skills from which life is composed are no longer clear. It is no longer possible to follow the paths of previous generations. . . . Our lives not only take new directions; they are subject to repeated redirection. . . . Just as the design of a building or vase must be rethought when the scale is changed, so must the design of our lives. Many of the basic concepts we use to construct a sense of self or the design of a life have changed their meanings: Work; Home; Love; Commitment. . . .⁴

To this list we might add "Man" and "Woman," concepts that give us our core sense of ourselves as gendered beings. Yet even as they change, we still interact with the emotively strong residue of their former meanings. Furthermore, various groups within society stridently contest what the meanings should be and how they should relate to each other. To expand upon Bateson's analogy, we now have to improvise our very sense of ourselves. And unlike a successful jazz improvisation, where the players already know the basic harmonic structure and the rhythmic form, we must improvise ourselves without a trustworthy knowledge of structure or form and in constant dissonance with ourselves and the ensemble around us.

In short, "life is an improvisatory art."⁵ But in our currently conflicted society, we improvise like a group of artists from widely variant cultures who do not even share a common definition of music. As we play our living riffs, we offend others and at times even ourselves. We do not even clearly know when we perform dissonance or assonance. We desperately create a cacophony of melodies in the hope that some structure will arise in their overlapping sounds and that some audience will appreciate our efforts.

Gender has become a strident issue in academics as well as in politics and religion.⁶ Feminist writing has justifiably sensitized us to the social creation of gender and to the way power and inequality mobilize themselves around it. Within anthro-

pology, feminist scholarship reacted against the “androcentric” bias of traditional work. It assumed that the male perspective simply was the society’s point of view.⁷ Unfortunately, too often we hold that this “male-centered” body of research adequately describes the masculinity and therefore little more research need be done.

I disagree. We should reconsider masculinity using the textured advances of feminist theory to explore the nuances of gender within society, asking: What does it mean to be a biological male who is socialized in varying ways into roles of maleness? How do people learn to function in gender-specific ways and learn to interrelate with other people in terms of their gender? How are multiple understandings of gender created within our society, and how do they interrelate with powerful social institutions like religious and political blocs? How are we as individuals invoked by our society? How is our personality sedimented as we interact with our parents, siblings, friends, social organizations—like schools, businesses, and churches—and our culture? Finally, we should explore the relationship between the world’s assortment of masculinities and femininities and our own society’s dominant representations of gender.⁸

We should never assume there is only one discourse about maleness in a society, nor that manhood is a simple biological fact; being a male and being a man are not the same thing.⁹ Granted, we all have either X or Y chromosomes, but their presence does not guarantee that we will be socialized or act in ways our society considers appropriate for the social roles of men or women. In fact, not all societies understand gender as a binary set. Some cultures mobilize their biological resources so differently as to create gendered beings who are neither men nor women. A classic example is the Native American Berdache, who, although biologically either male or female, dress and live as members of the other category. They are the womanly man or the manly woman. Because of their middle position, because they do not stand wholly at either of the poles, they often have a spiritual power greatly valued in their societies.¹⁰ As individuals who stand betwixt and between, they can be shamans able to mediate between spiritual and earthly domains.¹¹

While the technical structural analysis of these median genders can quickly become rather dense, it is important to note the common relationship between them and religion, spirituality, and healing. Notions of gender frequently are anchored in a people’s cosmology where their permanence is a guarantee for the stability of the universe and society. Hence, any challenge to gender roles will provoke a strong and often preemptive counterattack to prevent the apparent slippage from the base on which the heavens and the earth seem to rest.

Mary Douglas indicates that societies frequently attempt to remove their basic organizing categories from argument or consideration.¹² By a cultural sleight of hand, they hide from themselves the contingency, arbitrariness, and social creation of social order. They do this by locating their core categories in a divine or natural ordering of the universe. Thus the categories become untouchable first principles. For example, with

our Victorian understanding of the scriptures, we often absolutistly argue that “Male and Female created He them,” placing the creation of Gender by God beyond human questioning (Genesis 1:27). Anthropologist Clifford Geertz further argues that even our notion of “common sense” is a culturally created category that similarly attempts to disguise itself as universal and thus unarguable.¹³ If different societies did not hide different things from themselves by this means, thus affording cross-cultural comparisons, we would be locked within the categories of our own society and could never raise them for disquisition.

THE FRAGILE CODE OF MANHOOD

I N his recent book, *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity*, anthropologist David Gilmore considers the various ways by which masculinity is constructed in cultures around the world. Though he relates masculinity to the material conditions of life, he asks further if there is anything universal in its construction. With a few exceptions, Gilmore contends that most societies create masculinity as an “elaborated code.”¹⁴ Manhood rarely develops unproblematically from biology; rather, it is a creation formed in opposition to a male-based discourse about womanness. Men, Gilmore argues, see femininity as a more basic and natural human code from which manliness must be built.

This argument is rather fun, since, ironically, feminists formed their thought in opposition to androcentrism; yet here men seem to react against a womanness that they see as the basic human condition. In English, we traditionally use the term “men” as the modal form of humanity; “man” is synonymous with human being. Yet according to Gilmore, at a deep level around the world, men understand “woman” as a synonym for human being and “man” must be developed from this in an active process. Feminists would probably argue that “womanhood” is also an elaborated code that is developed in opposition to other discursive positions (such as manhood), but that argument does not contest Gilmore’s point. He does not claim that woman is somehow inherently basic, but that men invoke her, naturalize her, and sacralize her in their creation of themselves.

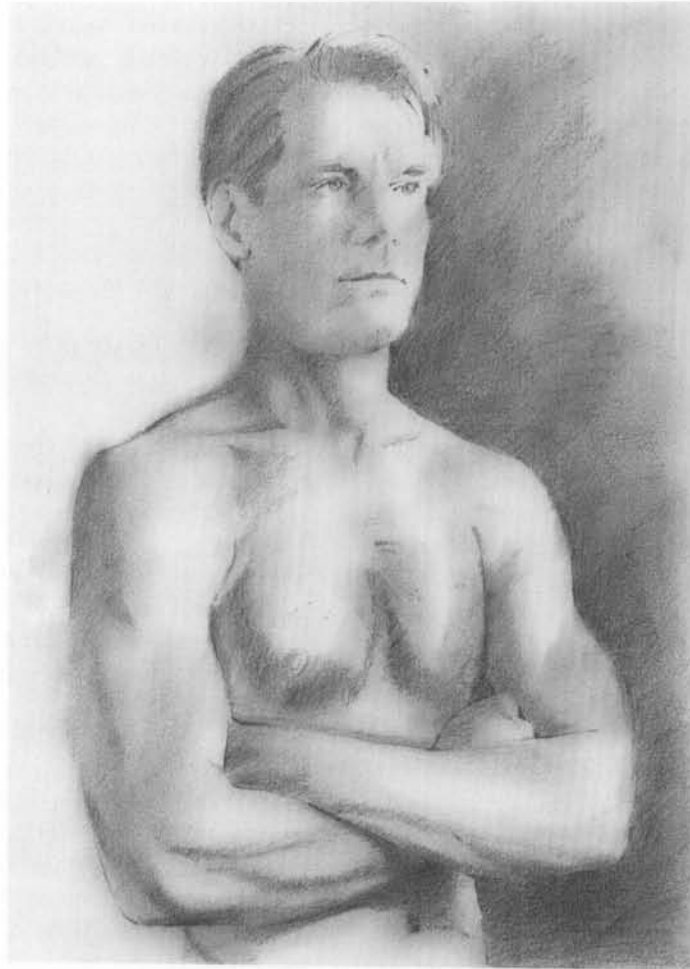
For example, while in Chile one Saturday last August, I was flying from Santiago to Arica. During the flight most of the people wandered around chatting with friends and strangers in constantly reforming groups. They would talk, play cards, talk some more, drink, and continue to talk. Suddenly a child of about two-and-a-half started crying. His father, who was watching him, tried to calm his son by holding him, rocking him, and gently cooing to him. Finally the father became frustrated and held the child out and said, “¡No seas mujer!” He ordered him to not be a woman, which meant not to cry. In this interaction, the father was teaching the boy that to be a man, he had to not be a woman. Womanness was the more basic level in reference from which he should build a positive masculinity.

Few who have grown up in Western American culture

would find this idea strange. American men learn quickly the correct way they should hold themselves, cross their legs, walk, and even talk. We become paranoid that our wrists might drop, that we might slink or even lisp. We worry about these things, lest we be accused of being effeminate. This is not womanness in any empirical sense, but is instead a male discourse, a masculine invocation of things that men define as womanly in order to react against them.

Gilmore further notes that masculinity requires constant public display, performance, and acceptance. Men in cultures around the world try to demonstrate to others how much they exemplify the norm of masculinity; they show how manly they are. The proof of their masculinity, however, does not depend on an internal sense of self, but rather on a public validation of their manliness. Hence, the status of being a man is never guaranteed; it requires constant external affirmation. One is only as much a man as one's last male act.

Manhood therefore contains an inherent insecurity. At any time, no matter how manly you think yourself, you could fail in a public performance. You would lose your manliness with its implied public respect and return to the more basic yet stigmatized position of an effeminate male. Maleness, therefore, includes a deeply rooted fear of regression back to what men have defined as a womanly state. To avoid this, societies establish rituals and practices of public display to ensure their men ample opportunity to prove over and over again that they are men. Should a male deviate from the optimum, the normative, or fail in a public display, then he stands accused of regression. Like the Chilean boy, other men warn and counsel him by saying, "don't be a woman!" Male discourse contains many insults and epithets to describe such pariahs who have not succeeded in their maleness. Importantly, every man has internalized the manly voice that stands in continual judgment of his performance.



STEVE MOORE

Being a male and being a man are not the same thing. Manhood rarely develops unproblematically from biology; rather, it is a creation formed in opposition to a male-based discourse about womanness.

However, a more important regression develops in the early stages of children's psychic development when they develop a sense of themselves and others as persons and erotic objects. Robert Stoller writes:

The boy . . . must first separate his identity from hers [his mother's]. Thus the whole process of becoming masculine is at risk in the little boy from the day of his birth on; his still-to-be-created masculinity is endangered by the primary, profound, primeval oneness with mother, a blissful experience that serves, buried but active in the core of one's identity, as a focus which, throughout life, can attract one to regress back to that primitive oneness. That is the threat latent to masculinity.¹⁶

In New Guinea, and elsewhere, society does not leave this problem of separation and individuation entirely to the mother/son pair.¹⁷ Rather, the society intervenes to socially exorcise fears that boys or men might return to their primeval bliss of oneness with their mothers. At a certain age, boys are actively moved from the

women's social domain to a men's house where they ritually and socially absorb maleness. Among the Sambia of New Guinea, this takes the form of temporary, ritual homosexuality, where boys fellate older adolescents in order to drink "men's milk." Once they marry, they return to women's houses, but are now appropriately socialized men and fathers. (Very few of them are reported to continue practicing homosexuality.)¹⁸ Thus, on top of the various aspects of the oedipal conflict, with its castration anxieties, to ensure their son's appropriate individuation and socialization as men, the Sambia developed rituals to further stress and inculcate manhood.

When men fail to obtain public acceptance in their displays of manhood, the threat of the first regression—sissiness—probably makes them fear the second regression—the loss of self in the return to that primitive oneness with mother. We

speak glibly that “sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.” But when someone affronts a boy by accusing him of effeminacy, the psychic pain is often greater than that inflicted by sticks and stones. It wounds his sense of self as an individual human being and even threatens him with dissolution of self. This connection between the cultural complex of “regression” to a less prestigious status and the psychological fears of regression to a state of nonseparation from the mother, with implied loss of self, anchors the socio-cultural dynamics of masculinity deeply within the powerful psychic processes of individuation. It gives the culture an energy and intensity it otherwise would lack.

Thus the status of man exists in two junctures: (1) between public affirmation or disgrace and internal approval or shame and (2) between cultural complexes and intense psychodynamic fears. This status requires that other people watch its performance and applaud its skill, yet its potentially harshest critic lives inside any man where his culture interacts with his sense of self, his soul.

THE PLIGHT OF MODERN MAN

THIS precarious status of man is only a minor problem in the stable societies inhabited by Bateson’s potters where there is little ambiguity in the proscribed gender roles. In our complex societies where we improvise our self-identity amongst contradictory and conflicting definitions and rituals of manhood, the maintenance of manhood becomes a difficult problem. We do not agree on what constitutes an acceptable performance and demonstration of manliness that we can unproblematically acclaim and reward. One person’s rituals of display are another person’s provocation of disgust. Since we are socialized with so many strident voices, it is not easy to obtain equivalence and security among, or even within, ourselves. We are constantly improvising our gender roles and performances, and thus we are not able to proclaim, without dissent, our masculinity. Constantly we hear voices criticizing us. Even if they do not openly accuse us of regression, we often hear their critiques as proclamations of our sissiness to which we must respond. They resonate deeply within us, where they often trigger deeper psychological fears of loss, not only of masculinity, but of our very sense of ourselves. Thus we must respond to affirm our masculinity.

By beating drums, creating rituals of manly self-validation, and by finding the “wild man” within, these gathered men try to silence the social and private fears of regression that stem from our chaotic complexity. Their daily improvisations raise too much dissonance, and they need assurance about a fundamental aspect of themselves: their manhood. Since assurance requires ultimately some public affirmation, they find temporary solace in their collective ritual making. They further calm, for awhile, their troubled psyches. But their activities, as I understand them, do not begin to address the roots of their malaise, which lie deeply entwined in our society’s stridently conflicted discourses of gender.

There is probably a class basis to this phenomena. Different

ideas of manhood aggregate in terms of our hierarchy of social classes. Working-class men probably do not hold the same ideas of what constitutes manliness as do upper-middle class businessmen. This would mean that they experience different degrees of conflict about their manhood and different challenges to it. Since contradicting critiques of gender seem to be a peculiarly middle and upper-middle class phenomenon, it would not surprise me if the gatherings of men draw people primarily from these social strata.

MORMON AND AMERICAN CONCEPTS OF MASCULINITY

FURTHERMORE, divergent discourses of manhood are propagated in different institutions of society. The LDS church and its society emphasizes and sacralizes the creation of our lives during our mortal probation. We are supposed to be potters, using the material and forms of the gospel to throw the beautiful and delicate pots that create our salvation. The ostensible purpose of our church is to aid us in that task, provide guidance, and encourage us to give priority to its artistic forms rather than to the chaotic voices of our external world. The Church also prompts us to strengthen the artistic capabilities of our fellow potters.

Yet, Mormons do not improvise their lives solely within the Church and solely with its forms. We study in American schools, watch television, read books, work in secular offices, and interact with non-LDS colleagues. All of these voices suggest to us alternate ways of organizing our masculine forms and styles. We internalize portions of these voices as we grow up and interact with them throughout our lives, both inside ourselves and in our broader social intercourse. Since the Saints lost Deseret, we have not had the privilege of creating our society in a vacuum, where Mormonism could establish the stable environment of Bateson’s potters so we could easily mold our lives solely in Mormon ways.

But since Mormons no longer live in isolation (if we ever did), we now organize ourselves in opposition to and in acquiescence with the larger national society that hosts us. We learn to be Mormons and Americans simultaneously. Our Mormon culture establishes points of disagreement and difference that function as boundaries, means by which we distinguish and justify ourselves as a “separate” society. Nevertheless, we are not totally separate and distinct. As a result, we participate in and accept most of American culture, even when it may contradict various Mormon mores. We do this without completely realizing that fact because these areas of conflict are not boundary issues we have consciously chosen for the building of opposition, difference, and self definition.

Not surprisingly, Mormonism does focus tremendous attention on gender and sexuality. To become Gods—i.e., to attain exaltation—Mormon thought requires that man and woman be united through marriage. The roles of each seem established according to divine fiat. As a result we segregate the genders at an early age in their church activities in order to teach them things specific to their particular gender. Mormonism attempts

to inculcate both genders with roles and ideologies that oppose some problematic aspects of our modern national culture and that accept other aspects. An important part of American discourse about masculinity, one that Mormons learn from popular culture and in school, not to mention from their Church experience, requires a man to perform in ways that are the opposite of Mormon ideals.

Of course, it is difficult to say with precision that there is a single, dominant American discourse about masculinity. Too often we discuss issues like men and society by relying on an almost absurd simplification of terms. We speak as if a society were a unified, bounded entity capable of having any view at all, let alone a single consistent position. And though there are many American discourses on masculinity—including Mormonism's—yet there are a number of common themes that infuse our minds because we have all learned about and interact with the stereotype they comprise, even if it is not the only voice to which we listen.¹⁹

We find these themes in American movies, television, and literature, places where heightened, limited images and values are reflected back to the diverse models. Some psychoanalysts argue that within each of us are similar idealized images of the "man." Guy Corneau writes, "As I explored the theme of masculine identity with a

group of men, it became apparent to me that each one of us was grappling with a model of masculinity that he could not live up to. This model consisted of an ideal image that oppressed us from within—an unconscious image that we tried to respond to without being aware of doing so."²⁰ Corneau argues that there is a relationship between these internalized images and popular culture and he notes that "these images



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Masculinity requires constant public display, performance, and acceptance. Men in cultures around the world must demonstrate to others how much they exemplify the norm of masculinity. The proof of their masculinity depends on a public validation of their manliness. Hence, the status of being a man is never guaranteed; it requires constant external affirmation. One is only as much a man as one's last male act.

exert a great amount of pressure on a child's unconscious. They will take the forms of mythic characters such as Superman, Rambo, and the Incredible Hulk."²¹

These kinds of images exemplify an ideal masculine complex that to some degree both molds a male's sensibilities and serves as the measure for his self-evaluation. We might summarize this North American complex as including values of independence, strength, power, potency, aggression, competition, hard work, self-sacrifice, being in control of difficult situations, athleticism, success, and emotional solidity and control.²² This complex further involves notions of sexual performance—the fact that none of Corneau's "archetypal" superheroes are involved sexually suggests a fundamental male ambivalence about sex. Nevertheless, sexual conquest and performance are important measures of manhood, particularly American manhood.

In contrast to the American complex of masculinity, the Church attempts to create a different image of a "man" for us to internalize. Although Mormonism embraces significant aspects of the national complex, it is also different in critical ways. Mormons value a man who is spiritual. In fact, Church position, a measure of spirituality, also becomes a gauge of manhood. Mormonism praises the man who is able to shed tears as a manifestation

of spirituality. Instead of independence and aggression, it values the collegial man who operates within the domain of the Church in a non-contentious, cooperative fashion. It focuses on manhood as self-sacrificing service to family, church, and others. The man is expected to be deeply involved in the family, perhaps even in a nurturing role. Official Mormonism does not allow for a sexual double standard; men are expected

to be chaste until marriage, and then only to be sexual with their spouses. It stresses restrained and controlled sexuality. Additionally, it values, at least officially, a limited kind of male bonding between companions, and within quorums and presidencies. Here, such male bonding is positively sanctioned to build, and express with emotion, love for one another at appropriate times.

Since these themes only partially express national culture, Mormonism seeks to create a strong positive discourse of maleness linked with religion. It attempts to give these attributes such positive strength that they will have priority in our lives over the contrasting American values to which we are also socialized. Therefore within priesthood meetings, Scouting, etc., we find tremendous attention given to exhorting men to dedicate themselves to the Church as a true show of manliness. We cultivate admiration for the prophets and other cultural heroes as true men. Male rites of passage become heavily ritualized. Furthermore, the male who does not follow these norms becomes the subject of criticism and negative sanction, as we can see in the recent scathing talks about single men and about priesthood holders who violate their covenants by abusing their wives and children.²³ In some central ways, Mormonism is a religion obsessed with masculinity, as shown in its attempts to socialize its youth into the yoke of priesthood obligations and responsibilities and to keep its men on the straight and narrow path as they push and pull the handcart of the Church.

This model and program of manhood reveals the structural tension that forms the Church and that lies in the heart of every Mormon man. Traditionally, religion is more the domain of women than of men. If we look, for example, at Latin American Catholicism, men commonly expect to attend church four times in their life: christening, first communion, marriage, and death. Yet women are expected to attend more consistently and to be more involved. The men emphasize their Catholicism in very different ways than do the women, and attending church is not part of their definition of self. We Latter-day Saints recognize this male tendency in our over emphasis on men. We speak as if women were somehow more naturally spiritual than men, thereby acknowledging our structural problem of masculinizing what both we and national society see as a feminine domain par excellence. Not only does this tension exist in the relationship between the Church and the external world, but it also lives within our individual psyches. If we did not simultaneously belong to American and Mormon culture, this duality would not be a significant difficulty. If we could simply mold our lives in terms of Mormon traditions, our culture would connect less problematically with our psyches. Yet this dual existence significantly explains much of modern Mormon practice and belief.

As boys grow up, they sing songs over and over again like "I Hope They Call Me on a Mission," as if there were any serious doubt about any "worthy," willing male being called. Although the song stresses that God must make the determination about whether to call a young man to serve a mission, the greater difficulty is whether the youth will even want to

serve or will be that closely socialized into the Church, given the alternative non-Mormon directions encoded in the discourses of masculinity he hears.

To guarantee male commitment to the Church, we develop a strong series of rites of passage to move them from one age-group to another without occasion to contemplate alternate discourses. We do not, even now, focus quite as much effort into socializing our young women, since we traditionally do not see their relations to the Church as so problematic (although that is slightly changing with the drop in young women's activity). The boys move, en masse, into Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, priesthood (deacons, teachers, priests), and then many actually go on missions. Preparing for and serving a mission brings the youth great prestige within the Mormon community. They are told over and over that these will be the best two years of their lives, that they will spend the rest of their lives reflecting on their experiences, and will have a store of narratives to share on appropriate occasions. In many ways, the mission, with its separation, institutionalized hazing (the Missionary Training Center), change of status, and ultimately reincorporation, is the price of admission to the Mormon "Good Old Boys" club.

Finally, the Mormon youth is pressured to get married shortly after his mission. He thereby plays the role of "patriarch" in his own small family and begins a lifetime of Church service. All this happens so quickly that it almost leaves the young man's head spinning. It occurs before he has time to seriously consider the different options of life and before he can easily make too many alternative choices. The Church and its members heap plenty of negative sanctions on any young man who fails, at any step, to follow the established pattern. I would expect that many of them are socialized out of the Church, in part through active ostracization.

SEX AND THE MORMON MAN

AT the heart of both American and Mormon notions of masculinity reside somewhat opposing notions of sexuality. They share the idea that "sexual performance is closely associated with the state of being manly."²⁴ They further relate male sexuality and gender with power, although they differ significantly in the particulars. Arthur Brittan writes:

Male sexuality is construed as autonomous, adventurous, and exploratory. Of course the real is far different from the image. Very few men are sexual athletes who can meet the Hollywood performance requirements popularized by Clint Eastwood and Burt Lancaster. . . . But . . . this view of uncontrollable sexuality . . . is part and parcel of the mythology of everyday life. One can hear its main assumptions repeated in countless sites of male aggregation, such as pubs, rugby and football changing rooms, factory canteens, senior common rooms, working men's clubs, the House of Commons, board rooms, in fact everywhere men congregate away from women. Both experts and laymen participate in the elaboration and refinement

of this myth, by the never ceasing narratives about male sexual prowess and adventure. In early adolescence boys learn the language of sexual objectification in the context of a climate of dirty jokes, and through stories of their peers' sexual exploits. Everywhere men are surrounded by images of male virility, everywhere sexual representations are suffused with the power of the phallus. . . .²⁵

It should not surprise us, therefore, that we unconsciously symbolize this in the Church office building. It rises, like a powerful, towering phallus, from a nest of two smaller, rounder buildings. Although this association suggests an unreflected and unproblematic relationship among masculinity, Church authority, and sexuality, in reality we find crucial structural tensions right in the middle of this powerful biological drive connected with our sense of ourselves as men and our relationship with Church authority.

Despite the American focus on aggressive sexuality as an index of manhood, the Church stresses over and over, from the time we are boys and through our adult life, that we must repress our libido. In adolescence we learn of the dangers of "the little factory" within our bodies. We are interviewed by our authorities and often questioned directly about whether we masturbate, a practice indulged in by almost all American males and about which many adolescents brag as a sign of their movement from childhood to adulthood. We learn to feel guilty and troubled about our sexual drives. We hear stories about people, particularly missionaries, who have been excommunicated because they had sex. Over and over our leaders preach about the dangers of kissing and petting, all the



STEVE MOORE

In contrast to the American complex of masculinity, the Church attempts to create a different image of a "man" for us to internalize. Instead of independence and aggression, it values the collegial man who operates within the domain of the Church in a non-contentious, cooperative fashion. If we did not simultaneously belong to American and Mormon culture, this duality would not be a significant difficulty.

and raising a family we fulfill an important criterion for admission into the celestial kingdom. Sexuality is powerful; it mobilizes our internal psychology. It can define us further as good Mormon men or cause us to lose our salvation. It thereby is a symbol of belonging or excision as motivated by Church authority.²⁷ It represents the degree to which we hold to Church teachings and to which we accept the power of our

while these activities have a tremendous allure in national culture. As adults we learn and fear the sudden death aspect of "improper" sex since it will trigger Church authorities to punish us, possibly cutting us off from the body of the Church and from our families and friends. We learn to feel ambivalent about our penises. The penis is a symbol of male power and our own masculinity, yet it can fail us in sex, and it can cause us to be ostracized from the kingdom.

When the character in Levi Peterson's *The Backslider* feels such sexual guilt and anxiety that he amputates his organ, we intuitively understand his action even though it strikes at the very root of our identity as men.²⁶ At some deep level of our consciousness the scripture—that says, "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell"—resonates (Matthew 5:30). As we seek the purity and spirituality desired by the gospel, we enter into powerful conflict with our libidos and our sense of manhood, given the way national discourse formulates it. Mormonism exacerbates this conflict with its focus on sexuality as the major defining criterion of purity. But our penises and sexuality also become means by which we obtain salvation, in the sense that by marrying

leaders. As a result, we organize anxiety, fear, faith, and hope around our penises, our libidos, and our sense of ourselves as gendered and religious beings.²⁸

Our relationship with American society worsens this tension by adding another conflict to it. Gilmore writes:

“We will recall how early in a boy’s development performance is sexually identified as masculine. His penis is a performing organ. It marks a boy for masculinity and associates him with performance.” American boys are also tested in this respect, but differently [from New Guinea boys]—by gossip and innuendo on the playingfield or locker room rather than by public village mockery. Performance anxiety about sex is as great among the Mehinaku or Andalusians, for much the same reasons of social status; and both impotence and incompetence are widely feared as negations of manhood and a simultaneous loss of social esteem.²⁹

Sexual performance becomes one of the central competitive tests by which American men learn and prove their masculinity. Mormon boys, given the Church’s insistence, learn to either meet the demands of their peers and suffer potential shame within the Church, or to comply with the Church and risk intense shaming and severe accusations of sissiness or worse from their peers. They internalize this tension in ways that make it an important part, not only of the structural relationship between the Church and national society, but also of the psychodynamics of Mormon men in general.

Here is a summary of my arguments:

1. In early childhood, boys separate themselves from their primary identification with their mothers. They develop thereby their sense of selves as individuals different from their mothers, i.e., as individuals and gendered beings. The regression to that primal state strongly threatens men with a dissolution of self.
2. Society and culture create practices and discourses that form “men” against an image of the effeminate male, i.e., one who has regressed.
3. Part of the social formation of manhood involves the channeling of the libido in public ways that demonstrates one’s manliness. Thus culture once again anchors itself in powerful psychodynamics.
4. This requirement to demonstrate one’s manliness is problematic only to the degree that there are individual miscues in socialization or in the psychological formation of individuals. But when there are multiple and contradictory or changing complexes of masculinity, serious difficulties arise because of its connection with deep processes of the self. When people are torn between multiple ways of validating their manliness, they also feel strongly threatened with the dissolution of self. This provokes considerable fright and anguish and requires some sort of response.
5. The Mormon complex of masculinity accepts some aspects of the American national discourse about masculinity, but varies significantly in others.
6. Therefore, American Mormon men probably have within

themselves a masculine identity in conflict with itself. They internalize both the national and the Mormon norms and connect them with their libido and their early individuation. At times, either the Mormon or the American forms can threaten them with both social as well as psychic regression, i.e., effeminacy and loss of self.

7. So the Mormon culture attempts to shore up its men’s conflicted identities, to guarantee them priority against that of the “world,” and to minimize conflict, both within the Church and in the hearts and souls of its men. Nevertheless, this shoring up is doomed to partial failure as long as the barriers between it and the national society are not absolutely closed.

From this summary we can envision a number of consequences. First, we expect that men will attempt to masculinize the religious domain so that it will reflect back to them supports and props for the performance of their masculinity. Thus the Church’s beliefs and practices will emphasize male experience, rites of passage from childhood to manhood, and will celebrate its version of masculinity in order to grant it the strength and priority that come from association with the divine. Like the Sambia of New Guinea, the Church will provide ample ways for their boys to metaphorically ingest male milk in order that they become thoroughly and appropriately masculinized within the religious domain.

MORMON MEN AND MORMON WOMEN

THE Church does indeed emphasize male experience and, in the last century or so, has further limited women’s position within the Church to more completely present a panorama of exalted masculinity in its leadership and worship. As we have seen, the rites of passage for men are more thoroughly and completely ritualized than those for women. Further, men have a ranked hierarchy in the priesthood and in the range of callings available to them that allow for ample testing and display of their Mormon manhood. Our church affords women few of these possibilities.

Christianity contains two possibilities for understanding priesthood and leadership, which can either be seen as connected or opposed. First, we could emphasize the Good Shepherd, who nurtures and cares for his flock, in somewhat androgenous ways. Second, we could see our leaders as authority figures who in their emotional distance must be obeyed at all costs. We choose to focus on the latter, in part, as a means of reinforcing the masculinity of our religious leaders and ourselves.³⁰

Similarly, we can expect this situation to be reflected in the heavens. Mormons avoid the androgenous imagery of Christ as a somewhat effeminate nurturer and mediator between us and the heavens. Rather, we focus on the Christ ascendant, as “man” the conqueror. The classical sociologist Emile Durkheim argued that a society’s notion of God is a projection of itself onto the heavens.³¹ Since we emphasize the development and maintenance of manhood in our earthly practice, it

follows that we would also emphasize the masculine in the heavens.

Interestingly, Mormonism has an insurgent doctrine of a Mother in Heaven, a female deity. However she is relatively underdeveloped and dismissed in formal Mormon theology, as we would expect given this argument. Furthermore, it will be very difficult for her to be further accepted by the official Church because she implies a threat, not so much to the Father in Heaven but to the individual Mormon male's sense of self as man. She challenges implicitly the means of resolving the structural tension inherent between Mormon and North American masculinity.³²

Additionally, we can expect significant tensions to appear between men and women within Mormon society. According to Gilmore and other analysts, the way cultures and societies around the globe construct masculinity leads inherently to anxiety. Masculinity is a somewhat fragile discourse that requires constant performance and validation and is linked with deep psychic fears of regression and feelings of loss. Women are not only appropriated by masculine ideology as a base from which to construct manhood, they also form a proving ground on which manhood can be demonstrated, but which also can thereby challenge or threaten it. The structural conflict between Mormon and national society ensures that the early anxieties of regression become connected with the structural insecurities of Mormon manhood. Women not only represent the early male fears of regression and loss of self, but they further suggest to Mormon men, who are following the national norms internalized within them, the possibility that they are not as solidly "men" as the national image requires. Women also represent to men their own potential impotency, both spiritual and physical, as exacerbated by their attempts to



STEVE MOORE

As Mormon men seek the purity and spirituality desired by the gospel, they enter into powerful conflict with their libidos and their sense of manhood, given the way national discourse formulates it. Mormonism exacerbates this conflict with its focus on sexuality as the major defining criterion.

already exist.

I would expect this fear of women to manifest itself in a relatively high level of tension and distance between Mormon men and women, compared with other, less deviant, national cultures. I would also anticipate that variants of the "vagina dentata" theme—the devouring woman—would occur in the stories men tell each other. For example, as a young man I heard a story about a young missionary in Australia who had to get up in the middle of the night to use the bathroom. He left his companion sleeping to go to the outhouse. On his return he met his landlady, clad in a robe, also on her way to the outhouse. They stopped to converse. Soon her robe fell open, and they ended up in bed together. The next day, the poor fellow was excommunicated and sent home to Utah in absolute disgrace. He was shamed in his neighborhood and never returned to full fellowship. The woman on the outhouse path had devoured his membership in the Church and kept him from completing the rite of passage leading to full Mormon manhood. She took his manhood.³³

In a similar vein, I have been told that at BYU it is important to avoid even the appearance of evil, that it leads to the possibility of temptation. Thus, many men, when they find themselves suddenly standing in a rainstorm, feel better letting

repress and control their libidos. Simply put, Mormon women represent to Mormon men a threat of emasculation.

When this basic internal question of one's masculinity is combined with the structural tensions inherent in the location of Mormon men within American society, the relationship between Mormon men and women becomes potentially problematic. The extent of the problem depends on the degree to which personal factors, such as the nature of the family in which the boy was raised, exacerbate the tensions that

themselves get drenched than accepting a ride from a woman. The ride might be the roller coaster tossing them out of the Church and eliminating their manhood.³⁴ While these stories describe extra-familial interactions, I would not be surprised to find similar fears and anxieties, with their concomitant passive-aggressive behavior patterns, within Mormon households between husbands and wives.

D. H. Lawrence describes similar male fears of women in his fiction. His Victorian England is uncannily similar to Mormon Utah in many ways. For example, *Women in Love* is suffused with the concern of masculine loss of self and disintegration as expressed in the theme of dominance and submission and the relationship of women with death. Psychoanalyst Nadia Ramzy argues that the root of the book is Lawrence's profound feminine identification (ultimately Lawrence's relation with his strong-willed mother) that lead to his "intense wish for and fear of true intimacy with a woman and his need to maintain a homosexual bond to balance his fear of the wish for and the dread of merger or death in the intimacy with a woman."³⁵ Furthermore, Lawrence's women seem to kill men, as we see in his perception of the similarity between his parents' relationship and Berkin's parents in *Women in Love*.³⁶ "Involvement with a woman," Lawrence seems to argue, "involves the risk of death, the loss of self, the soul."³⁷

Ramzy further writes:

Modern day psychoanalysts know . . . that each man at core then is a woman. It is a lifelong task of every man to come to terms with his feminine identification, to come to terms, for example, with his capacity for tenderness, for nurturance, and with other kinds of identifications associated with mother-woman. . . . The boy's capacity to (do this) depends on a number of factors, not least of which is the quality of the parental marriage. Mutually respecting and loving marriages generally enhance the internal development in the boy of mutually complementary female and male identifications. Whereas marriages riddled with conflict and hostility pose problems for this process. Boys who later become men and fall in love with women, right along with the loved woman, regress in intimate one-to-one relationships. That is, all of us in intimate relationships regress, especially in passionately sexual ones. We regress internally by returning to our earliest internal experiences and memories. We once again experience the helplessness and vulnerability of our earliest memories. For women, however, it is generally not quite so dangerous as for the man. . . . For the man, to passionately love a woman is to return internally to feelings of utter dependency, vulnerability, and helplessness in relation to the all powerful mother, who is after all, very threatening to the boy in the man. Not only does he feel these older regressive feelings, but he is also threatened by a sense of the loss of his masculine self in the closeness.³⁸

Therefore our third expected consequence of the dynamics

of Mormon masculinity and women suggests the probability that Mormons experience unusual difficulty in establishing complete, intimate, sexual relationships. This difficulty depends, in part, on the nature of the relationship between the man's parents and the degree to which he is socialized to Mormon and American norms—i.e., the degree to which they conflict within him and raise severe fears of regression and annihilation.

I have been surprised at the number of married Mormon men who have confided to me intimate details of their marital life. Sometimes my office seems like a confessional.³⁹ They often tell me of sexual dysfunctions between them and their wives. Typically, before marriage they thought and fantasized extensively about sex, although they generally had virtually no experience. After marriage the frequency of sex diminishes quickly. They tell of seeking to initiate relations, only to be refused. Soon they stop initiating and wait for their wife to show an interest. They say that she chastises them for their lack of sexual ambition, and that they try to function on demand. But frequently they experience difficulties maintaining an erection or experiencing orgasm.

While I am surprised at the openness of these men, particularly in their confessions of impotence, I do not claim that their stories represent a valid picture of Mormon intimacy. Nevertheless their cultural logic nicely expresses my theme. Sexuality may be natural, but it is also exceedingly complex. It is difficult to move from repressing one's libido to full, functioning sexual intimacy, even under the best of circumstances. It requires the culturally appropriate triggers of desire, appropriate sequencing, and an internal psychological capacity to approach regression, without it invoking excessive, incapacitating anxiety. When, as in Mormon or Lawrencian society, the relationships between the genders invoke tension, anxiety, and a viable threat to one's masculinity, I would anticipate finding the kind of sexual dysfunction and lack of intimacy described in my office.

A number of stereotypes circulate among Mormon women concerning Mormon men, such as the image of the frigid Mormon male.⁴⁰ Women tell of dates who never touch them. They claim that this common kind of man seems distant, non-engaged, non-committal, and unwilling to hold the woman's hand, to put his arm around her shoulder, to kiss her, and perhaps go further. In American society, men are expected to aggressively push women to give more, in this ritual dating dance, than they might wish. It is a sign of their status as men to insist women go further toward sex. Yet in Mormon society, the entire process is fraught with extreme anxiety and danger, as well as potential misunderstandings and psychological risk.

In my introduction to cultural anthropology class, BYU students frequently write in their essays about the code of touching on dates. They ask what every advance in touching means in terms of intimacy and commitment. They wonder if it is okay to hold hands on the first date. In contrast, my students at Washington University were more likely to worry about having intercourse on the first date. Our Church leaders insist that we should not engage in inappropriate intimacy,

terms that they leave too vague to serve as meaningful guides, thereby enhancing fear and concern. When I returned from my mission, I remember that many people insisted it was correct to wait to share your first kiss with your spouse over the temple altar. As a result, the process of dating, of building intimacy is overburdened with tension and difficulty, making miscuing, extreme anxiety, and failure to perform likely. This does not result simply from the worry that one must find the eternal "one and only," but develops from the tensions and conflicts in men's sense of themselves vis à vis women, their families, the Church, and our national society.

This argument has many other critical implications for the changing place of women in the Church.⁴¹ As women seek to improve their position, refeminize the domain of religion, and even begin praying to Mother in Heaven, they fundamentally threaten many, particularly traditional, Mormon men. As noted earlier, any challenge to masculinity and its anchoring in the sacred will provoke a strong and often preemptive counterattack to prevent the apparent slippage from the base on which heaven, earth, and the male psyche seem to rest. Mormon feminists should consider means by which Mormon masculinity might be reconfigured in relation to American discourses and men's internal psychodynamics.

CONCLUSION

WHAT then is a man? Many things. In part, he is a creature of nature—a male. However, that biological being is shaped into a socialized, gendered being—a "man"—through interaction with the particular social and cultural system that he internalizes as he grows. His first notions of gender develop



STEVE MOORE

It will be very difficult for Mother in Heaven to be further accepted by the official Church because she implies a threat, not so much to the Father in Heaven, but to the individual Mormon male's sense of self as man. She challenges implicitly the means of resolving the structural tension inherent between Mormon and North American masculinity.

in his relations with his parents, and later with his siblings and friends. As his social circle widens, he develops a sedimented notion of self that to a degree reproduces within himself the tensions of his social milieu as constitutive elements of his soul.

"Man" is also a cultural complex of discourses and customs. Because of the way this complex organizes itself, manhood involves a reactionary fear of regression, of failing to maintain manhood. These cultural discourses connect themselves with the psychodynamics of each individual in connection with the individual's deepest feelings of self, particularly with their psychological fear of regression. In traditional societies, where there is often a single vision of masculinity, these conditions together form a solid concept of manhood. However, in modern societies, where inconsistent and contradictory complexes exist, these conditions create structural difficulties for individuals and cultures. Mormon masculinity is a manhood in conflict. The stresses and strains from this tension form the background for our everyday lives as members of the Church.

In conclusion, to quote Bateson once again on the creation of a life:

[People] today, trying to compose lives that will honor all their commit-

ments and still express all their potentials with a certain unitary grace, do not have an easy task. It is important, however to see that in finding a personal path among the discontinuities and moral ambiguities they face they are performing a creative synthesis with a value that goes beyond the merely personal. We feel lonely, sometimes, because each composition is unique, but gradually we are becoming aware of the balances and harmonies that must inform all such compositions. Individual improvisations can some-

times be shared as models of possibility for men and women in the future.⁴²

As both our Mormon and national societies change, we face the challenge of artistically improvising an intertwining melody for our lives in ways that please our sense of beauty and fill our souls. For that task, we need to comprehend the dissonances and potential assonances that lie in the complex structure of the societies in which we live. Together, by careful study, preparation, thought, and caring we can face the fears of cacophony to raise marvelous songs to God and to each other. ☞

NOTES

1. Guy Corneau, *Absent Fathers, Lost Sons: The Search for Masculine Identity* (Boston: Shambala Publications Inc., 1991). See also Arthur Brittan, *Masculinity and Power* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1989). This sense of crisis has created a growth industry in seminars and publications about American manhood and psychological self-healing, not to mention magazines such as *Man! Men's Issues, Relationships and Recovery*, published by the Austin Men's Center in Austin, Texas.

2. Bill Moyers's Public Broadcasting Service program entitled "A Gathering of Men" as well as reports in popular magazines, such as *Newsweek* (24 June 1991), are the sources for my observations on these rituals; I have not participated in them personally. Further, I am skeptical; these rituals remind me of the ridiculously created ritual of Scouting's Order of the Arrow or, from what I hear, many fraternal organizations.

3. Robert Bly, *Iron John: A Book about Men* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1990).

4. Mary Catherine Bateson, *Composing a Life* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1984), 1-2.

5. Bateson, 3.

6. Appropriate ideologies of gender and the family have become part of the terrain of battle between the Right and Left in the United States and Western Europe, as can be witnessed in current struggles over abortion and the U.S. Senate confirmation hearings of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. See also the analysis in Brittan, in Rowena Champion and Jonathan Rutherford, eds. *Male Order: Unwrapping Masculinity* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988) and in Steven Seidman, *Embattled Eros: Sexual Politics and Ethics in Contemporary America* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

7. See, for example, Rayna R. Reiter, *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975).

8. My theoretical position requires that individual subjectivity and action be dynamically related to social process, not in a reductionist fashion, but by carefully taking account of the different phenomenal levels of individual and social cultural reality and their interaction, in spatial and temporal sequence. Levels of sedimentation, interaction, and reflexivity should be distinguished.

9. Cf., Jonathan Rutherford, "Who's That Man," in Chapman and Rutherford, 21-67; Brittan.

10. Walter L. Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986).

11. I wonder if this is not part of the reason why Catholic priests must remain celibate. As "sexless" males they also mediate to a degree between the category of fully sexual men and fully sexual women.

12. Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973) and *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology* (London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul, 1975).

13. Clifford Geertz, "Common Sense as a Cultural System" in *Local Knowledge* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

14. David Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). In a similar vein, Corneau writes, "As far as sexual identity goes, we might say that women 'are' while men have to be 'made'." 14.

16. Robert Stoller, "Facts and Fancies: an Examination of Freud's Concept of Bisexuality," in *Women and Analysis*, ed. Jean Strouse (New York: Dell, 1974), 343-64. Quoted in Gilmore, 27-28.

17. See, for example, Thomas Gregor, *Anxious Pleasures: The Sexual Life of an Amazonian People* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1985) and Gilmore.

18. Gilbert H. Herdy, *Guardian's of the Flutes* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981).

19. In the absence of serious, nuanced studies of different discourses and values of masculinity in America in relation to different social classes and other social groups, we must proceed at this overly general level. Nevertheless, it is common to speak as if there were only one norm of American manhood. See, for example, Barbara Ehrenreich's "Breadwinner Ethic," in *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight From Commitment* (London: Pluto Press, 1983.)

20. Corneau, 31.

21. Corneau, 32.

22. Michael Kimmel, "Introduction: Guilty Pleasures," in *Men Confront Pornography*, Michael Kimmel, ed. (New York: Crown Publishers, 1990), 8. He writes

The rules of masculinity, like sexuality, vary from culture to culture and within any culture over time. The meaning of masculinity also varies in our culture by class, race, ethnicity, and age. Though it is appropriate to speak of multiple masculinities, we can also identify some elements that, if not held by all men in our culture, at least define the dominant form of masculinity, the model to which middle-class white men aspire and against which others are measured. Social psychologists Robert Brannon and Deborah David summarized the rules of masculinity into four basic axioms:

1. "No Sissy Stuff": Masculinity can allow no behaviors or attitudes that even remotely hint of anything feminine. Masculinity is demonstrated by distance from the feminine.
2. "Be a Big Wheel": Masculinity is measured by success and status in the real world, by one's capacity as a producer. We measure masculinity by the "size of our paycheck" or the recognition from others.
3. "Be a Sturdy Oak": Men must be confident, secure, reliable, inexpressive, and utterly cool, especially during a crisis.
4. "Give 'Em Hell": Exude a manly air of violence, aggression, daring. Masculinity is demonstrated by taking risks, by "going for it."

23. I would expect that these structural tensions in relationship with individual psychology would exacerbate tendencies toward abuse.

24. Gilmore, 107.

25. Brittan, 48, 57-58.

26. Levi Peterson, *The Backslider* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1983). See also Brittan, 47, who argues that although in our Anglo-Saxon culture, "A man is a man only in so far as he is able to use his penis as an instrument of power," we still "have to account for the generalization of this belief in our culture. How is it that the penis is regarded as the symbol of male power, as some kind of 'transcendental signifier'?" He continues to note the difficulties the penis as symbol raises, since most of the time it is flabby, flaccid, and unimpressive. Furthermore erections are not always obtainable or maintainable, because of the psychological complexities of desire and arousal. Since impotence symbolizes the loss of manliness, significant anxiety is built into the penis as symbol. When we add the burden placed on Mormon men, a deep-seated fear provoking tension and ambivalence is created within them.

27. Interestingly, Jessica Benjamin ("The Oedipal Riddle," in *The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and the Problem of Domination* [New York: Pantheon Books, 1988], 163) has written about male castration-anxiety in a somewhat different sense. She holds that "most psychoanalytic writers have denied the extent to which envy and feelings of loss underlie the denigration or idealization of women. . . . Similarly, the anxiety about the penis being cut off is rarely recognized as a metaphor for the annihilation of that comes from being 'cut off' from the source of goodness . . . once the mother is no longer identified with, once she is projected outside the self, then, to a large extent, the boy loses the sense of having this vital source of goodness inside. He feels excluded from the female world of nurturance . . . [and] it engenders a fear of loss. . . . The boy who has lost access to inner space (i.e., the goodness inside), becomes enthralled with conquering outer space." Once again we see a means by which Mormonism anchors itself in critical processes of the psyche.

28. I find it ironic that Levi Peterson's character excises his penis, while the Church through Phallic authority can "cut us off" for using our penis improperly. If I were anthropologist Claude Levi Straus I would have great fun with this symbolic and psychological inversion, particularly since in the case of Church courts, the phallus excises us. Within our psyches this threatened reversal probably organizes much of our relationship with the Church and society.

29. Gilmore, 107. The embedded quote is from the psychoanalyst George

Rochlin's 1980 work, *The Masculine Dilemma: A Psychology of Masculinity* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980), 23.

30. I am indebted to Brigham Young University sociologist Jim Duke for this observation.

31. Whether or not we agree with the positivistic naturalism inherent in Durkheim's sociology of religion, this observation is powerful. It forces us to recognize that even if we grant the existence of God, he can only be understood by means of a society's own categories, which will always tend to force the divine into the procrustean bed of society's own self image.

32. I am really struck by the intensity of President Hinkley's statement that prayer to Mother in Heaven is somehow apostate. At a recent Mormon Women's Forum event in Salt Lake, this issue raised an impressive amount of anger between the audience and professor Rodney Turner, who did a rather unimpressive job of defending the Church's position. Ultimately his justification came to an angry assertion of "authority," both divine and earthly, against the fear of chaos that the arguments for worshipping Mother in Heaven provoked. We see in this example how the growing development and worship of Mother in Heaven seems to call into question the traditional Mormon male's association between power, authority, and their gender identity. It further questions their internal circumscription of their libido, from which come the fears of chaos, dissolution, and regression. Although I distrust and usually dislike explanations of social phenomena that reduce them to psychological processes, like the oedipal conflict, in this case it makes sense and is valuable, since it stresses that the social structural conflict tends to lead to a similar problem, as mediated through the social practices of socialization and in the psyche of a society's members.

33. One cannot help but note the partial similarity between this tale and that of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. It does have a few significant inversions, such as the outhouse path replacing the garden and the expulsion not leading to a greater good. Nevertheless the double bind that the Lord gave Adam in the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth while not eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil suggest the "Catch-22" faced by modern Mormon men in terms of their sexuality, gender identity, and the Church. Furthermore this image is emphasized in the temple, replete with the redolent phrases of the serpent and woman tempting and "beguiling" Adam. The structural ambivalence about women could not possibly be made more evident.

34. One of my students told me that he had heard the Church is not successful in the Faroe Islands for similar reasons. The tale says that one day when the first missionaries were there, a man returned to find one of the elders in bed with his wife. As a result the Faroes will not accept the Church.

35. Nadia Ramzy, "Woman in Love," 1991, 7, copy in the possession of the author. I am indebted to Ramzy since many of the ideas in this paper developed in conversation with her. It is difficult to know anymore where my ideas end and hers begin.

36. Jeffrey Meyers, *D. H. Lawrence: A Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990).

37. Ramzy.

38. Ramzy, 8-9.

39. This was a confidential confessional, I might add. I feel that my professional ethics would never allow the divulgence of people's personal details, not even to BYU's Standard's Office, other than in the most abstract of terms.

40. To be fair, women also speak of the returned missionary octopus who can't keep his hands off them. In a sense, the paired stereotypes express a "damned if you do, damned if you don't" double bind that Mormon men face in their relationships with Mormon women and their troubled sexuality.

41. Among the other consequences, we could include a problematic emphasis on male solidarity—as a support and almost institutionalized worship of the masculine—that fractures because of the homophobia invested in the structural framing. This complex relationship with masculinity would also favor the development of homoeroticism and homosexuality in many Mormon men as a means of resolving the discursive conflicts and the various threats of internal annihilation, exacerbated by the difficult relationship between Mormon men and women. It further follows that Mormon men would probably seek compensatory activities in which they could strongly demonstrate their compliance with American discourse. People constantly comment on how ill-behaved and foul-mouthed many Mormon men are on the playing field. Church athletics have become an institutional problem as a result.

42. Bateson, 232.



LAMENT FOR LEAH

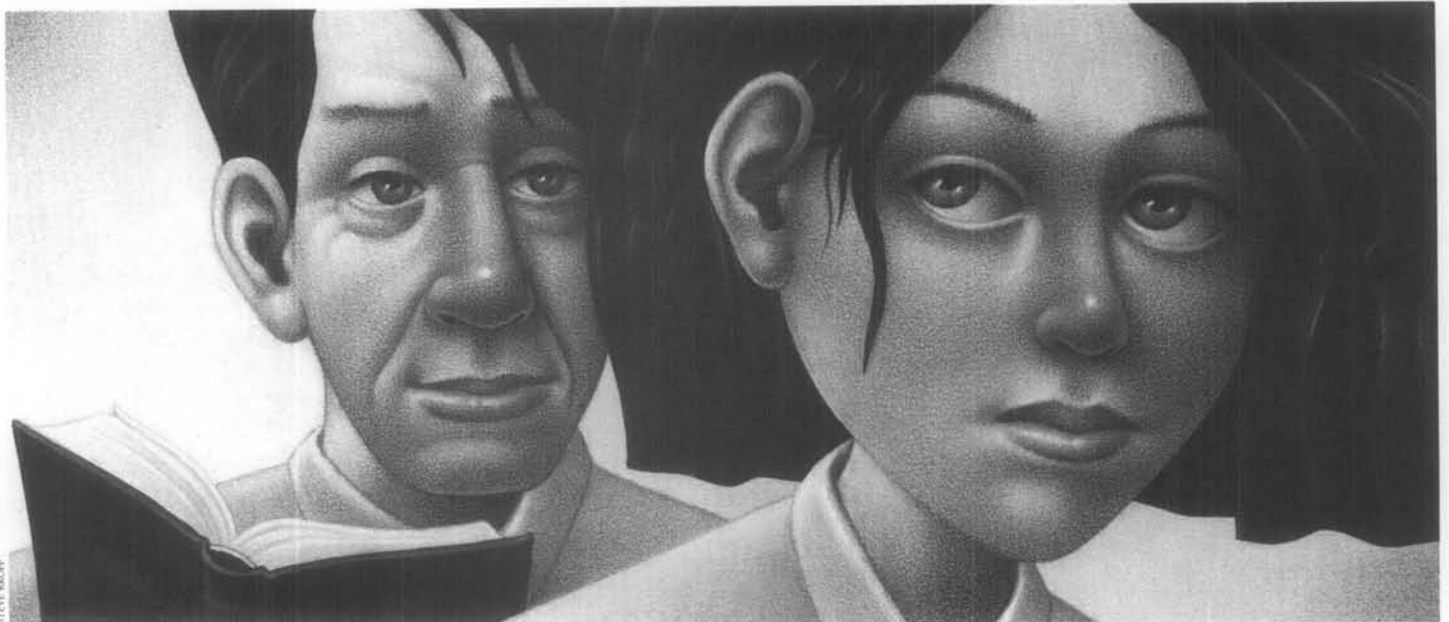
On the night when Jacob took Leah,
When he supposed he held his love
Seven years earned,
As he undid her hair
Did Leah's breath stop,
Her lips holding the secret
Waiting to be given away?
Did she whisper "my love,"
As if speaking the words
Would make him so?
And did Jacob wonder
At her ordinary thighs,
Or did he, in his drunkenness
Grant them another's beauty?
Did Leah dare to embrace her husband
In their one essential deed,
Or did she simply endure
The staining of the bed
While the soul of red opened to her?
Was the morning stone-gray and still
When the softness of sleep
Left Jacob's eyes,
And he saw with revulsion
His tender-eyed wife?
Did her pride go small
And her hopes world-narrow
As he cried out against
Their sacrilege of love?
As he cried out for Rachel,
did his wife turn to prayer
For an open womb, that heart-balm gift?
Did she have any vision
Of the women to come
Who will never sit near any well's mouth,
The elder sisters, given in haste—
Who with fair eyes or not
Will see through the prism of marriage,
Through the cut-glass prism of marriage?

—LAURA HAMBLIN

Third Place 1992 Brookie & D.K. Brown Memorial Fiction Contest

PRODIGY

By Michael Fillerup



My daughter the genius is flunking half her classes because she refuses to submit dull boring question/answer worksheets that are nothing but unmitigated mule work and an insult to my (meaning her) superior intelligence, quote-unquote. Why, for instance, won't her physics teacher simply let her design a nuclear-powered dishwasher or a frictionless V-6 engine and be done with it?

My good wife Natalie retorts: "Why can't you just for once in your stubborn little obstinate life play the stupid game? You're slitting your own throat, can't you see that?"

"You said it," she says. "Because it's stoo-pid! And a game."

My wife hollers at her through the bedroom door she refuses to unlock: "If you don't turn in all those missing assignments, if you don't . . . I'm going to . . ."

"Going to what?" Val snickers.

What, precisely? Ground her? She doesn't drive, doesn't date, doesn't dance, doesn't do much of anything except hole up in her room playing her cello and writing scripts for TV sitcoms that are doomed to someday make her rich and famous.

MICHAEL FILLERUP is the artist of *Visions and Other Stories*.

And poems—tragic sad depressing awful horrible nihilistic things, quote-unquote Natalie.

"Val, come down for dinner!" she hollers through the wood.

"Leave it outside the door!" Val hollers back.

Self-incarceration is a sign of true genius or insanity, the line between the two, she reminds us regularly, being a very fine one indeed.

She quite frankly tells us she hates church, hates Seminary, hates the Book of Mormon, hates Sister Myers her Laurel advisor. "All she ever says," Val sneers, "is get married and have babies. Make dumb babies." Val says she hates kids. Would never ever in a million years get married. "Not like that. Not like her." So why are we always compelling her to go to church? Didn't she have free agency? Wasn't compulsion Satan's plan? She can't wait until she graduates from high school and is on her own, boy oh boy. "I'll never go to church—ev-ver! Just you wait!"

"If you graduate," Natalie corrects.

Natalie can't understand her attitude. Natalie loved Seminary, loved MIA, scripture chases, youth conferences. With Val it's always pulling teeth. "What's the matter with her? Why can't we just have a normal kid? Why can't she be—"

Natalie also can't understand why no one has asked Val to

the junior prom. She's tall, blond, beautiful, long legs like a model.

"Well, would you want to go out with an ice pick?"

"A what—a *what*?"

It's a stupid, foolhardy, idiot thing for me to mumble, and I invent an instant edit: "With a nice kid?"

Sister Myers tells her Laurels, Val included, that they are special chosen spirits sent to Earth at a special chosen time for a special chosen purpose. They are the most valiant spirits, preserved to usher in the Savior's second coming.

Val rolls her eyes and groans. Her arrogance is almost as frightening as her I.Q.

"The glory of God is intelligence," she says. "Just don't ever use it."

A week ago I committed an unpardonable and sneaked into her room—just curious, prowling for nothing in particular, just clues to get inside that busy little brain of hers. I did not see the leather-bound scriptures we bought her for her twelfth birthday; no framed poster of the Young Women's Values; no *New Era* Mormonads; no certificates of Church achievement. Instead, books on astrology, handwriting analysis, palm-reading (she tells me I have a short lifeline but a creative crease), the interpretation of dreams. I see knickknacks on the walls; a poster of Magic Johnson slam-dunking a full moon below a fluorescent red caption: THE MAGIC KINGDOM (an unexpected brush with reality). Box games; a picture of a tiger stalking through the snow; the masks of comedy and tragedy, the former turned upside down, making a dour duo.

And one more: a black-light poster featuring a young woman, slender and blond, in a flowing white gown, sitting at the foot of a glittering waterfall in some unnamed fantasyland. She is gazing longingly at the far horizon where a little family of white unicorns is sipping from a bubbling stream. She holds a bouquet of pink flowers. No caption, no title.

Then I find what I suppose I have been looking for all along: her journal. I open and read: "Love is an ice pick; it is a poem which is a process which is the kid genius would-be god/prophet you must be willing to follow blindfolded through the rough and dark and slippery parts, must sometimes follow the snake into its hole. Are you with me? Are you? Or against? Then get out of your sweet skin and think for a change. Go blow your beautiful brains to kingdom come all ye weary and beknighted etceteras unto me—" I hear footsteps, shut it fast, and slip out just in time. But suspicious eyes pass me coming up the stairs.

Later that night Val asks, "Why did you quit writing?"

Natalie rushes to my defense. "He didn't quit. He never quit!"

I smile. "I'm a no-talent bum. A has-been-who-never-was."

She quietly folds up her music. It suddenly occurs to me that (a) for some peculiar reason she has deigned to practice downstairs, in the living room, among "us," and (b) she has interrupted her intense practice just to ask me, out of the blue, this question.

"I'm going to be a scriptwriter," she announces resolutely. "I'm going to write screenplays. I'm going to be famous."

I smile. Wink. Whisper, "Go for it, kid."

She almost smiles back.

Later, Natalie reminds me she's failing three classes. No hope for a college scholarship. She's burning all her bridges. Why am I encouraging her?

That night I'm up late again, in the living room, two or three A.M., fighting another bout of insomnia. Except I'm on my knees this time. I become aware of another presence in the room. I say a hasty amen and turn to find my genius daughter watching in her nightgown. She is wearing the most peculiar expression. It is identical to the look she wore ten years ago when she drifted into this same living room late one Christmas Eve and found her mother and me sneaking carefully wrapped gifts under the lighted Christmas tree. It was not a look of shock or betrayal, but a little omnipotent smirk.

"Dad?"

I smile, rise to my feet a little awkwardly, as if I am trying to stand up in a rowboat. A little self-consciously, and self-conscious of my self-consciousness.

She tilts her head at an odd angle. "Dad, I have a question."

"Shoot," I say, dusting off my knees as if I have been kneeling in the dirt rather than on shag carpeting.

She gestures toward the Book of Mormon lying open face-down on the floor, an arm's length from my feet. "Dad, can an intelligent, educated person like you really believe all that mumbo-jumbo?"

It frightens me that I have to summon up all my earthly courage to look her squarely in the eyes and say, "Yes." ☞

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*We perhaps seek spiritual experiences less often and less intensely than we might,
and our spiritual lives are impoverished as a result.*

MODES OF REVELATION: A PERSONAL APPROACH

By Lavina Fielding Anderson

AS I HAVE READ SOME OF THE HUNDREDS OF diaries and reminiscences produced by nineteenth-century Saints, I have been struck repeatedly by the nature of their spiritual experiences. Not that they had them, nor that they had so many—such things are not uncommon among us today—but rather struck by the range of types and qualities. Divine messengers appeared in night visions, people spoke in new tongues or interpreted them, broken bodies healed, departed loved ones or individuals who were far away came with messages and reassurance. In short, both the scriptures and our own history suggest that revelation can come in many ways. It is my sense, however, that modern American Mormons have a much shorter list of “respectable” or accepted ways in which revelation can come. These ways primarily seem to be answered prayers, healings, and feelings of enlightenment about the scriptures.

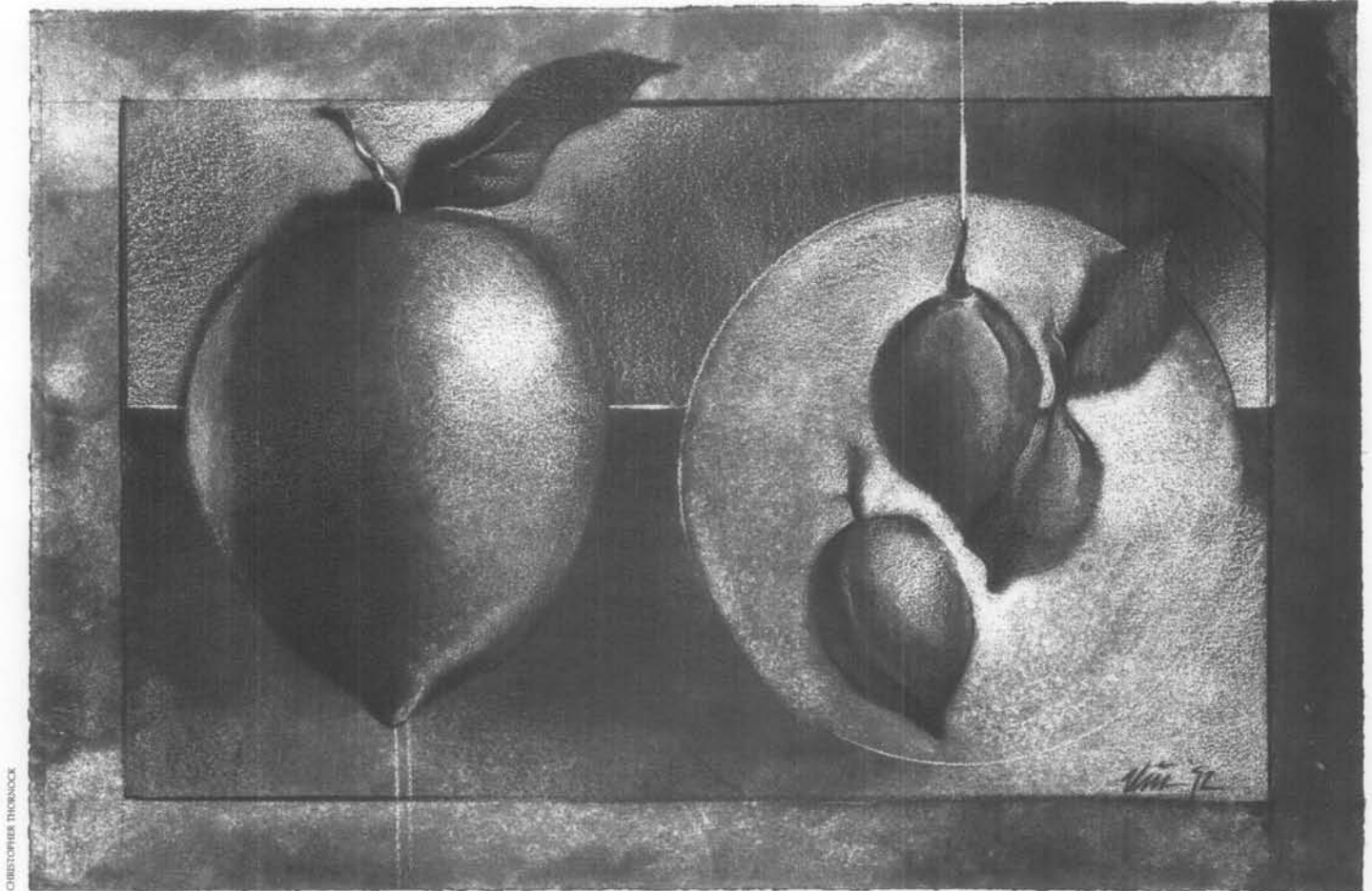
Matthew Rowan, who wrote a detailed reminiscence of joining the Church in Scotland in 1844 when he was eighteen, recounts many spiritual experiences. He was baptized on a “cold and sleety” night in February, but remembers that his “burning desire . . . kept all cold and fear from the heart.” In bed one night, he felt a hand touch his shoulder. He turned over to see a dark-visaged man whose face was full of “earnestness and authority.” The visitor assured Matthew that he could speak with the “tongues of angels.” Trying to reclaim a friend who had drifted away because of ridicule, Matthew bore testimony in tongues so powerfully that it drained all the strength from his own body and left his friend quaking. The next day, this friend told him he had knelt to pray and found himself praying in an unknown tongue. Why did Matthew have these experiences? I believe the answer may lie partly in his com-

ment, “We were taught to believe in, and contend for, the Supernatural gifts of the Spirit.”¹

It has been twelve years since I attended either Sunday School or Relief Society, thanks to the block schedule and my calling in the Primary, but I cannot recall lessons about the need to seek spiritual gifts. Nor do I recall hearing sacrament meeting talks, stake conference addresses, or general conference sermons that urge us to desire, receive, and use spiritual gifts. I understand some of the reasons. First, we have all shuddered at the Laffertys and the Lundgrens, who have heard their own grotesque and violent voices as the voice of God. We might think, “If this is what happens to someone who seeks the Spirit, then better not to seek.” Second, as the LDS church has moved during the course of the twentieth century from being a despised and bizarre sect to being a solidly respectable, impressively well-financed, middle-class church, at least in the United States, excesses of enthusiasm leave us uncomfortable, make us suspicious, and seem more likely to foment discord than to enrich the community life of the Church. Third, the twentieth century does not often impose upon us the sheer physical needs of the nineteenth century that made prayer the first, and sometimes only, resort when a Saint needed food, healing, knowledge, comfort, or protection. Fourth, the normative forces that tame and restrain charismatic manifestations may have acted differentially in the cases of men and women, making women particularly vulnerable to spoken or unspoken messages about appropriateness. To have a spiritual experience rejected as “just a hysterical woman” or even accepted but with cold politeness is chilling to further expressions.²

Of course these miracles still happen. In my own sacrament meeting within the last year one woman testified of seeing a vision of Christ on the cross and knowing he died for her. Our Primary president read from her missionary journal to the children during sharing time—a woman received a visitation in a dream from a man named Abinadi who had a message for her. When she met the missionaries and saw the Arnold Freiberg painting of Abinadi in chains before King Noah, she knew who he was. A woman in her seventies, legally blind and a survivor of triple cancer, made a commitment to contribute

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CHRISTOPHER THORBECK

I saw a two-fruited tree. One of the fruits was like oranges or peaches—tender, juicy, but delicate and perishable. The other was slow-growing and encased in a tough protective shell, like walnuts. The tender fruit fell to the ground, but was not wasted. It decayed quickly and nourished the tree. After the freezing season, the gardener searched every branch and put each piece in his bucket rejoicing. Yes, it would be hard. Yes, there would be rejection. But yes, ultimately it will be all right.

a certain sum each month to support her nephew who was on a mission. She won an amazing string of poetry contests for two years, supplying a virtually steady income in the sum she had promised. My husband, whose ancient Saab was not equal to the commute to Provo for his new job, prayed to find the kind of car he wanted at a price he could afford; two days later it was in the lot at \$3000 off the list price. My brother saw that his secretary was in such turmoil during a busy period in the office that she was incapable of dealing with the work effectively. As he talked kindly to her, a sudden, strong image came to him. "Did you almost drown as a child?" he asked her. "I see you in a whirlpool." She stared at him in amazement. She *had* almost drowned as a child when she was almost sucked into a canal culvert; but she had never told anyone and only her mother, who had rescued her, knew about it. Ever afterward, that drowning experience had come back when she was feeling overwhelmed. My brother helped her visualize herself as big

enough and powerful enough to break out of the whirlpool and pull herself out of the canal. The change in her personality and her work capacity was miraculous. At one point when C. S. Lewis's wife was dying of bone cancer, her decalcified thigh bone "began to regenerate, to rebuild itself, to find some source of available calcium and regrow into a healthy femur." At the same time, Lewis began suffering from osteoporosis. On another occasion, when Joy was in such "terrible pain . . . that she really felt that she could not stand it any longer, [Lewis] prayed that he might be permitted to . . . accept the pain. . . . At once, he began to experience indescribable agony in his legs and, for a while, [Joy] was relieved of her pain."³

So I am not suggesting that spiritual experiences do not occur or that we do not seek them. I *am* suggesting that we perhaps seek them less often and less intensely than we might and that our spiritual lives are impoverished as a result. You probably know John Bunyan as the author of that wonderful

spiritual allegory, *Pilgrim's Progress*. He also wrote a little spiritual autobiography called *Grace Abounding*, which chronicles his long and desperate search for God through a thicket of doubts and despair that seemed to grow up anew before him daily. He did not understand how the Atonement could apply to such a wretched sinner as himself. For some time, he had felt that the promises of the scriptures did not apply to him:

... but now there was no time to wait: the avenger of blood was too close upon me.

Now I caught at any word, even though I feared I had no right to it, and even leaped into the bosom of that promise that I feared shut its heart against me. . . . In my great agony, I would floun[der] toward the promise as the horses in the mire do toward sound ground. . . . I tried to take the words as God had laid them down without trying to explain away a single syllable of them. I began to realize that God had a bigger mouth to speak with than I had a heart to understand. . . . Two or three times I had such an amazing understanding of the divine grace of God that I could hardly bear up under it. It was so out of measure that if it had stayed upon me, I do think it would have made me incapable for business.⁴

It is particularly one sentence that struck me: "God had a bigger mouth to speak with than I had a heart to understand." I have the feeling that God has more to give us than we have capacity to receive. I have an image of myself in a cell, dragging a three-legged stool over to the barred window, balancing precariously on the stool and clinging to the bars with one hand while I reach out through them to a kindly benefactor who stands without, holding toward me a ripe apple, bursting with juice and bringing with it all the fresh, crisp scents of autumn. With great effort, we both stretch as far as we can. The apple exchanges hands. I sink back to the stool and gratefully eat the apple, savoring every bite. For days I recall that apple. I save the core. Even when it is brown and shriveled, the scent of harvest clings to it. Finally, reluctantly, I acknowledge that it is a memory. Painfully I drag my stool to the window again. There stands the benefactor, patiently waiting, eager to give me yet another apple. We go through the whole process again. And I do not notice that there are no walls in my cell except the wall that holds the window. I could walk to the left or to the right and find myself in an orchard of trees, each laden and glowing with apples—scarlet, gold, russet, and green—ready to fall into my palm at the slightest pressure, ready to eat by lifting it to my lips. My own experience teaches me that we have created a climate of scarcity in spiritual experience that contradicts the Savior's wish. We insist on getting our nourishment through a narrow window when he has created a world without walls.

That first generation of converts struggled to find words to express the witness of the Spirit to them, using terms like these: "The sublimity and grandeur in the contemplation of the work of God . . . would at times completely overshadow me and cast into momentary forgetfulness [my] many vain amusements"; "relief and peace and the gentle whisperings of

the spirit of God . . ."; "I gazed with wonder . . . and listened with delight"; "[my] heart was full to overflowing"; "it ran through me like lightning. It roused every feeling of my mind . . . Something seemed to bear upon my mind, like a clear calmness"; "a bright light burst on my mind. Many passages of Scripture came plain and clear to my mind"; a missionary "unfolded new principle after new principle, glory after glory, until my Soul was fed with fatness"; "I have sometimes . . . been so filled with the love of God and felt such a sense of his favour as had made me rejoice abundantly."⁵

Many remarkable spiritual experiences of early Church members spring from both their backgrounds in other religious traditions and their seriousness in asking for spiritual gifts. What if we were more open to other forms of spiritual communication besides those usually reported in testimony meetings?

I WANT to share an experience that was a revelation to me. It came under somewhat unconventional circumstances and took a perhaps unusual form; but it came with an unmistakable spiritual force and authority that I could not deny. In 1982, a group of fifty-three women from across the nation met at Nauvoo in a private celebration of sisterhood. We called ourselves a Pilgrimage. The energy generated by that gathering was so intense that we spontaneously decided to sponsor regional pilgrimages. They include the annual *Exponent* retreat in New England and its spin-off Provo Canyon retreat, a bi-annual Midwest Pilgrimage, and an annual Salt Lake City Pilgrimage. At the 1983 Salt Lake Pilgrimage, one of the small-group sessions was a guided imagery about friendship. I began the exercise with the other women in the group, but something quite extraordinary happened. I received what I have come to regard as a personal revelation of comfort and consolation to heal the pain I was feeling over what I saw as the Church's increasing rejection, in many ways and on many levels, of its women and its intellectuals. I never afterwards talked about what happened except infrequently, and never in detail, with a few of my closest friends.

In the fall of 1991, Paul and I were invited to address the Midwest Pilgrimage, an invitation we were delighted to accept. Before we left, while I was preparing my address for the Sunday morning Midwest Pilgrimage sacrament meeting, I had a strong impulse to include my 1983 Pilgrimage experience and started to look for my journal, but stopped, feeling that it might not be appropriate. During the testimony meeting on Sunday, 15 September 1991, I again had a strong prompting to share this experience. I resisted, since the focus of that sweet and spiritual meeting had not been, even indirectly, on feminist issues, and I did not want to introduce what might be a discordant note.

After the closing song and prayer, however, when half a dozen women left to meet travel schedules and home obligations, Lynn Matthews Anderson said, "I feel that somebody here still needs to talk. I remember how I felt once when the meeting closed and I hadn't said what was in my heart; and I'm still here to listen if somebody else has something to say."

Everyone else stayed. Two other women spoke, sharing personal feelings and experiences in the same trusting and supportive way that earlier women had spoken. By then the prompting was so urgent that I stood up and said, "I'm the one who has something to say, Lynn." I then related the vision.

The next day, when I was home, I went back to my journal and reread the original account for the first time in eight years. I was expecting considerable difference between the way I recorded it initially and the way I told it. It has been my experience that revelation adds layers of deeper meaning as events, understanding, and needs bring us to new stages of our spiritual journey. This revelation has been an extremely significant spiritual event to me, often present in my mind. In the eight years of my own development and changing conditions, I expected to find extensive reinterpretations and was amazed to discover only minor differences.⁶ Here is the text of that vision:

It was a profoundly moving experience, a form of revelation and a kind of prophecy. I saw a two-fruited tree. One of the fruits was like oranges or peaches—brightly colored, glowing on the branches, tender, juicy, but delicate and perishable. The other fruit was hidden under the leaves, slow-growing and encased in a tough protective shell, like walnuts. The tree needed nothing from its gardeners. The sun and the rain came dependably and predictably. The soil was rich and fertile, the season progressed normally, and the fruit came to ripeness. But the tree needed a gardener to pick the fruit. It was ripe, ripe to the point of being overready, and then overripe. The gardener responsible for that section of the garden admired the tree. He thought it was beautiful, ornamental, and decorative. But the gardener was not going to pick the fruit. He was busy and impatient with the tree. Oranges had to be wrapped in tissue and put in cold storage or else made into marmalade, and marmalade was bitter. Peaches bruised too easily and had to be preserved. It was just too much trouble to pick the fruit.

He walked away from the tree; and the fruit, unwanted, unneeded, began to fall to the ground. I felt devastated by grief at the waste and wept in sorrow. But the fruit was not wasted. It decayed quickly, sank easily into the earth, and nourished the tree. Meanwhile, high up—not easily accessible like the first fruit—the second walnut-like fruit continued to grow in their black bitter hulls. After the freezing season, when the cold made them sweet and firm, the head gardener came himself with his high ladder. He searched every branch carefully, plucked the fruit gently, and put each piece in his bucket rejoicing, because they were all precious, every one. I wept again, but this time my tears were tears of joy.

It was a prophetic experience in many ways. It applied not only to the broad work and gifts of women, but also to *Dialogue* where I was associate

editor [and, I would now say, to the broader search for truth and understanding of our history and doctrine, to the entire range of Mormon scholarship, symposia, and publications]. I could tell the rightness of the whole pattern, and I felt utterly at peace about the future. Yes, it would be hard. Yes, there would be rejection. But yes, oh yes, ultimately it will be all right.

I feel that gratitude still. Probably never a week goes by when I don't think of that vision—sometimes with irony when something else goes "plop" and squishes underfoot, sometimes with an immense feeling of being sustained by the hands of divine love. I have no question that the tree is sound and healthy. I hear the rustle of its tender leaves unfurling when seasons of sunshine come. I feel its immense patience during the iron-cold freezing seasons. A growing tree makes no sound, but its silent roots can rend the very stones, and it knows in itself how to bring its fruit to ripeness.

I have no interpretation to offer with this revelation besides what I have already said: that it spoke comfort to me on the pressure points of the Church's feminists and intellectuals. It was very personal to me, but it was not exclusively to me. I was not the tree, the fruit, or the gardener. I was an observer—a witness. I feel great peace about sharing this experience publicly, after the silence of years; but I do not have a specific interpretation to offer with it. Perhaps that is a gift reserved for someone else.

But in addition to the comfort that it may bring others, I want to make a specific point. I would not expect an exercise in guided imagery to be either the setting or the stimulus for a profoundly comforting personal revelation. But it was. I wonder what other treasures are waiting to be recognized, what other messages are coming from the mouth of God to a heart too small to hear, what other trees are bearing their harvest on the other side of a wall I could walk around at any moment.

Do we fear to ask because we think such things are inappropriate or greedy? Thanks to the handy computerized scripture program, I was able to learn in something under twenty seconds that the phrase, "Ask and ye shall receive," or a variation of it, occurs thirty-three times in the scriptures. That's a lot of encouragement. In fact, that scripture in James 1:5 that triggered Joseph Smith's first vision is to us all: "God . . . giveth to *all* men [and women] liberally, and upbraideth not" (James 1:5-7). God is pleased at our requests. Joel pronounced a prophecy that Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost: "In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Acts 2:16-17). Moses cried out in the congregation of Israel: "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!" (Numbers 11:29). God not only promises spiritual gifts but promises a great diversity of gifts and, furthermore, promises them to "every man"—and woman (Romans 12:3; see also 1 Corinthians 12, 14).

I hope that our comfort and trust can increase to the point that we can both seek and share spiritual experiences beyond the conventional and "correlated." Two paired scriptures seem

relevant to this topic. The first is from a sermon of Alma's:

It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the [human family], according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

. . . And therefore, [they] that will not harden [their] heart[s], to [them] is given . . . to know the mysteries of God until [they] know them in full.

And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell. (Alma 12:9-11.)

And the second is the voice of the Lord speaking to Joseph Smith: "If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal." (D&C 42:61) ☞

NOTES

1. In Lavina Fielding Anderson, "In the Crucible: Early British Saints," *Ensign* (December 1979): 52-53.

2. This phenomenon is, of course, part of a larger devaluing of women's experience in our culture. Elaine Showalter, a literary critic, pointed out that women "are estranged from their own experience and unable to perceive its shape and authenticity, in part because they do not see it mirrored and given resonance in literature. . . . They are expected to identify with masculine experience, which is presented as the human one, and have no faith in the validity of their own perceptions and experiences, rarely seeing them confirmed in literature, or accepted in criticism" ("Women and the Literary Curriculum," *College English* 32 (May 1971): 855-62). My thanks to Marnie Ebert Leavitt for bringing this quotation to my attention.

3. Douglas H. Gresham, *Lenten Lands: My Childhood with Joy Davidman and C. S. Lewis* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988), 80-81.

4. John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, Modern English version of Moody Bible Institute of Chicago (Chicago: Moody Press, 1959), 86-87.

5. The speakers are, in order, Gilbert Belnap, Ebenezer Robinson, Ira Carter, and Mary Fielding Smith in Lavina Fielding Anderson, "Kirtland's Resolute Saints," *Ensign* (January 1979): 51-55.

6. These differences were: (1) Due no doubt to the imagery guidance, I had visualized specific, not generic, fruits; (2) I now recall the feelings of the first gardener as including appreciation of the tree's beauty; and (3) I recorded only the tears of grief; yet the most powerful emotions I took away from that experience are gratitude that my need for reassurance was met so directly, joy at the accompanying peace of the vision, and total acceptance. I have included these three changes in this account from my 1983 journal.

 MAKING THIS NOTHING SOMETHING, 5-9

It pays, it pays, to count the days
 from decimation to liberation,
 to print graphic novels of afternoons
 like *Maus* returned from hibernation,
 clap-clap like a wind-up monkey's tune,
 harsh cymbals protesting the bar's turned-up
 Van Halen
 & AC/DC classic CDs
 while F-16s Mach into the breeze
 of big-screens carpet bombing
 Mesopotamia:
 more at eleven.
 Shall we dance? (This gallery is all a holograph
 on some corporate Gold Card anyway)
 Let's dance
 the illness the moon brings
 arms, legs, fingers, toes, tongues: frenzied.
 This hall is all illusion, a reflection of your slip
 on a Faberge egg, a bottled ship,
 you will not remember the ragged lace of morning.
 Unlike aphasia
 where grammarians scream
 and phoneticians pull their hair,
 we are sick on the conceptual world,
 the imitation Baudelaire,
 the world Freud says is unascertainable,
 the world of moral aesthetes, indiscernible:
 the fundamental delusion we call
 love of life.

—SEAN BRENDAN BROWN

Pillars of My Faith

A taste of a time when the Church was smaller and more rooted in relationships.

A GREAT SEA OF SUPPORT

By Emma Lou Thyne

ONE SUNDAY night, my three brothers, their wives, and my husband and I sat around the old black Monarch stove at our Mt. Air cabin and talked, as we have at someone's home one Sunday night a month for nearly forty years. We talked about growing up in the Church. We remembered. We listened. We laughed a lot. We knew more than we had before. But even in this group of my dears who have been in on much of my growing up in the Church, surprisingly little of what we saw as "true"

matched each others' views that Sunday night—let alone reasons for looking for that truth.

"Why have a Sunstone symposium?" one sister-in-law asked. A woman whose loving kindness and ingenuous generosity of spirit I adore. "What can it do but stir people up, make problems?"

We all had read the reports in the papers that morning of an authoritative opinion that facts do not make testimony nor



The family of Emma Louise Stayner and Stephen L. Richards.
Front row: Emma Louise, Grace (Emma Lou's mother), Stephen L., Lynn (grandson), Russel, Gill; Back row: Willard, Claude, Stayner, Irene, Steve, Alice.

I was raised lovingly. And certainly "relatively," with ease and joy, in a day when structure and stricture played a so much smaller role.

us remembered things exactly alike; more importantly, no two of us remembered anything but ease and joy in growing up Mormon in a day when structure and stricture played so-much-smaller roles in any of it.

Later, I wondered into the night about why a Sunstone symposium? Why, too, *Dialogue*, *Exponent II*, *SUNSTONE*, study groups, talk? Why not just the *Ensign* and the *General Handbook of Instructions*? Why the constant bubbling and boiling, the anti-Mormon Deckers and Tanners, the proponents and the opponents? Why the inability of those in or out of the Church to leave it alone? Why might the Iron Rodders move without questions, the Liahonas without answers?

Into my head came Eugene O'Neill's 1946 *The Iceman*

"truth" history, and that we should not indulge in criticism of authority, even if the criticism is accurate. We all had our own opinions of the opinion—and they were all different. I was fascinated. There we were, the newest in-law in the group had been there for more than thirty-seven years, four of the rest of us racing with the same genes, tuned to the same background, as close in age and mutual conviviality as the luckiest of siblings, yet with interpretations of Church orientation as various as our feelings were harmonious. No two of

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Cometh, a drama of love and hate, of human frustration and loneliness, of passion and spiritual bankruptcy—of nine drunks living every day in a bar on pipe dreams. Most of all, I thought of Larry Slade, O'Neill's world-weary cynic and commenter, age sixty—my age now exactly. I hunted up the play, a long one, four-and-a-half hours of inexorable reading. It was as bleak, as laser-beam insightful, as I remembered. Larry the philosopher saying: "Have you no respect for religion? . . . To hell with truth! As the history of the world proves, the truth has no bearing on anything."

So why a Sunstone symposium? An education week down south? Or even a general conference?

Larry goes on to say, "I was born condemned to be one of those who has to see all sides of a question. When you're damned like that, the questions multiply for you until in the end it's all question and no answer. As history proves, to be a worldly success at anything . . . you have to wear blinders like a horse and see only straight in front of you. You have to see, too, that this is all black, and that is all white."

O'Neill's play is about pipe dreams, derelicts drinking themselves into a stupor while telling themselves that tomorrow . . . tomorrow . . . they'll find "peace." He conspires to send them out into the world beyond the bar. One at a time they go. One at a time they return. When their pipe dreams are shoved into reality, they melt, they turn sour. Their lives go dead, until guileless Jimmy Tomorrow says, "What's happened? I don't feel a thing. There's not even a kick in the booze."

Larry watches "from the grandstand" of his distancing as Hicky, who has insisted on the reform of others and lost himself in the process, says on his way to jail and maybe execution for shooting his wife who forgave him once too often, "Do you suppose I give a damn about life now? Why, you bonehead, I haven't got a single damned lying hope or pipe dream left!" The Iceman cometh.

Why a Sunstone symposium? Maybe to make sure we search out not only truth, but how to hold to our pipe dreams.

How to deal with the potential coming of the Iceman. And that's why tonight I am glad my topic is "Pillars of My Faith," not "Subscribers to My Doubts."

Still, I ask myself, how did I get to be "one condemned to see all sides of a question?" To be full of pipe dreams even as I'm full of questions? One who sees a lot more grey than either white or black? One who knows why a Sunstone symposium is all right. And yet be one of the privileged partakers of the simplest of answers to growing up at all—in and out of the Church—love; I have been offered it at every turn. At home, in the ward, in the neighborhood, on committees, and in

classrooms. In anything that had to do with the most hopeful and promising of pipe dreams?

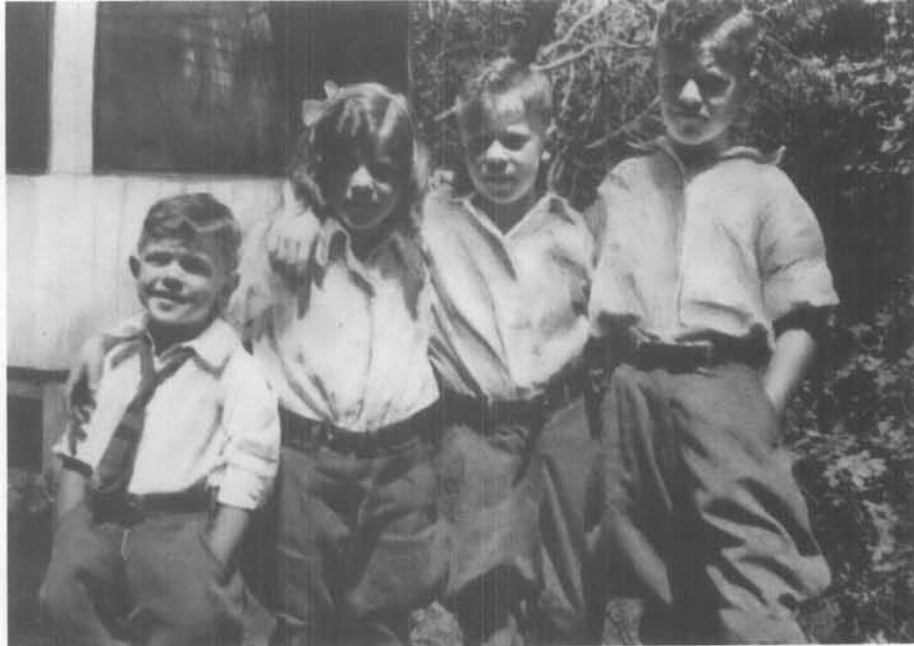
It had to be my pillars who helped put the whole non-structure together.

MAYBE I can talk about my pillars best in terms of Sunday—the Sabbath—and what that meant to my becoming.

As much as I've loved being a girl, for as long as I can remember, I've also relished being "one of the boys." As an only daughter with my three brothers, Homer and Rick, just older, Gill just younger, tossing balls and ideas

about, throwing and catching either, never doubting that I could—or should; glad too that I didn't have to get up early to go to priesthood in Highland Park Ward through the block or wear a white shirt and black bow tie that Earl Glade Jr. had the deacons wear to pass the sacrament. I liked that I had choices—to kick the football or slam the Flexible Flyer on Crystal Avenue, or to put my sixteen dolls to bed behind the couch, or make, as Father said, "the best dang Sunday night sandwich in forty-eight states" for him and the crowd in the kitchen listening to Charlie McCarthy on a Sunday night.

Sundays were simple, slow moving for us. Father, Homer "Pug" Warner, was gone every Sunday morning for nineteen years to MIA General Board meetings, where he started the M-Men basketball program whose final week we paid more attention to *by far* than to any general conference. And Mother, Grace Richards Warner, was always there as needed to kill the



The Warner children in Sunday dress at the Mt. Air cabin.
Homer, Rick, Emma Lou, and Gill.

Such was our mix of life and church.
Never static. Never separate. Never somber.
By osmosis, authentic.

rattlesnakes, in both a literal and figurative sense.

I was reared lovingly. And certainly "relatively." I was the first baby blessed in the new Highland Park Ward; my Uncle Stayner Richards was for fourteen years our bishop; my Uncle Claude helped design the chapel; my Grandma and Grandpa Warner and Aunt Edna Heiner and her family brought the best lemon pies and buttermilk biscuits to Relief Society dinners; and my Uncle Willard Richards was Sunday School superintendent. And some Sunday School it was—a thousand of us!

In the summer we lived in the canyon—never came down—and our one Sunday meeting per week was announced by us on our "bugs"—go karts—and a megaphone—from the Victrola. Up and down the road: "Sunday School, 11 o'clock, Stephen L. Richards's!" Sometimes sixty of us gathered on the screened porch of his cabin to sing "Our Mountain Home So Dear," "For the Strength of the Hills," and "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth."

After that, there was dinner, formal even in our boots and tucked-in pants in the canyon, Father carving, me in my ringlets, serving, Mother supervising, everyone joking, talking sports and Grandma's trips. She lived with us and determined my sense of life—and death.

Sunday meant a head rub from Aunt Katherine Stayner, Grandma's youngest sister, our second mother, who had been on a mission and who had never married, had her own ad agency, and who could grow hair on my bald uncles' and father's heads (you who know them, know how successful she was!), or soothe out and send to sleep any of us. There was always an after-dinner nap, reading the funnies, sometimes climbing the apple tree to read a book alone, throwing a ball, or Father pulling us on a sled or, when we were in the canyon, taking us on a hike to the Crow's Nest.

Always it meant visiting, leisurely with ourselves, often with Mother's and Father's friends, who became ours. Into the Hupmobile, later the demo Mercury from Ford Motor, in our Sunday clothes, off to see whom? It didn't matter, it was a spree: Father's only brother in town, Uncle Harry on Eighth

East, Aunt Irene in a wheel chair; Grandma and Grandpa Warner and Aunt Edna five blocks away—Aunt Edna now the only one left of that whole generation.

And always, if they hadn't already come through our wide front door to visit Grandma and the folks, some or all of our most unusual uncles, Mother's six brothers and their wives, always home on a Sunday afternoon, their homes as different as their contact with the Church. Uncle Willard, portly as his namesake great-grandfather Willard Richards, who we all knew had been with the prophet in Carthage Jail, and whom I

was to revere as the first editor of the *Deseret News*. Uncle Willard laughed and took us for rides. He sometimes had a bus or truck, was in on a railroad, had horses for us in the canyon. The best rides? On Sunday, Uncle Gill—Dr. Gill to everybody else—could cure anything, came to give us shots and was home to show us his singing canary and a library furnished with leather. Doctor to apostles and Grandma's club ladies, medicine must have been his religion.

Uncle Claud, a writer of books like *A Man For Tomorrow* and a biography of J.

Golden Kimball, was among the first to write about a thing called "Family Night." He had seven back operations and couldn't sit well, especially in church. Uncle Bus lived often out of town, and when he came in, we scouted out our one ash tray for him and sat wide-eyed as he told exotic tales of far-away doings. It was no different to visit him or have him in our living room than it was to be with one of the two general authority uncles.

Uncle Stayner, one of the first six assistants to the Twelve Apostles, never was not smiling, doing magic hat tricks, juggling, or playing pool at the table in his cool basement. Uncle Steve was apostle at twenty-nine, and later in the First Presidency; we listened to him on the radio at conference time, but all remember him much more on his boat on the Snake River or Hebgen Dam or Great Salt Lake, chuckling over catching a fish or one of Aunt Irene's jokes. Like about the little boy coming through a line shaking hands after a meeting in St. George, saying on meeting Uncle Steve, "You're an apostle? I



Warner family gathering at the cabin.

By couples: Mother and Father—Homer C. "Pug" and Grace Richards Warner; Children and spouses: Homer and Kay Warner, Rick and Marian Warner (and Julie), Gill and Nedra Warner, Mel and Emma Lou Thayne.

Testimony was obvious but no more forced than participation in sports or a hike to the armchair, and just as natural.

thought they were all dead." And salty Aunt Irene answering, "That's right, dear, they are; it's just that some of them refuse to lie down."

And the wives of these men? Like my mother, never adjunct, very much present. Except for Aunt Jane, Uncle Stayner's wife, I never saw them in church, including Grandma Richards, who, in her younger days, had been president of the Relief Society for ten years. Something was afoot besides church attendance.

More Sundays than not we ended up in Uncle Steve's and Aunt Irene's backyard on B Street and Seventh Avenue playing hide and seek or miniature golf with our cousins under the arbors or in the secret passage-ways of the huge old home where often his best friend David, later President McKay, came, too.

It was on Uncle Steve's pool table that our wedding gifts were displayed after he married us in the temple, Mel and me, and in that manorly living room on the oriental rugs where our reception in the winter of 1949 brought together friends and relatives with so much electricity that a fuse blew and the lights went off to let us celebrate by candlelight.

Such was our mix of life and church. Never static. Never separate. Never somber. By osmosis, authentic.

Mother aesthetic, Father athletic, both believed in learning by exposure, taught us through their own combining. All aspects of our lives fell into the spiritual, the enlivening. There was taking clothes and pot roasts to Brother Phillips, nursing baby chicks and Mrs. Weggeland when she was having a baby. There was the entwining of Bible stories and love for rocks and trees; ice cream cones from Laura Larsen's or Snelgrove's combined with Longfellow or James Whitcomb Riley after we memorized the Articles of Faith for Primary, then stories of sports or Book of Mormon heroes read in the hall by Mother

or Father where we all could hear as we went to sleep.

Sacrament meeting? In the evening, and attended not at all regularly. More often the family sat by the fire or played ping-pong in the basement, but always together. When we started to date, we went to the sacrament meeting chosen from the listings of speakers in the Saturday night paper.

Testimony? To the goodness of life, people, engagement with both. Obvious but never that I can remember borne by either Mother or Father in a church setting. No more forced than participation in sports or a hike to the armchair, and just as natural.

The Church? Like the Word of Wisdom, a way of life that allowed everything else to be more alive. An after-life? The divinity of Jesus Christ? As certain as daybreak.

Scripture? To make a point, they talked of the "Blessed are they . . ." and the "thou shalt" much more than the "thou shalt not." Grandma's New Testament gift to me read like diaries kept—at my desk in my room and in private. The whole orientation was always more private than proclaimed.

Priesthood? The dew from heaven distilling, power to heal my combination measles and

whooping cough when I was four, blessings ever since full of assurance and cure. Priesthood was not something my father, uncles, and brothers, and later, husband, wore, but a meeting they went to, a power they drew on.

Faith? Constant. Personal and family prayer as certain of efficacy as of the predictions of the barometer that came across the plains and was never wrong, Mother always tapping it as she "worked on the weather" for any of us traveling or otherwise.

Love? Never even wondered about. A loving Father in Heaven simply an extension of a loving father at home.

Rebellion? Against what? The sun coming up over Pine Top? Snow curtaining against the street light? Father stomping his day off on the porch—home from a trip, a meeting, refereeing



The Laurel Committee.

Front row: Emma Lou, Betty Jo Reiser, Joleen G. Meredith;
Back row: Heidi E. Vriens, Sharon Staples, Elizabeth Haglund,
Eleanor Knowles, Gwen Anderson.

I have been offered love at every turn.
At home, in the ward, in the neighborhood,
on committees, and in classrooms.

a game? Mother setting up her easel, the smell of oils and turpentine? Thunder and lightning crackling over the crags, the wind blowing us swooping and swaying in the young maples, never really afraid but loving the chance-taking, the adventure. But far from angels we were. More, curious, mischievous, inventive, sometimes show-off, takers of lumber for a tree house, creators with our cousins of initiation rites and punishments I blush to remember.

But guilt? Over what? There could have been plenty, goodness knows, but induced by us, certainly not by Father's motto that comes through the years to me as: "Try hard, play fair, have fun." Easy words to translate into harmony with a divine will that we never talked about, but took for granted as we brought home stories, questions, friends, knowing that the one thing we would never be was condemned—even as we learned that to mind was to be without "the little willow to tingle our legs" as occasional prompter. No permissive household this, but a place of refuge and acceptance.

God? Like Father and Mother on the sidelines at our tennis matches. Usually the finals on Sunday, right after Sunday School. If we weren't playing, we were in the bleachers at old Forest Dale rooting in the then decorous silence of a tennis match for someone else in the family, Father keeping track of errors and placements, Mother never missing a point, both with their arms open to console or celebrate as we came off the court. Each of us knowing we had done *all right*.

But, as illustrated in that Sunday night discussion with my brothers, for all our similarities and congeniality, even with my being "one of the boys," we grew up, of course, different. For me, any philosophical struggles with the Church were to come later, be assuaged, shared by other "pillars" than just my mother and father, Homer, Rick, and Gill, the strong people we married, the solid, felicitous friends like Corinne Godbe Miles that I'd grown up with.

I had help. With no whys or whethers, Father simply dropped us off at East High for early morning seminary. There I encountered my first real learning of history and doctrine from Brothers Cecil McGavin and Marion Merkley. I loved singing with a vengeance born of getting up before I was ready

all the hymns that were to become like poems memorized from the cardboard folders of only words.

At the LDS institute at the university, Brothers Lowell Bennion and T. Edgar Lyon took over, Lowell to be a life-long mentor, inspiration, and friend who kept a freshman Lambda Delta Sigma skeptic afloat and then braced me through adulthood. At the institute, for a girl much more interested in Chi Omega and the College Inn than in the Book of Mormon, those men held forth with valor in everything from scripture and Beethoven to preparation for marriage. Later, Marion Duff

Hanks brought the Book of Mormon alive and made remarkable sense in understanding people, including me.

But it was not just proscribed LDS pillars who held me up. It was Dr. Louis Zucker, self-named "Jew in Residence" and his Bible as Literature class, Jack Adamson and his study of the intrepidity of Job and the loving-kindness of Hosea, Methodist Clarice Short, Catholic Kathryn Grant, Jewish Maxine and Victor Kumin, and broad-



Emma Lou with her daughters:

Shelley T. Rich, Emma Lou, Megan T. Heath, Dinny T. Trabert, Rinda T. Kilgore, and Becky T. Markosian

As the years pass, wonderful others have
become for me not so much pillars as
a great sea of support who keep me afloat.

based Esther Landa, to say nothing of tennis friends of every faith teaching me about mercy and justice and good will.

It's hard to recall a single "assigned" woman teacher in those formative years. The first came when I was seven years married, and it was Sister Blanche Stoddard bringing the New Testament to our Sunday School class in Monument Park Third Ward, where we have lived ever since among many remarkable teachers. But it was also slipping across ward boundaries to hear young Neal Maxwell field questions, make connections, use the language in more compelling teaching than I could resist, introducing me to C. S. Lewis and G. K. Chesterton along with Jonah and Joseph. (I remember a question from the class: We know how beautiful Bathsheba was, how dire David's temptation. But whoever said what the wife of Potiphar looked like?)

Then Neal and I were on the general board of the MIA, together, he and Elizabeth Haglund teaching us all how to take leadership to the field. There was Florence Jacobsen, a leader with foresight and the gumption to act on it, Carol Cannon and Edith Shepherd, towers of good sense and restraint to channel my impetuositities. There were committees, Mia Maid, Laurel, writers, who honed and fed and chastened me—the Laurels so

intriguing we've laughed and eaten and talked church for ten years since our release. Always there has been the ward, where we have lived long enough to watch heads bald and backs hump with the doing of good by genuinely good people, people dear as family. And for me, Mutual classes, Relief Society lessons, Sunday School classes to teach, learn from, always with the exchange, that crazy love. Genuinely caring bishops and stake presidents, strong pillars, have honored my eccentricities and been friends in my callings. And a Lowell Bennion study group, Nauvoo Pilgrims, friends both in and out of the Church, camaraderie in "positive looking."

On boards, in the center of the Church as well as otherwise, I have sometimes also seen the crumbling of pillars. Having grown up with un-deified authorities, I find myself disappointed in those few who curry deification. Along with the Christian goodness, I have seen, as anywhere, protection of turf, resistance to change, intolerance of difference, sometimes bewildering silence or puzzling interference on issues, and least appealing of all, ambition. Above my desk I wrote in 1974, "Freedom is allegiance without ambition." Freedom I respond to. As I do to expertise, depth, integrity, authenticity, kindness in those I work with. Much more, I'm afraid, than I do to position.

For nine years, as "one of the boys," I have sat congenially with all men, mostly general authorities, on the *Deseret News* Board, comfortable sometimes, sometimes comforted, often discomfited and discomfiting, still one of those condemned to needing a Sunstone symposium as much as the *Church News*.

As the years pass, not only the adults sitting around that fire at Mt. Air, but those wonderful others sitting everywhere—many of them women across the country—have become for me not so much pillars as a great sea of support who keep me afloat. Much more than holding me up, they give reason to my flailings and loving buoyancy to my plungings. Just as do now our own children, their husbands, and their children, to say nothing of my intrepid husband.

What could be more satisfying than to sit all amazed at the grace and graces of one's family? A month ago on the first vacation that all five of my daughters and I have ever taken alone together, we lay, the six of us, on the beach at Santa Barbara on a Sunday afternoon not unlike those leisurely, enrapturing Sunday afternoons of my growing up. Now my girls are all women, and lying there, sun worshippers that we've always been, there, on our towels on the beach, spontaneously, we had a "testimony meeting." With attendance to nothing but each other, they told me how they felt, and I told them how I felt. It was grace all right, and gracious, that coming together, that same gentle osmosis that drew me into believing even as I questioned and quested, that allowed us that mutual exchange. Oh, yes, I loved it.

Now as a questing, grey-haired woman who might have grown into the cynicism of O'Neill's Larry Slade from seeing at least two sides to everything, of being in a position to see often sides I would rather not see at all, I sometimes think of fading away, comfortable, comforted in not having to look, let alone contend. And I think, No. No, Mother, Father, you gave me

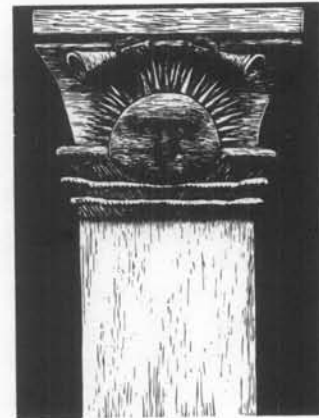
more, you and all those quite human but rather glorious others. You gave me a reservoir of faith sufficient for the most demanding Trappist monk. Whatever it is, I believe in it. I get impatient with interpretations of it, with dogma and dictum, yes, with the institutionalization of those most private connections. I rail and I take issue, but somewhere way inside me there is that insistent, expectant, so help me, sacred singing—"All Is Well, All Is Well." My own church, inhabited by my own people—and probably my own doctrines—but my lamp, my song, my church. I would be cosmically orphaned without it.

Maybe I'll find in the years to come, as Larry Slade says in *The Iceman Cometh*, that "life is too much for me!" I'll be (as he describes himself) "a weak fool looking with pity at the two sides of everything till the day I die." Maybe, Larry Slade, I will. But more likely, I expect I'll be hoping that truth can be found, talked about, made peace with. Never distorted, ignored, or most of all, feared. That even my pipe dreams will be kept alive and well. Thanks in great force to my pillars and my sea of support. And a Sunstone symposium as well as education week and general conference.

In the meantime, even on the days I struggle trying to stay afloat, maintain balance in a leviathan organization so different from the relaxed, personalized church I grew up in, I'll trust that the faith of those pillars and that buoyant sea of my maturing will have bequeathed me both hope and charity—if not always clarity—more lasting than any doubt. The faith that whispers I have inherited much more than the wind, the wind. ☐

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The limits of contention ought to be tight; the limits of difference ought to be wide.

LET CONTENTION CEASE: THE LIMITS OF DISSENT IN THE CHURCH

By J. Bonner Ritchie

IT IS A COMMON AND USUALLY CONSTRUCTIVE reality that there is tension between an organization and its intellectuals. Regardless of the institution—governments, trade unions, churches—there will always be tension. It is part of the larger world of conflict between intellectuals, who don't have to run the organization, and the people who do, who feel that independent thinking is a nuisance, especially when it doesn't support the established policy and programs. At some time, most members of the LDS church have experienced this tension, either as a dissenting intellectual or as a leader, or both. I will share some personal perspectives and strategies that help make this tension creative and constructive rather than wearisome and destructive.

An example of this dynamic is the current tension at Brigham Young University. BYU is in the process of coming of age as a major university; it is taking dramatic actions that move it in that direction, but also fuel the tension. In the last few years we have clearly started to hire the best people in their academic fields. They come with aspirations, dreams, and styles rooted in their training at Harvard, Stanford, Michigan, and Berkeley, and they want to behave like the people at those schools. When they get to BYU they find that they are part of a very powerful young group. So these young professors bring a front edge that is ahead of the existing faculty, the administration, and the system. As a result of their education, they not only see their academic fields differently, but also their religion and the role of the university. With that edge, they make demands—they have expectations for research money, for graduate students, and for a voice in the larger world of ideas. They receive

encouragement and reinforcement from strong deans and the fact that the first determinant for advancement is published research.

Ironically, at the same time these people are coming in, the university is saying that it is primarily an undergraduate institution and that its resources are primarily going to support its undergraduate students and programs, and that it is not going to increase research or graduate programs. But that's why these young scholars came; many feel betrayed in terms of why they came and where they are now. Understandably, they start looking at the system that makes these decisions. Recently, one new faculty member said to me, "Who's making these decisions anyway? Who do they think they are?" Many of these young people feel that the faculty *are* the university and should determine what the university is about. There are enough new faculty here now to form a critical mass. They see their actions and criticisms as natural, day-to-day expressions at a university, but others see them as major attacks on fundamental assumptions; and so the tension increases.

It is important to realize that the current tension at BYU is not just the result of the Church tightening control, it is not just over academic freedom, it is about the core and the soul and the definition of the university. All these forces come together, and so we have new academic freedom documents, new policies on promotion and undergraduate education, new policies on orthodoxy, and people feel that they have been betrayed; that what they thought they were hired to do is no longer accepted.

At this point in the history of the university there are many people, some of whom are in important positions, who feel that we have reached the point of greatest conflict between the intellectual and the institution. Whether that is true or not is subject to the test of time. But there is no question that the situation is tense, that there are extreme pressures, and that there are issues that are very troubling to a lot of people. The

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fact that employment at BYU requires a demonstration of "loyalty to the principles of the restored gospel" means that there are many individuals who are absorbing a lot of this tension in their roles as faculty members. Recognizing that this tension normally exists at various stages in the organizational maturation process does not make it any easier for those whose daily lives must absorb the conflict. This tense drama is considerably enhanced because many people value predictability, both in terms of work and Church membership, while trying to live principles that are not just of a passing interest, but are of passionate significance—such issues as academic freedom and freedom of conscience.

BYU is only an example of the dynamics of this tension in institutions. This talk applies to all intellectuals and Church leaders. Its title alludes to the recent book, *Let Contention Cease: The Dynamics of Dissent in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, edited by Roger Launius and Pat Spillman.¹ I recently reviewed this provocative and fun book for the *Journal of Mormon History*. While its accounts do not deal with the Utah Latter-day Saint tradition, they do discuss the Nauvoo and Kirtland time periods plus the Reorganized Latter Day Saint tradition. The title came from a revelation to the Church in 1922 recorded by RLDS President Frederick M. Smith. This was a time of great debate over change in the Reorganized Church and the revelation concluded with the command, "Let contention cease" (RLDS D&C 134:7). The book posits an interesting and instructive analysis of RLDS history, which for some time during the first part of this century included a dissenting movement that came from a strong liberal coalition. This dissent was a movement to open up the church, to somehow make more tenable a flexible, theological, and administrative process of church life. Ironically, now the dominant dissent within the RLDS Church is coming from the Right in protest of the church's general acceptance of the liberal issues for which the Left had earlier campaigned. These include ordination of women to the priesthood, changes in administrative procedures, and backing off from traditional orthodox positions. Now the conservative, or orthodox, dissent is outside the mainstream and finds itself in a troubling position, with questions such as: "Where do we stand concerning these new changes? How do we maintain the fundamental Restoration theology? How do we keep true believers in the fold?" I appreciated the book's title and content, and would like to explore the issues of dissent and contention we experience in the LDS church, not so much in our LDS historical tradition as in our current philosophical debates.

The warning that almost everyone will exercise unrighteous dominion was not given to teamster officials, nor to Watergate conspirators, it was given to priesthood leaders.

A PERSONAL FRAMEWORK

IN order to put the issue of individual and organizational dissent in perspective from my vantage point, I would like to explore some complementing dimensions. First of all, I recognize that I am a broken record on one topic, for which I make no apologies. Those in my classes have heard it several times; those who have read my articles in *SUNSTONE* and elsewhere have read it several times. Regardless of frequency, it's important to restate. Its importance is not just academic—I really believe it; it drives my decisions and actions. Very simply, the dominant motive in my professional world is to *help people protect themselves from organizational abuse*. I make that statement as a professor in a school of business; I make it from a standpoint of having done a lot of teaching and consulting in a world that is clearly top-down and institutionally biased, rather than one that is bottom-up, with democratic participation. My criterion has always been the same: to help people understand organizations well enough so that when they take a stand, it's done with information and analysis rather than by default; when they oppose or when they support the organization, it's done not with total, but with at least reasonable insight and understanding; when they protest or deviate, they understand the goal and cost of that protest and deviance, and they have some calculus that allows them to compute what those limits are in terms of their own idiosyncratic criteria of what constitutes a comfortable world.

I should note that my comfortable world involves a fair amount of dissent, a lot of dissonance, and extensive ambiguity. Everybody's does not. I respect and appreciate that; but if there is too much calm, I may well try to create a wave because that's what's exciting and invigorating, but more important, it is the lifeblood of the organization. It is also the force that generates needed change in both the individual and the organization. "If it ain't broke, break it." Creating a wave also provides a laboratory to learn about the organization, and it provokes the creative thinking and analysis necessary for survival.

I spent a good part of the last two or three years in the Middle East doing management research and training, attempting to bring Palestinians and Israelis together to improve management, and in the process trying to understand the cultures, overcome conflict, and build bridges. It was a great experience. Some people asked, "Weren't you afraid?" "Weren't you fearful?" "Weren't the prospects of failure high?" The

answer to all those is, Yes. But it was a marvelous learning experience.

I'll share one facet of that experience. One evening I was returning from Tel Aviv where I had been interviewing some executives from one of the largest organizations in Israel. It was about dusk on a hot, September evening. We'd driven back to Jerusalem, and I had dropped my wife and son off at home and went on to BYU's Jerusalem Center to return the BYU car.

Instead of going around the west side of Hebrew University, which is our normal route, I decided to go around the east side adjacent to the little Arab village of Issawiya—one of the centers of the *intifada* (the Palestinian uprising which began three years ago). The Unified Leadership had a printing press there where they put out their weekly bulletins and have a series of caves where they stash supplies and materials. It's a quaint little village on the Jordanian side of French Hill and Mount Scopus—northeast of the Mount of Olives. As I drove along, a car pulled out in front of me and stopped, blocking the relatively narrow road. I'd only been there a short time so I didn't have my cultural eyes attuned and sensitized. Then some kids appeared over the edge on the left-side of the road, and I realized that I was going to have a really interesting learning

experience. They had stones, but not the kind you read about that David picked up in the brook to throw at Goliath. These were six- to eight-inch diameter boulders that they held over their heads. I was driving a little stick-shift Subaru that I had had trouble getting into reverse all day. I couldn't get around the car that was blocking the road in front of me, so I had to try to get my car into reverse and back up, but it wouldn't go. Finally, I did get it into reverse, backed up, and drove out of the area, but not before windows were broken. One of the "holy stones" came through the driver's side window, burying several pieces of glass in my left arm. By the time I got back home my white shirt and pants were covered with blood. It was a somewhat dramatic ending to an interesting day, and the beginning of an important symbolic learning process. I went into the house, and my wife decided I needed more care than she could provide so we went to Hadassah Hospital, where I did a case study of the hospital organization. The high level of professional expertise would have made me perfectly comfortable with having brain surgery there, but the organization, human interaction, and sensitivity left much to be desired.

That close encounter triggered a kind of inquiry for me in understanding dissent. The story of Ahmed Issawi, the head of the village, was written up by John and Janet Wallach, award-winning journalists, in a book called *Still Small Voices* where

they attempted to capture the human side of both Israeli and Palestinian personalities, including many of those in the news during the recent peace conferences. In reviewing the profile of Issawi, I learned an important lesson from this book and later from personal conversations with these people. If I had gotten out of the car I would not have been hurt. The car probably would have been torched, and that would have been fine by me, but they would not have hurt me. The car was a

symbol—its license plate identified it as oppressor property (as the village chief explained to me: "It deserved to be destroyed").

Beyond the car and the stones was a more important lesson. The Issawi family has a story that illustrates their attachment to the land and the roots of the insult. The story teller says, "My grandfather Mohammed goes to heaven and God asks him if he was a worthy servant. The primary question is: 'What did you do with the land?' He can say, 'I took good care of it. I was a good steward. And I gave it to my family, to my son Ali.' Ali will have the same experience with God. Then I will go to heaven and God will say to me, 'Ahmed, what did you do with the land your father gave you?' 'I cared for it well, I was a good steward, but the oppressors took it away. But I will not be crestfallen, my head will still be raised. But if I said I sold it to

the Jews for a lot of money, I shall be condemned.' Can I say I sat by passively and allowed it to be confiscated? What can I say? You don't understand that our land and property are sacred. You are only an insult because you don't know our values. These symbols of our values are important, and we will fight to defend them and to get them back."²

It was a humbling story. I learned to use Palestinian means of transportation and to respect symbols of dissent.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY & ORGANIZATIONAL DISSENT

THE limits of dissent are, of course, idiosyncratic. There is no abstract rule that defines them. If we were to simplify the logic, the limits would be: you go to that point where the benefits of dissent are outweighed by the benefits of conformity; or when the costs of dissent become so high that you lose the community that you need. This, of course, becomes more complicated as more important principles are involved. For some of us that boundary is a long way out; for others it is fairly close. Regardless, each of us has the responsibility as a member of the LDS church, or any organization, to clearly define their theory of dissent, their theory of comfort, their theory of freedom, their theory of leadership, their theory of organiza-

You can never make the system safe or risk-free. If it could be made safe, it would be so sterile that it would be of no value to anyone. If any system is going to be useful it must have free choice, risks, and may even be dangerous and threatening.

tion, their theory of relationships and community. In the absence of doing that, individuals drift, act impulsively, impute motives to others, and take stands on the basis of second-hand criteria or rumors. Only when *individuals* decide, only when they accept responsibility for who they are and how they fit in the organization and what they want out of the organization are they in a position to say, "This is where I stand and why"—to decide our limits of dissent.

For many, dissent may be too strong a word; for me, freedom is a better word. The kind of freedom that John Taylor talked about in his underground presidency during the polygamy persecutions. In one of his letters President Taylor wrote, "I was not born a slave. I cannot, will not be a slave" to governments, to other people, to any person or institution. Then, finally that telling line, "I would not be [a] slave to God!"³ For John Taylor, freedom was not a passing principle, it was a compelling passion that he had to honor. That freedom, even if it meant that the United States government disagreed with him, or caused him discomfort, was worth the price. Thomas Jefferson wrote these words that are now inscribed in his memorial: "I have sworn upon the altar of Almighty God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." That is a profound statement of freedom; not a convenient rationalization for a form of government, but a passion for translating personal issues into organizational action.

THE GOSPEL AND RELATIONSHIPS

ANOTHER framing consideration. Among the many purposes that one could define for the use of the gospel, the one I would suggest is that the gospel is a set of values for defining the quality of relationships in an array of organizations—male/female, individual and neighbor, Church member and non-member, individual and community, individual and state, individual and employer, individual and church, and individual and God. Frankly, I can't think of any higher purpose of scripture than to define the purpose of each of those relationships and what is required to obtain a quality dimension in them. The ultimate theological relationship, of course, is between the individual and God, and any ordinance or procedural system that we follow in our ecclesiastical world is predicated toward that. And so, in our quest to develop quality relationships, we should ask where we fit in a particular organization. The definition of quality relationships is fundamental in defining the limits of dissent.

PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM ORGANIZATIONAL ABUSE

NOW, as I stated, my goal is to help people protect themselves against organizational abuse. In an absolute sense, no one can ever protect you against abuse—only you can protect yourself. Organizations can never be made safe for people; we can only try to make people safe for organizations.

We all need enough of a community that we have a place to go where people do love and understand us. But don't demand universal agreement or support for all of your idiosyncratic positions.

We must prepare people to try to make organizations noble instruments rather than victimizing machines. But we can never have an organization that is pure enough that it will not abuse. The warning in the Doctrine and Covenants that almost everyone will exercise unrighteous dominion was not given to teamster officials, nor was it given to Watergate conspirators; it was given to priesthood leaders (D&C 121:39). I have observed that usually the unrighteous dominion is not intended. Usually it is done with good will and with an intent to help people and to look out for their best interests. Nevertheless, unrighteous dominion is exercised in every organizational setting. The scripture doesn't say every person will exercise unrighteous dominion, it says *almost* all. And when you get in an organization with a large number of people, "almost all" will certainly include at

least one of them. And so in every organization you have that immoral reality.

As stated above, you can never make the system safe or risk-free. If it could be made safe, it would be so sterile that it would be of no value to anyone. If any system is going to be useful it must have free choice, risks, and may even be dangerous and threatening. You need to teach people to protect themselves against that—not by circling the wagons, not with a siege mentality, but with an inner security that is not threatened by those who think differently, a security that comes from understanding the world and organizations well enough to realize what's going to happen and to be able to transcend the situation.

All organizations have dynamic tension. Those in leadership roles tend to take stands that move the organization toward a conservative position; yet, interestingly, dynamic organizations are those that also move in the direction of change. And, of course, the exciting dilemma is that we must do both at the same time. So there are going to be strong differences and currents that people must navigate. There will be conflicting institutional pronouncements when these two forces converge in the organizational dynamic, and some will feel threatened by the diversity or by the changes going on in the world and try to say something to console those on the

conservative side. (This is the issue that the Reorganized Church is struggling with right now.) Others will try to interpret the situation in terms of the need to change, or to provoke the change. There will always be that tension. What is important is the way we manage the tension, the dissonance, and the organizational process. It will never be safe; it will never be totally comfortable; but nothing worthwhile is. The question is whether our different perspectives become causes for destructive contention or forces for positive change.

Within Mormonism, I think there is enough good will from enough people to be patient, tolerant, loving, and understanding as we work through our issues. But liberals, for example, should not expect top-down support for a pro-change position in an organization that tends toward conservatism. We must expect the tension and the frustration. I have often said, if you want to behave like an independent deviant and still have the rewards of a conforming conservative, you're in organizational trouble. You can't have it both ways. You must accept that tension is going to exist, and you must learn to maintain a tenuous balance. It is never really comfortable.

INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENT TO PRINCIPLES

IN the process of thinking through the limits of dissent, I referenced Arab culture. Now let me reference Jewish culture. In Elie Wiesel's forward to *The Testament*, he re-tells a powerful allegory:

One of the just men came to Sodom, determined to save its inhabitants from sin and punishment. Night and day he walked the streets and markets, protesting against greed, theft, falsehood, and indifference. In the beginning people listened and smiled ironically, then they stopped listening, he no longer amused them. The killers went on killing and the wise kept silent as if there were no just men in their midst. One day a child moved by compassion for the unfortunate teacher approached him with these words, "Poor stranger, you shout, you scream, don't you see it as hopeless?" "Yes, I see," said the just man. "Then why do you go on?" "I will tell you why. In the beginning, I thought I could change man. Today, I know I cannot. If I still shout today, if I still scream, it is to prevent man from ultimately changing me."⁴

I like the metaphor in that allegory, especially the reference

system of individual responsibility. I have no illusions of making the world safe, but I have a passion against the world co-opting me. I have no illusions of making the LDS church safe for liberals—that's a contradiction in terms—but I am committed that I will not be co-opted in terms of what I believe out of fear or threat or especially by default. Of course I may change what I believe, I may modify my position on a particular issue, but my commitment to principles must be clear.

CAUTIONS TO CHURCH LEADERS

AN interesting and useful insight regarding that logic is in Elder Boyd K. Packer's very telling address, "Let Them Govern Themselves." The title, of course, builds on Joseph Smith's answer to a question regarding Church governance: "I teach the people correct principles and they govern themselves."⁵ It also builds on President Harold B. Lee's statement with respect to Doctrine and Covenants 107:99: "Let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence."⁶ President Lee said he had read that passage many times and each time he had read it he had heard

it as an order, as a command, to learn and perform your duty. Then he read it again, and he heard the word *let* as *allow* each to learn their duty, *allow* each to interpret their duty, *allow* each to receive the personal revelation to define and implement their duty. With that interpretation in mind, let me quote some things from Elder Packer's address that apply to our discussion:

In recent years we might be compared to a team of doctors issuing prescriptions to cure or to immunize our members against spiritual diseases. Each time some moral or spiritual ailment was diagnosed, we have rushed to the pharmacy to concoct another remedy, encapsulate it as a program and send it out with pages of directions for use.

While we all seem to agree that over-medication, over-programming, is a critically serious problem, we have failed to reduce the treatments. . . .

We now have ourselves in a corner. . . . It is time now for you who head the auxiliaries and the departments and those of us who advise them, after all the repetitive cautions from the First Presidency, to change our mind-set and realize that a reduction of and a secession from that constant programming must be accomplished.

The hardest ailment to treat is a virtue carried to the extreme. . . . In recent years I have felt, and I think I am not alone, that we were losing the ability to

define contention
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and to love.

correct the course of the Church.

I might add that I'm glad it was Elder Packer who said that. Elder Packer went on to say:

Both Alma and Helaman told of the Church in their day. They warned about fast growth, the desire to be accepted by the world, to be popular, and particularly they warned about prosperity. Each time those conditions existed in combination, the Church drifted off course. All of those conditions are present in the Church today. . . . [T]he patience of the Lord with all of us who are in leadership position, is not without limits.

The most dangerous side effect of all we have prescribed in the way of programming and instruction and all, is the overregimentation of the Church. . . . "Teach them correct principles," the prophet said, "and then let," *let*—, a big word, "them govern themselves." . . . Can you see that when we overemphasize programs at the expense of principles, we are in danger of losing the inspiration, the resourcefulness, that which should characterize Latter-day Saints. Then the very principle of individual revelation is in jeopardy and we drift from a fundamental gospel principle! [People must] *act for themselves and not . . . be acted upon*. . . . (2 Nephi 2:25,26.)

[I]s it possible that we are doing the very thing spiritually that we have been resolutely resisting temporally; fostering dependence rather than independence, extravagance rather than thrift, indulgence rather than self-reliance? . . . "We have done it all with the best intentions."

If we teach them correct principles rather than overburden them with too many instructions . . . they can be both free and spiritually safe in any nation, among any people, in any age. If we indulge them too much, or make them too dependent, we weaken them morally, then they will be compelled by nature itself to find the wrong way. . . .

There is no agency without choice; there is no choice without freedom; there is no freedom without risk; nor true freedom without responsibility. . . .

There are some things which cannot be counted and should not be programmed. Matters with deepest doctrinal significance must be left to married couples and to parents to decide for themselves. We have referred them to gospel principles and left them to exercise their moral agency.⁶

Those are good lines. They are powerful lines. I recommend the talk to you in terms of a larger set of principles, and I encourage its application in a larger array of situations than the one in which it was originally given.

TRANSCENDING CONTENTION

AS you look at the larger world, consider the scriptures that talk about dissension and contention, especially in the

Book of Mormon:

And he commanded them that there should be no contention one with another, but that they should look forward with one eye, having one faith and one baptism, having their hearts knit together in unity and in love one towards another. And thus he commanded them to preach. And thus they became the children of God. And he commanded them that they should observe the sabbath day, and keep it holy, and also every day they should give thanks to the Lord their God. . . . that the priests whom he had ordained should labor with their own hands for their support. And there was one day in every week that was set apart that they should gather themselves together to teach the people, and to worship the Lord their God. (Mosiah 18:21-25.)

I define contention as anything that undercuts the capacity of people to work together and to love. Contention never implies differences in interpretation. It never implies an enthusiastic debate over how you apply concepts. It implies a destructiveness in terms of the basic purpose for coming together, which is to love, to serve, to build, to grow, to develop, to learn, to explore, to take risks, to make mistakes, and to translate all these into eternal learning experiences.

In the Doctrine and Covenants there is a qualifying comment in terms of this process: "I . . . establish my gospel, that there may not be *so much* contention" (D&C 10:63). We clearly don't want destructive contention, and we don't want unnecessary contention; but also we don't want artificial harmony or a facade of homogeneity—there always will be and should be a diversity of personality, gifts, perspective, and behavior.

My recent BYU devotional speech, *Taking Sweet Counsel*,⁷ takes its title from David's encounter with God where he struggles with his attempt to escape the consequences of his behavior and to hide from God. He finally wrote with respect to God, "a man mine equal"—an interesting term—"we took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company" (Psalm 55:14). I suggest that sweet counsel—spelled both counsel and council—is a condition of non-destructive, non-contentious differences. In an autocracy, power rests with the sovereign; in a democracy, power rests with people; in a council, power rests with truth. Therefore, the quest is to discover truth, which, in Joseph Smith's conceptualization, implies that "by proving contraries, truth is made manifest."⁸ This means debate and discussion and exploration with a noble purpose in a sweet council that does not condemn those who disagree, does not demean those who are different, be they on the Right or the Left, that has understanding of a dynamic system that engenders patience even with those on the opposite end of the continuum. I ask for that indulgence from conservatives as they judge my position, and they should expect the same from me. Sweet council implies a process of trust, faith, search, and debate; but not of condemnation, intimidation, rejection, and contention.

The limits of contention ought to be tight; the limits of difference ought to be wide. Because contention destroys the

capacity of the organization to become a vehicle for the exploration of truth, we have to find the sweet council that allows us to live together even with the diversity and differences—not *even with*, but *especially celebrating* their interpretations—and the variation of revelation given to individuals for what they should do. To honor that diversity necessitates an organization with a council as its criterion, rather than a bureaucracy or an autocracy or even a democracy. Votes don't reveal truth. While they are useful in civil government, there is a higher truth that can only be found in the righteous operation of a council—in giving and receiving sweet counsel at all levels of the organization.

WE must acknowledge that within organizations are the seeds of self-destruction. The normal state of an organization is to die. It is a miracle when they survive more than five years, and most don't. But some do, and those that do are worth looking at because they survive for a reason. And we ought to look at the LDS church carefully as an organization that has survived and flourished for some time—not as long as the Catholic Church, although some would debate at what point an organization becomes a different organization (you can debate that same issue about the changing Reorganized Church).

When Brigham Young made a decision that Bishop Edwin Woolley didn't like, Brigham said to the bishop, "Well, I suppose you are going off and apostatize." Bishop Woolley replied, "No I won't. . . . If this were your church I might, but its just as much mine as it is yours."⁹ I see that as a good example of engaged and spirited differences—not even allowing Brother Brigham to make an interpretation of a policy a contentious point of debate. It's a commitment to relationship, to exploration, to staying, and to not demanding that everyone love you, agree with you, or appreciate you as a condition of your continued involvement.

Nevertheless, in order to continue one's involvement in an organization, somebody needs to love and appreciate you. We all need enough of a community that we have a place to go where people do love and understand us. I've often said that the ultimate definition of loneliness is not physical isolation, it's enduring the presence of those who don't understand you. And when you have a religious community that doesn't understand you—not that it doesn't agree with you—it can be lonely. But don't demand universal agreement or support for all of your idiosyncratic positions. We ought to be part of creating a world where the individual's diversity is respected and appreciated, even if it is not the agreed-upon position of everyone in the organization.

I feel that the Mormon intellectual community is at a

turning point within the institutional Church. There are severe tensions. Many of the tensions do not turn on symposia like Sunstone's. Most focus on different issues. But in all cases, the contentious motives of destruction, viciousness, or embarrassment are inappropriate. There are reciprocal burdens of membership. And if we do claim a faith and a commitment, then we ought not be derisive in terms of our style or content.

A good example of this is the letter written by BYU professors Eugene England and Edward Kimball in response to a *BYU Daily Universe* editorial about Sunstone and the statement issued by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve regarding unauthorized symposia. The Brethren's statement, the editorial, and their letter are reprinted in the previous *SUNSTONE*.¹⁰ That diplomatic letter made a big difference in the minds of many people I talked to. Those of you who think that writing letters doesn't matter do not realize how important that letter was in helping put the issue in perspective. Implicit in the letter was the authors' faith and commitment along with a critical analysis and logical argument.

Individuals need to ask themselves, "What are we really claiming to say or do?" For example, if we were advocating an alternative voice with respect to the basic concept of running the Church, that would be quite different from a community exploring different ways of translating gospel principles into practice. How we act on these principles influences the organization's response. We all need to be clear about our motives and desires.

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH CONFLICT

LET me offer a bit of advice. When you feel that you have reached your limits, I suggest the following strategy that I have found useful when people disagree with me, or when I disagree with them. Rather than arguing the point, or rather than trying to convince them of my way of thinking, which I have done enough to realize both its costs and limitations, just say, "Do you realize how difficult you have made it for me? Do you realize the bind you put me in?" When somebody tells you to do something you don't like, you can argue, you can subvert, you can beat the system, you can do all kinds of things, but you can also tell the person, "Do you realize how sad I feel when you reject my position?" My experience is that even reactionary zealots often back down after that comment. You don't say, "Do you know how wrong you are?" or, "Do you know how stupid you are?" or, "Do you know how impossible you are?" But you do say, "Can we understand each other?"

Consider an example. I know a woman who went jogging in shorts and was told by her bishop that she was violating her

There are reciprocal burdens of membership. If we do claim a faith and a commitment, then we ought not be derisive in terms of our style or content.

temple covenants. She argued and won by every point of logic, but her bishop still would not give her a temple recommend because she removed her garments to go jogging. Only when it was pointed out that university and Church leaders and many other people go jogging in shorts, and only when she said, without accusation, “Do you realize how difficult you make it for me?” did things start to change.

When you push people into a corner they may fight back. When you give them a reason for your position, acknowledging their difference of interpretation, you have an arena of negotiation, exploration, and reconciliation. In effect you are saying: “Not that you have to agree with me, not that you are wrong, but rather you and I are different and you have made it very hard for me, given my values and your values. Can we explore how to translate that into action? What can we do in that process?”

My point is that we need to learn to create a strategic rather than a defensive position, an exploring rather than an argumentative environment. Use the metaphor of council where the objective is discussion and collaboration instead of a metaphor of fighting where the objective is to destroy, or a metaphor of a game where the objective is to win, or a metaphor of debate where the objective is to convince the other person that you are right. The metaphor of council and love is an exploration of what is in the best interest of both people without having to agree, without having to keep score, without having to define who is on which side of an issue as the ultimate test of virtue or legitimacy.

I would hope we could create a world of diversity, modeled beautifully by the current general presidency of the Relief Society. In their sesquicentennial conference, we observed a tribute to diversity—worshipping together with people who talk, look, and behave differently, who may play bongo drums in church instead of organs. By their openness and their commitment to the worldwide sisterhood of love and support, rather than judgment and control, the Relief Society has done a beautiful job; they have left people who want to make changes and who want to do creative things without excuse to be involved in the process. It’s a metaphor of love and council rather than of fights, games, and debates. I commend that process to you.

CONCLUSION

IN closing, I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of the saving mission of the Church, the excitement of teaching at BYU during a period of redefinition, the intellectual inquiry of Sunstone, and to be part of a world that is changing so dramatically. It is both exhilarating and scary. It is worth noting that in the Middle East, the former Soviet republics, and Sarajevo, we see tragic demonstrations of the cost of suppressing diversity. It’s sad to think that the price of stability was the suppression of diversity. We must learn to rise above that tragedy in every context. One of my favorite teaching devices is an upside-down map of the Americas with South America at the top (even the use of *upside-down* is loaded—who said

north should be at the top?). It’s a nice metaphor for seeing things from a different perspective. Your ability to be a constructive member of an organization depends upon your ability to draw the map upside down and not call it upside down, but to see it as a natural viewpoint. If we insist on one viewpoint, we’ve said something very troublesome to others in the way we draw maps, in the way we draw organizations, in the way we draw symbols, the way we use metaphors, and in the way we invoke our own favorite theories.

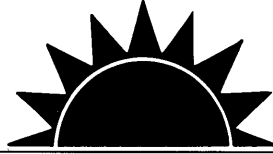
As individuals, then, may we clearly identify, based on our limits of dissent, principles that deserve our deepest commitment. May we assume responsibility for acting within an organization that may not always be benevolent. And may we engage in sustaining quality relationships, both with our needed supportive group of like-minded friends and with those Saints who see things differently than we do and with whom our conversations must be non-contentious disagreements rooted in a love that respects their symbols and positions and in a desire to serve and explore.

And when in the roles as leaders, may we manage the inherent tension by acknowledging and celebrating the different perspectives of members of the community. And may we facilitate their reconciliation in sweet council that prizes loving relationships and sustains individual dignity, that doesn’t pronounce judgments on perspectives, and that creatively seeks for commonalities that transcend differences and makes a place for all.

I hope, I pray, that all of us might find within us the ability to tolerate dissonance, the ability to love those who are different than we are, and the ability to engage in a council that will push the limits of differences—not the limits of contention—as far as they need to go to love and support all of God’s children. ☒

NOTES

1. Roger D. Launius and W. B. “Pat” Spillman, ed., *Let Contention Cease: The Dynamics of Dissent in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Independence, MO: Graceland/Park Press, 1991).
2. John and Janet Wallach, *Still Small Voices* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989), 65-66.
3. B. H. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 424.
4. Elie Wiesel, *The Testament* (New York: Summit Books, 1981).
5. Quoted by John Taylor in *Journal of Discourses*, 10:57-58.
6. Boyd K. Packer, “Let Them Govern Themselves,” *SUNSTONE* 14 (October 1990): 30, 31, 33.
7. J. Bonner Ritchie, “Taking Sweet Counsel,” *BYU 1990-91 Devotional Fireside Speeches*. (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1991), 133-40.
8. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, ed. B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 6:428.
9. Leonard J. Arrington, *From Quaker to Latter-Day Saint: Bishop Edwin D. Woolley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1976), 449.
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DEPARTURE INTO THE NEW COUNTRY

I. GRANDPA

The sun draws a gold blanket
 Across Grandpa's face and chest.
 In late afternoon, points of light
 Band his fingers and their blunt tips.
 And so he lingers while the cancer grows.
 He watches the robins, the orioles, the blue jays
 Eating just outside his window.
 He sleeps in the noon sun, dreaming
 Of his father, his sisters and a brother
 Whom the cancer sent into the new country.
 Grandpa wakes to find his children sitting
 In the room, chatting with Grandma
 About gardens, zucchini jam and bread.
 I talk to him about my wedding in early spring.
 He smiles when I say I'll need a marble rolling pin.
 I do not tell him what it meant to me when once
 He said he wanted to live long enough to see
 My first child.

II. CROSSING OVER

Grandpa has crossed over into a gray land of fog and rain:
 Even the voices of loved ones is cruel, rousing him
 From sleep back to the day-lit valley of pain.
 He speaks, but death muffles each word,
 Making it echo down a stone corridor.
 Grandma draws the sheets over him,
 Shifts his pillow. She smiles when she talks
 To the women about raising babies
 And baking Christmas cookies. But at night,
 She lies awake, listening to Grandpa breathing.
 When we pray for him, what do we ask for?
 How we want to ease his departure, and oh,
 The words we want to say—the candle, the token,
 The lamp we would light for his crossing.
 But he must go alone, caught between
 The voices of those left behind grieving
 And the voices of those who wait to greet him.

III. THE WATCH

It was an outing for a princess to go fishing
 With Grandma and Grandpa. Out to the stands
 Of maple and oak, the expanse of blue water.
 Grandpa would stretch back a long arm
 And throw out the fishing line, plunging
 Up the sky and into the lake that seemed deeper
 Than sleep. And we would wait,
 Watching the bobbin till it dipped with a mystery.
 Grandpa helped me reel it in; he let me run
 My fingers over the scales of the blue gale,
 Let me dangle my hands in the minnow pail.
 We never said much, Grandpa and I. But then,
 How much did Christ say to two men when
 He told them they could be fishers of men?

IV. THE NEW COUNTRY

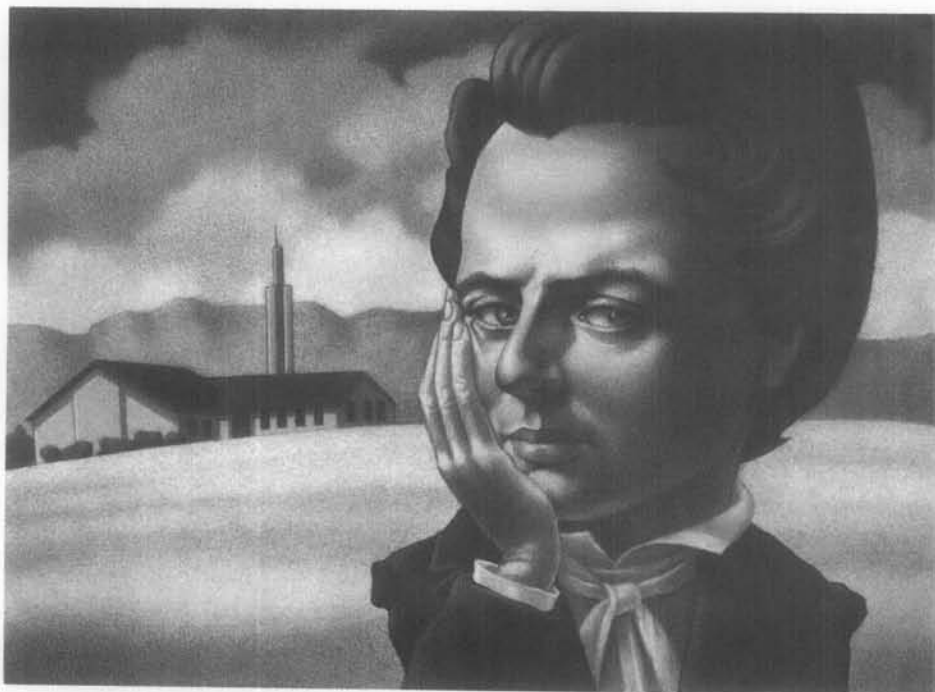
He left on a Sunday morning
 When Grandma went to another room.
 He left as fast as a candle blowing out,
 Gentle as the thin wisps of smoke
 Rising after the small flame goes.
 The voices called him across the water
 To the new country, and they came to him
 Singing, whispering, or saying nothing but
 Taking his hands and looking into his face.
 Those of us left behind are praying
 That when we walk towards that place,
 Grandpa will call to us across the water,
 Take our hands and reel us gently in.

—CARA O'SULLIVAN

LIGHTER MINDS

JOSEPH SMITH VISITS REDWOOD CITY FIRST WARD

By Samuel W. Taylor



I thought I'd drop down and see how things are going these days.

Mormonism . . . has experienced a social and intellectual transformation of such magnitude that a resurrected Joseph Smith, returning to earth today, might well wonder if this was indeed the same church he had founded.

—KEITH A. NORMAN¹

I BACKED OUT of the garage Sunday morning and was surprised by the guy alongside the car. He was tall, husky, with a strong face, prominent nose, a good smile. "I'm looking for Sam Taylor."

"Look no farther."

SAMUEL W. TAYLOR is an author living in Redwood City, California.

be an experience, Sam, attending your ward."

"Better buckle up, Joe."

"Buckle what up?"

"The seat belt." He didn't seem to understand, so I reached across and fastened it for him.

"What on earth is this for?"

"Where you from, Joe?"

"I'm a native of Vermont."

"Born Mormon?"

"Convert, you might say."

"Still in Vermont?"

"I'm now in another land. Another world, really."

"They don't have seat belts there?"

"No; nor vehicles like this one."

"Does Detroit know about this?"

"Who is Detroit?"

As I swung into the highway he clutched the arm rest. "Say! No wonder you buckle up! I've never gone this fast before, not even with a runaway."

"I'm only doing thirty-five, Joe."

"Thirty-five what?"

I eased down to about twenty-five. He said, "I'm glad to find you still at Stockbridge Avenue. It's been a while since your mother gave me your address."

The guy had a memory. My mother had passed on a quarter century ago. "It's your nickel, Joe."

"I beg your pardon?"

"You said you wanted to talk with me."

"Yes, of course. I'm told you're an author and have researched Church history. So I thought I'd drop down and see how things are going these days."

"You're leaning on a frail reed, Joe. Salt Lake is the place to go, not Redwood City, not me."

"I want a grass roots reaction, not an official statement. There can be a difference, you know."

"I certainly do know, only too well."

"Where are the Twelve Traveling Councilors these days?"

"Twelve who?"

"The Twelve Apostles."

"Why, they are in Salt Lake, of course. Where else?"

"Is there some emergency which recalled them?"

"No."

"Then why aren't they traveling, special witnesses to Christ in all the world—different from other officers in the Church in the duties of their calling?"

"Joe, you should know very well that they don't have time to be on the go, traveling around."

"John Taylor had time. Brigham Young

had time. All of them had time in the early days—Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Parley Pratt, William Smith, Orson Pratt, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, Willard Richards, Lyman Wight, Amasa Lyman.”

“That was a long time ago, Joe. They’re not called the Twelve Traveling Councilors any more. And if they were out preaching all over the world, who would stay home and tend the store?”

“Why, the teachers would, of course. Just as they’re supposed to do.”

“The teachers? Joe, you’ve got to be kidding.”

“The duty of the Teachers is to watch over the Church always and be with and strengthen them. And see there is no iniquity in the Church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking. And see the Church meet together often, and also see that all members do their duty. And a teacher is to take the lead in meetings in the absence of an elder or priest. . . .”

“Hold it, Joe. I expect you’ll be telling me next that even deacons do that sort of thing.”

“Of course they do! The teacher is to be assisted always, in all his duties in the Church, by the deacons, as occasion requires.”

“You don’t say so. Just about no limit to their authority, I suppose.”

“Indeed there is. Neither teachers nor deacons have authority to baptize, administer the sacrament, or lay on hands.”

“Well, it’s a relief to know that much, anyhow.”

“They are, however, to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come to Christ.”

“You’re quoting from the Doctrine and Covenants, Joe.”

“Of course. What’s wrong with that?”

“Tell the truth, Joe, there have been a few changes made.”

“How can you say that, Sam? I had it from good authority that a fellow named Hugh Nibley, a recognized authority on Church history and doctrine, said that if Joseph Smith walked into a conference of the Mormon church today he’d find himself completely at home; and if he addressed the congregation they wouldn’t detect the least bit strange, unfamiliar, or old-fashioned ideas in his teaching. He said the Mormon gospel sprang full-blown from the words of Joseph Smith, and has never been worked over or touched up in any way, and it’s free of revisions and alterations.”

“Well, Joe, you’ve hit the jackpot. It’s ward conference today. See for yourself.”

As we parked at the chapel, he said, “What a magnificent building! Is this your temple?”

“No, that’s in Oakland. This is the chapel. Three wards meet here.”

“Looks brand new.”

“It’s not very old.” I indicated the parking area. “Our old chapel was over there. They tore it down because it was twenty years old.”

“You must be joking.”

“It was no joke, believe me.”

“Why was it demolished?”

“I couldn’t say. Maybe it wasn’t elegant enough.”

As I unbuckled the seat belts, he said, “Say, before we go in. . . .” He lowered his voice. “Are you living the New and Everlasting Covenant?”

“If you mean what I think you do—”

“How many wives do you have?”

“One.”

“I understand.” He winked. “But just between you and me.”

“Surely you know about the Manifestos? The first one in 1890, then a dozen more before the final one in 1933.”

“That’s for the world. It’s okay, Sam. I do understand. You’re a good man. But from the example of your grandfathers and your father, don’t tell me you’re not living the Principle.”

“You know what they say about that, these days, Joe? A guy named Elden J. Watson did a paper on it, proving that the New and Everlasting Covenant meant baptism, not plural marriage.”

“Baptism? That’s the ranting of an apostate!”

“No more, Joe. It’s the new interpretation. We’re doing our best to sweep the Principle under the rug.”

“But it’s essential to the celestial glory!”

“It’s just incidental, these days.”

“Sam, are you crazy or am I?”

WE went in. At the elders presidency meeting he met Tom, Bill, and Ron. As executive secretary I reported home teaching statistics for the month; then we discussed the problem of inactive members and do-not-calls. I reported that we had forty elders in the ward, and we saw about one-third of them. Just nine had recommends. There were eighty “prospective elders,” and we saw none of them.

“What’s a prospective elder?” Joe asked.

Tom gave him a curious look. I explained, “Joe’s from another country.”

“Well, Joe,” Tom said, “a prospective elder is a member who’s only maybe a deacon, teacher, or priest.”

“Well, and what’s wrong with that?”

“As adults, they should be elders.”

“Nonsense!” Joe said. “In pioneer days plenty of good men were deacons, teachers, and priests, all of their lives.”

“Joe, today a kid of twelve is ordained a deacon. He becomes a teacher at fourteen or fifteen, a priest at seventeen. Then at nineteen—”

“I never heard anything so crazy in my born life! How long has this been going on?”

“You *must* be from a country far away, Joe. Don’t you get the priesthood manuals there?”

“Manuals? Never saw one.”

“And the conference talks on TV?”

“What’s TV?”

“There’s the *Ensign* and *Church News*, there’s *Sunstone* and *Dialogue* and *Utah Historical Quarterly*.”

“We don’t see any of that stuff.”

“Surely you read books by the general authorities?”

“No printing press in my land.”

“But you speak English.”

“What’s wrong with that?”

“Joe was born in Vermont,” I said.

“You must have been away a long time, Joe,” Tom said.

Through the partition came music, the congregation singing. Our meeting broke up.

Praise to the man who communed
with Jehovah!

Jesus anointed that Prophet and
Seer.

Blessed to open the last dispensa-
tion,

Kings shall extol him, and nations
revere.

Seated in the chapel as the song continued, Joe whispered, “We sing it to another tune, ‘Star in the East.’” Then as I opened the song book: “Say, that’s a good idea, having the music together with the words.”

“What do you mean?”

“Our song book is vest-pocket size. It has only the words.” Then his voice rose. “That’s not true! W. W. Phelps didn’t compose the verses! Eliza R. Snow did!”

“Shh!” came from behind.

Praise to his mem’ry, he died as a
martyr;

Honored and blest be his ever great
name;

Long shall his blood, which was
shed by assassins,

Plead unto heav’n while the earth
lauds his fame.

“It’s not ‘Plead unto Heaven,’” Joe said, “it’s ‘Stain Illinois, while the earth lauds his fame.’”

“Shh!”

As the deacons began passing the sacrament, Joe whispered, “Why no music?”

“It isn’t reverent to have music.”

"Used to be. And is it more reverent to listen to babies whimpering, people coughing—somebody is blowing his nose—mothers shushing kids?"

"Shh!"

Joe beamed as the sacrament tray was passed along the row. "Good idea, little paper cups for the wine. We used to—"

"No, no, Joe," I whispered, "take it with your right hand."

"Huh?"

"The right hand is the hand of righteousness."

He gave me a scornful glance, took a cup with his left hand, drank, then grimaced. "It's water!"

"Of course."

"It's supposed to be pure wine of our own make. Don't you make wine in California?"

"Shh!"

After the sacrament, the bishop arose. "I see we have a visitor. Would you like to introduce yourself?"

"I'm Joseph Smith, from the Celestial First Ward, Kolob Stake. Just dropped in to visit you good people."

"We're happy to have you with us, Brother Smith." The bishop then began the formality of sustaining the Church authorities, beginning with the First Presidency. "All who approve, manifest by the uplifted hand. . . . All opposed by the same sign, and now, do you sustain the members of—"

"Hold your horses, Bishop!" It was Joe, hand high in the air. "I opposed, and you never even looked up!"

"What?" the bishop said, startled and amazed. "You *opposed*?"

"Yes, I did."

"You opposed sustaining the *First Presidency*?"

"No, I opposed voting until we had discussed the issue."

"But, Brother Smith, there's nothing to discuss."

"Always used to be plenty to argue about, at Kirtland, in Missouri, at Nauvoo. Before we sustained anybody, we discussed if he was worthy of the office. Apostle Parley Pratt was challenged at conference, some folks claiming he was in darkness. Sidney Rigdon of the First Presidency was accused of treachery, until investigation proved the charges false. At Kolob Stake we have a lively discussion before we sustain anybody."

"Brother Smith, I will speak to you in my office after services. And now, I will ask the ward members, do you sustain—"

"Joe," I whispered, "the quickest way to land on the carpet is to refuse to sustain the authorities."

"Then there's *never* any discussion before the vote?"

"Never. And it isn't a vote; we just sustain."

"Then it means nothing."

"What it means is that the thinking has been done."

In conducting ward business, the bishop announced that Jack Snyder had been called on a mission to Germany. When the meeting adjourned, we shook hands with the boy's grandmother. Sister Snyder was bent with age, her hands gnarled iron claws from arthritis. "Sister Snyder, was your husband's grandfather Carl Snyder from Munich?"

"Yes, Brother; he arrived at Nauvoo as a boy. I'm so happy that Jack will be serving in Germany, maybe even in Munich."

"He will," Joe said, "and the Lord will bless and heal you, Sister."

As we left the chapel room I said, "Sister Snyder will need all the help she can get. Jack's parents were killed in a car accident, and it will be tough, him away on a foreign mission. The ward will help, of course, but I wonder if she'll have to mortgage her house?"

"If the ward helps her, why will she have to?"

"It costs \$1,000 a month to support a missionary in the German mission."

"What do you mean, support *him*? He goes without purse or scrip."

"Sure he does, but Sister Snyder and the ward will have to send him that grand every month."

"I don't understand, Sam. Traveling without purse or scrip has been the Lord's method of missionary work since Biblical times. 'And he said unto them,' Luke recorded, 'Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.' And Matthew echoed this. The Doctrine and Covenants instructs the Elders 'not to have purse or scrip, neither two coats,' with the promise that with faith any man 'shall not be weary in mind, neither darkened, neither in body, limb, nor joint. . . . And they shall not go hungry, neither athirst. Therefore, take ye no thought for the morrow, for what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed.'"

"I'm afraid it's cash on the barrelhead these days, Joe."

Lowering his voice, he said, "Before we meet with the bishop, where's the outhouse?"

"Outhouse? Oh, you mean—?" I pointed through the cultural hall. Straight ahead, take a left, and the door says 'Men.'"

"What? Your outhouse is *inside*?"

"Progress, Joe."

As he hurried away, I wondered where this character came from? Or was he playing some

elaborate practical joke?

"Oh, Brother Taylor," Sister Snyder said, limping up. "When Brother Smith held my hands, it was just—I can't describe it—but I seemed bathed in the golden warmth of his spirit."

I made a soothing reply. The old girl was of the gushy type.

When Joe returned he was beaming. "Sam, that's a most remarkable facility you have here, I must say."

"Comes in handy, especially in stormy weather."

On a table were several copies of the Book of Mormon, with a sign, "GIVE ONE TO A FRIEND." "A splendid idea," Joe said, picking one up. "I like this edition; good printing, flexible binding. As a missionary tool—hey, what's this?"

"What's what?"

"This passage is incorrect. And here on the next page is another mistake!"

"Well, Joe, over the years there have been several corrections."

"Corrections? It's the most correct book on earth! And what are you grinning at? Who changed it? And how much was changed? Do you know?"

"If you really want to know, Joe, there have been 3,913 changes. I have a book at home with all the corrections marked, if you care to give it a gander."

"But, Sam, why?"

"For example, we no longer promise that the Lamanites will become 'a white and delightsome people,' because that's racist. And being racist these days is worse than having a black telephone. So now it's 'a pure and delightsome people.'"

"By what authority were the changes made?"

"By the same authority that we got the book in the first place."

He grinned. "Yes, of course. What would be the point of continual revelation if there was nothing new to reveal?"

"And Joseph Smith himself corrected the Bible with his inspired version."

"True enough, Sam."

We turned as a woman began sobbing. It was Amy Jacobs; and her husband, Emil, seemed about ready to follow suit, as people shook hands with the couple and wished them good luck.

"They're moving to Phoenix," I explained to Joe. "Fine people; they've been in the ward more than twenty years."

"Retiring?"

"Well, they just can't stay here and face it, Joe. Nobody blames them, but—it's their son. He was recently sent home from his mission in disgrace."

"Oh, my, those poor parents. What did the boy do?"

"He was serving in England, and he fell in love with a girl from Liverpool. They married secretly, but it was discovered when she became pregnant."

Joe frowned. "I guess I don't understand, Sam. Just what did the boy do *wrong*?"

"Missionaries aren't allowed to date girls, let alone marry them."

"Stuff and nonsense! Apostle Willard Richards married a girl while on a mission to England. Plenty of missionaries brought home a wife."

"John Taylor brought home a bride who became my grandmother," I agreed. "But things are different now."

WE went to the bishop's office. After shaking hands, the bishop said, "Brother Smith, I wouldn't want to report to your home ward that you refused to sustain the authorities."

"Bishop, I simply said that it was customary to discuss matters before voting. We do that in my stake."

"Hmm. Which ward and stake was it? Tell me again."

"Celestial First Ward, Kolob Stake."

The bishop made a note of it. "And how long do you plan to be here, Brother Smith?"

"I intended to return today, but it was announced that priesthood holders were to meet at your home tomorrow morning at five o'clock to go the Oakland Temple. So I'll stay for that."

"Good. Glad to have you along. Of course you have a recommend."

"Have a what?"

"A temple recommend."

"Never heard of it. What does it do?"

"It certifies that you are worthy to attend the temple sessions."

"Now, wait a minute. Are you saying that the temple isn't a place of public worship?"

"Of course it isn't. The public is allowed inside before dedication, but not after. Only recommend holders can attend the dedication."

"It wasn't that way at Kirtland. At Nauvoo we—they—sold tickets for a dollar apiece for the dedication of the temple. And at Kolob Stake everybody's welcome."

"I have no information about that, but I'll check."

"And we hold dances in the temple."

"Dances . . . in the . . . temple?" The bishop was shaken.

"Just like the Saints did at Nauvoo. With cakes and wine at intermission, and they danced until two a.m."

"I wonder if the Brethren in Salt Lake know what's going on out there?"

"And I'm sure that when I get back, the people of Kolob Stake will wonder what's going on *here*," Joe said. "Tell me about this recommend business, bishop. What do I have to do to get one?"

"You'd have to strictly observe the Word of Wisdom—"

"But that was given as advice, not by commandment or constraint."

"It's now a commandment. No coffee or tea, no tobacco, no liquor."

"Certainly the excessive use of such things will injure the health. It is wisdom to use moderation in all things. But what does it have to do with spirituality? When the Scribes and Pharisees came to Jesus, Matthew tells us He said, 'Not that which goeth into the mouth defiles a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth. . . . Do ye not understand, that whatever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out in the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man.'"

"Brother Smith, you must understand that we can discuss doctrine, but not debate it."

"All right, Bishop. What else do I have to do to get a recommend?"

"You must pay a full tithing, and that—"

"I must buy my way in?"

"—that you wear the approved garments at all times."

"You must be joking," Joe said. "How would I look going around in my temple robes, even sleeping in them?"

"Brother Smith, I'm speaking of the inner garment."

"You mean the shirt which was set aside and never worn, after being marked and blessed?"

"I mean the inner garment which the prophet Joseph Smith designed and wore."

"What are you talking about? If the inner garment was worn at Nauvoo, do you suppose that the four men in Carthage jail would have left it off when entering that situation of grave danger?"

"They removed their garments because they didn't want them ridiculed by the guards at the jail."

"Better be murdered than ridiculed?"

The bishop sighed. "Brother Smith, I'm afraid that you simply don't have the right attitude."

We left the bishop's office to find Jack Snyder and his grandmother waiting in the

hallway. "Jack wanted to shake your hand, Brother Smith," Sister Snyder said.

Joe congratulated the new missionary. "When are you going to Germany, Jack?"

"I don't know exactly. I'll have to attend the Missionary Training Center to prepare."

"Training center? What's that?"

"It's at BYU. I studied German at college, but there is so much to learn about missionary work."

"Do you know the gospel is true?"

"Certainly."

"Then what more do you need, Jack? I've baptized many a man, confirmed him a member of the Church and ordained him an elder on the spot, and then called him on a mission. He left while still wet."

"Didn't he have to learn the series of lessons?"

"I told him to preach nothing except repentance; that was sufficient."

"But how did he know what to say?"

"Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say, but treasure up in your mind continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted out unto every man."

"Well—uh—so good meeting you, Brother Smith."

JOE and I went outside. "Stay here, Joe; I'll bring the car." That took some doing, because our ward was leaving and Redwood Second was arriving. When I pulled up by the entrance, Joe wasn't there. I looked inside, outside, everywhere, even in the inside outhouse. He wasn't around. So I figured he'd caught a ride with someone else.

And that's the last I saw of Joseph Smith. Next week at church old Sister Snyder hurried up to me, walking briskly without a limp. When we shook hands I was startled. The hand was no longer an iron claw, but supple, no lumps at the joints. The brown age spots had vanished. Her eyes sparkled. She looked years younger.

"Oh, how I wish you would thank Brother Smith for me!" she gushed. "The instant he took my hands. . . ."

Take it or leave it. Doctors can't explain spontaneous remission. They call such experiences "anecdotal," without scientific bearing. So there can be no medical verification, no double-blind study. And Sister Snyder is prone to gush. □

1. Keith Norman, "How Long, O Lord? The Delay of Parousia in Mormonism," *SUNSTONE* 8 (January-April 1983): 49-58.

CHRISTOPHER'S INTERVIEW

By J. Frederic Voros Jr.

CHRISTOPHER IS THE kind of boy who lives life on the edge. He delights in doing the unexpected, if not the unwanted. This contrariness is for him a matter of style. Doing what is expected is boring. Also, he is a natural egalitarian. All people are his equals: no one below him and no one above. Especially no one above.

So when Christopher turned eight and the bishop scheduled his baptismal interview, I saw all kinds of possibilities for disaster.

Some people disagree, but I think our bishop looks a lot like Clark Gable. Imagine Clark Gable in a western suit, wider of face and thicker of girth, with glasses and salt-and-pepper hair, and you'll have a pretty fair picture of our bishop.

I didn't know this at the time, but our bishop is at the top of his game with youngsters. He has since interviewed two of our children for baptism, and it has been a pleasure to watch him work. He pulls up a chair and sits next to them. He leans down and talks to them on their level, literally and figuratively. He asks open questions and follows the child through the interview. If the child gets stuck, he uses homely analogies to illustrate the principle. If an analogy is not working, he discards it and tries something else. This man could give seminars on interviewing children.

Christopher's interview day soon arrived. Walking into the bishop's office, I realized that I have never outgrown the slight discomfort I have always felt in a bishop's interview, even, as it turns out, when someone else is being interviewed. I scrutinize Christopher, but can detect no such discomfort in him. I can't tell whether he thinks he will answer every question correctly, or whether he knows any wrong answer will reflect more on

me than on him. He exudes quiet confidence. I silently pray.

We all shake hands. We sit down. So far so good.

"Well, Christopher, so you're eight years old."

"Right."

"And you're going to be baptized."

"Yeah." (That was a narrow escape. If I had



asked that question at home, he would have said something like, "No, I'm at this interview 'cause I want to go on a mission to Disneyland.")

"Christopher, do you know why we get baptized?"

"To wash away our sins." (Another close call, since that was clearly the correct answer. Christopher is doing fine. I'm sweating.)

"Who's going to baptize you?"

"My dad."

"Good, good. Now, can a person who holds the Aaronic Priesthood baptize you?"

"Yes."

The bishop shifts in his seat, keeping his eyes on the boy. I can tell he is about to throw a curve.

"Okay. Can a person holding the Aaronic Priesthood confirm you?" The bishop looks serious.

Christopher thinks for a moment. I wonder if the bishop has ever used this sequence before to set up a discussion of the higher

and lower priesthoods.

"Yes, he can."

There it was. We hadn't taught our son. He thought one of the kids in the priests' quorum could confirm him. The bishop leaned back and smiled slightly, showing a dimple. He started to say something when Christopher continued.

"If he also holds the Melchizedek priesthood."

The bishop smiled. I didn't. I suspected Christopher's answer was less afterthought than artifice, and I wondered what other tricks he might be planning.

The interview went on, question after question, and Christopher fielded each one deftly. Peter, James, and John. Joseph Smith. The Holy Ghost. He was flawless. I knew we were almost home free when the bishop asked, "Now, Christopher, is there anything you would like to ask me?"

I wondered what other baptismal candidates had asked. How can God hear everyone's prayers at once? How can I know if the Book of Mormon is true?

"Will there be a comb there or do I have to bring my own?"

"You'll have to bring your own."

"Okay."

And it was. Christopher had aced his interview. As we walked out, the bishop shook my hand, let Christopher get a few steps ahead, and said in a confidential tone, "I have never interviewed a child who was better prepared for baptism."

I appreciated that; he didn't have to say it. So I thanked him and walked out of the church. I caught up to Christopher.

"Darn!" he said under his breath.

"What's wrong?"

"I thought the bishop would shake my hand at the end of the interview."

This interview had obviously made a powerful impression on Christopher. He was never one to cherish a handshake, even the bishop's.

"Cause when he did," he continued, producing a two-inch rubber cockroach from his pants pocket, "I was going to slip him this."

It is a bitter thing to see so carefully planned a stratagem fail. I was almost sorry that the bishop had forgotten to extend his hand.

In Christopher's life, there will be other bishops; there will be other, more significant interviews. His church life has only begun. Still, I thought as we ambled down the sidewalk, not a bad start. ☐

J. FREDERIC VOROS JR. is a lawyer and writer living in Salt Lake City. Christopher is in the seventh grade.

REVIEWS

FAMILIAR AND TRUE

ENDER'S GAME

revised edition, Tor, 1991, 226 Pages, Hardcover \$21.95

SPEAKER FOR THE DEAD

Tor, 1991, 280 Pages, Hardcover \$21.95

XENOCIDE

Tor, 1991, 394 Pages, Hardcover \$21.95

by Orson Scott Card



Reviewed by Michael R. Collings

When *Ender's Game* first appeared in 1985, it was immediately and almost unanimously received as a masterwork of science fiction, indicated to some extent by its receiving best novel awards from the major professional and fan science-fiction organizations. *Speaker for the Dead*, published the next year, made science-fiction publishing history when Card became the first writer to receive the Hugo and the Nebula awards for a novel and its sequel in consecutive years. Card's fans were understandably eager for more. *Ender's Game* was in some sense a self-contained story, but *Speaker for the Dead* left a number of story lines unresolved and obviously required a sequel to complete it.

In the intervening years, Card occasionally mentioned a possible third volume. Under the working title, "Ender's Children," it would not only complete Ender's story but would be, as Card noted in a 1987 interview with Dora Shirk, "cosmic sci-fi—discovering what everything is made of, what underlies the laws of the universe, that sort of thing." In *Xenocide*, Card has met that promise with a novel that does indeed penetrate to the heart of things in ways that only an LDS writer might have imagined and that for LDS readers will resonate with their fundamental

beliefs. To commemorate the appearance of *Xenocide*, Tor Books has re-released the first two volumes in revised hardcover editions, each containing an extensive autobiographical introduction by Card.

Card is one of the few science-fiction writers whose works consistently and consciously exceed the conventional limitations of the genre. His characters may be aliens; his landscapes may be distant planets or future worlds—but throughout Card is essentially interested in telling Stories about us, about humans in the here and now, and specifically about tenets central to Mormons: Card creates worlds where fundamental LDS beliefs can be "made flesh," not just as theological abstracts or as articles of faith, but as demonstrable forces working overtly in the lives of his characters.

Ender's Game, for example, dissects the possibilities implicit in the LDS doctrine of free agency, along with contingent concerns for community, choice, and responsibility. In this novel, Card interweaves strands he has been developing for over a decade to create his image of a sacrificial mediator, a Christ-like figure willing to suffer in order to save his people. Card couches his story in the landscape and characterization of science fiction. Earth is threatened by invasion by bug-eyed monsters from outer space, and it rests with a single child to perform the single act that (at least as far as humanity knows) might save the world. Card carefully brings his character, Ender Wiggin, through a complex of decisions and actions, many paralleling

the life of Christ, until the final moment of choice. Ender acts to save humanity, even at the cost of his own sanity, and by doing so establishes new and important definitions of what it is to be human.

Speaker for the Dead picks up the narrative 3,000 years later and incorporates not only all of the above but also an increasingly focused concern for family and community. Ender is still alive, thanks to time-dilation in near-light-speed space travel. He arrives at the planet Lusitania, the home of a third sentient species, the piggies. Bearing with him the cocoon of the sole surviving bugger hive-queen, he must save piggies, buggers, and humans on Lusitania. In telling this story, Card introduces such concepts as the three degrees of glory, translated first into metaphor, then concretely into states of existence as readers discover more about the piggies. Ender again develops into a Christ-figure, but this time he must *perform* the sacrifice rather than *suffering* it. By reversing perspective in this way, Card explores even more intensely what it might require to be a Christ.

In *Xenocide* Card recapitulates all of the above, as well as anatomizing the LDS belief in the eternity of intelligences. Card fashions a view of the universe that allows his characters to escape the boundaries of the physical universe and become part of the Other (in some senses, God). To protect Lusitania from invading warships, Ender must unravel the mysteries of instantaneous communication through "philotic" connections received by a device called an ansible. He discovers that philotes are interlocking entities that compose all matter. More than that, the philotes (and here one may with some warrant read "intelligences" in the LDS sense of the word) are co-eternal and immortal. As Card extrapolates from his basic science-fiction plot, the novel becomes increasingly an experiment in eternal principles used as metaphor and image. When Ender follows philotic lines into the Other, for example, he becomes in theory and in fact a Creator-God, the next logical stage in his development.

The three Ender novels are thus of interest to LDS readers not only for Card's usual strong story-telling, but also because they perform what Ursula K. LeGuin calls "mind experiments" based on LDS principles. Card immerses his readers in worlds where belief becomes concrete reality, and where understanding the nature of free agency, the stages of human existence, and the eternity of the essential cores of living beings resolves problems ranging from private and personal to galactic. *Ender's Game*, *Speaker for the Dead*,

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and *Xenocide* are among the few science-fiction novels that should appeal widely to LDS readers. The stories are fascinating and the story-telling exceptional, but beyond that there is a sense that what is being said is familiar, resonant, and True.

The three novels demonstrate the strongest sort of "LDS literature"—that is, strong writing that is based on LDS principles, but that does not deal with them exclusively. Card can explore LDS beliefs even when (perhaps especially when) he does not deal with them directly. They are assumptions that underlie everything in his text rather than superficial or surface elements. His writing thus appeals to larger audiences as well, with the result that for the time they read his books, his readers become—whether they know it or not—momentary Mormons. They see a world, a galaxy, a universe through the eyes of an LDS writer; the values and assumptions implicit in that worldview are those of an LDS writer. This is not to imply that Card is an exclusively "religious" writer; he is not. But in the process of telling his stories, he touches in important ways on important beliefs.

The only problem with the Ender book is that in spite of Card's earlier promise to resolve the narrative as a trilogy, *Xenocide* invites a fourth volume. It will be interesting to see to what extent Card delves even deeper into LDS belief in the final volume of this arresting, engaging series. ☐

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READABILITY, POPULARIZATION, AND THE DEMANDS OF SCHOLARSHIP

REDISCOVERING THE BOOK OF MORMON:
INSIGHTS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED BEFORE

edited by John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne
Deseret Book Company and Foundation for Ancient Research and
Mormon Studies, 1991, 255 pages, Paper \$8.95



Reviewed by Todd Compton

THIS BOOK IS an attempt to present the research of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.) to a wider audience. (F.A.R.M.S. articles are usually printed separately and unavailable in any journal or book.) Such a volume as this is long overdue. However, even as popularization, *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon* is severely flawed because it lacks documentation (I count seventeen footnotes in twenty-three articles). Footnotes are the means by which scholars show their evidence and allow readers to judge for themselves. But this is a popularization, the editors might protest. I would answer, Hugh Nibley reaches a wide Mormon audience, and his footnotes are abundant. And even *Ensign* articles have limited but reasonably adequate footnotes. It is unfortunate that this book was not documented on at least that minimal level. Without minimal documentation, these articles sometimes sound like a used-car salesman who says "Trust me! (but don't check under the hood)." As I have the highest respect for the scholarship of the contributors to this volume (as represented in previous articles), I am puzzled that a wider audience is being introduced to their work under these conditions.

Footnotes also serve the important task

(especially in a popularization) of recommending further books and articles to interested readers. A short bibliography after every article would have served this purpose without adding many extra pages to the book.

Despite these flaws, the articles, even as popularizations and condensations of scholarly work, are often thoughtful, useful, intriguing, and sometimes exciting. They are, of course, solidly in the Book of Mormon-as-ancient-historical-text school; those not in that camp may find them unconvincing or annoying. (Anyone who is seriously interested in the historicity debate should read the original, footnoted articles, not this book.) However, a main objective mentioned in the introduction—to show that the Book of Mormon is a complex book—is more than adequately achieved.

AS to specific articles, John Tvedtnes's "Mormon's Editorial Promises" is neat and reasonable: Mormon fulfills his narrative promises. Herodotus offers an interesting parallel: he begins a story, takes a long explanatory detour, then takes up the story again. This technique is tricky even for sophisticated authors composing at leisure, revising with notes and sources at hand; much harder for a young man with little education giving dictation.

Tvedtnes also discusses colophons (formalized prefaces) in the Book of Mormon; his discussion would have been improved by reference to Nibley on colophons (*Lehi in the*

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Desert and the World of the Jaredites [CW 5.17]), and a short overview of non-biblical colophons with one or two examples.

Terry Szink offers an insightful analysis of Nephi's use of the Old Testament Exodus story in describing his own. Like Szink's article, Alan Goff's "Stealing of the Daughters" compares a Book of Mormon passage with an Old Testament parallel, finding that the parallels and dissimilarities "reveal the Book of Mormon to be an ancient document" (74). The parallels and dissimilarities in this case are not compelling enough to prove antiquity, but the comparison with the Old Testament does illuminate the Book of Mormon text. Goff mentions that dancing is a yearly ritual in the Old Testament (69); more documentation on this might have strengthened his case (cf. T. Gaster, *Festivals of the Jewish Year* [NY 1978], 149; Nibley, *Since Cumorah* [CW 7.247]). Obviously, cyclical ritual events will parallel each other.

Tvedtnes's "Hebrew Background" is a rich, evocative article; however, occasional transliterated Hebrew would seem to be an absolute necessity here, and one would also like commentary on which of the Hebraisms are found in the King James Bible. For instance, the idiom "calling the name of . . ." (89) is well represented in the King James Version, and Joseph easily could have derived such a phrase from this source. Other idioms Tvedtnes mentions are not in the King James Bible.

Goff's "Mourning, Consolation, and Repentance at Nahom" examines one of those uncanny details in the Book of Mormon. Hebrew *naham* means "to mourn," and Ishmael dies at the place the Lehighites named Nahom. But Goff probably goes too far when he suggests that Laman and Lemuel found consolation in murderous plots there.

Richard Dilivarth Rust's "Poetry" is a useful literary analysis of prominent Book of Mormon poems. John W. Welch's article on Alma 36 uses his groundbreaking research on chiasmus to analyze that beautiful chapter.

David Seely's "Image of the Hand" is a fine treatment of a Book of Mormon symbol. Seely carefully distinguishes between symbolic usages paralleled in the Bible and those unique to the Book of Mormon. I really miss footnoting here: what is the Semitic word for atonement (149)? Where has Nibley written about this (149)? Where do we find the Ugaritic reference (145)? Readers shouldn't have to write a letter to the author to get this information.

Eugene England's essay on the Atonement is predictably insightful. Louis Midgley's

"Ways of Remembrance" is a valuable survey of a persistent theme. When he refers to Hebrew and Arabic "remember" words (174), some transliteration is again necessary but inexplicably absent.

Stephen Ricks's "King, Coronation" and Blake Ostler's "Covenant Tradition" deal with the ritual background of the coronation/covenant aspects of King Benjamin's last speech. Both are impressive, convincing pieces (especially in the longer, footnoted versions from which the articles in the book are adapted).

Noel Reynolds's "Nephi's Political Testament" is a valuable and interesting reminder of how religion and politics are often combined. (In modern Northern Ireland, where I served my mission, Catholic and Protestant have almost become political terms — there were even Catholic Mormons and Protestant Mormons.)

William Hamblin's warfare article seems more condensed than the other articles, thus less satisfying than the solid, excellent articles on Book of Mormon warfare he has published elsewhere. Many points need additional explanation; e.g., the Lamanite destruction of Ammonihah (Alma 16:3) as "an example of the ritual destruction of apostate cities."

John Sorenson's "Seasons of War" is vintage Sorenson in its originality, thoroughness, and careful reading of the Book of Mormon text.

I wish I could recommend this book more. With a little better balance between scholarship and popularization, I believe it could have reached as wide an audience as it has (or wider) and could have been useful for scholars as well. As it stands, though some articles fare better than others, I often found myself missing what is absent as much as I appreciated what was there. For anyone interested in the F.A.R.M.S. approach to LDS scripture, I would rather recommend such books as *Warfare in the Book of Mormon* (ed. Stephen Ricks and William Hamblin [Salt Lake City: F.A.R.M.S., 1990]), the Nibley festschrift volumes, *By Study and Also By Faith* (Salt Lake City: F.A.R.M.S., 1990), John Welch, ed., *Chiasmus in Antiquity* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981), and the original F.A.R.M.S. papers many of these essays are drawn from. ☐



BOOKNOTES



PAPERDOLLS: HEALING FROM SEXUAL ABUSE IN MORMON NEIGHBORHOODS

By April Daniels and Carol Scott.
Palingensia Press, 1992.
203 pages, \$9.95.

TRAGICALLY, there are too many children whose screams go unattended. Many deny the screams; they say that they are none of their business; they justify them or they keep them secret in order to maintain their façades. They do this until the screams are silenced or until the screams return as painful ghosts of the past. Society in many ways will be judged by the screams they choose to hear and answer or by the screams they ignore.

Paperdolls is a book about screams. It chronicles the author's tragic victimizations at the hands of child sexual abusers. This is a victim's book. Any victim of childhood sexual abuse will recognize the feelings, the pain, and the denial. The book details the tragedy of child sexual abuse as both multigenerational and neighborhood phenomena. Along the way it also chronicles some of the devastating ripple effects such as self-destruction, addictive behavior, psychological problems, and dysfunctional families. It further confronts the indifference and denial of a culture which does not respond adequately. *Paperdolls* is a hard and heartwrenching read.

Paperdolls serves as a voice and a plea to a community to stop denying and to do something. It is neither a book that lays out a plan of action, nor is it an in-depth discussion of social and psychological dynamics that lead to and reinforce child sexual abuse. It is rather a notice to a Mormon community that child sexual abuse exists, is widespread, and extracts an enormous price. But it is also a book about the authors' therapeutic journeys toward healing, recovery, and growth.

Jonas Salk said, "Children are messages that we send to the future." The authors of *Paperdolls* remind us that we must fight to ensure that those messages are ones of hope, love, and growth rather than devastation. The screams of these authors need to be heard and attended to. ☐

—GLEN LAMBERT

"AND THEY ALL PRAYED ON"

THE CHURCHES SPEAK ON: AIDS

by J. Gordon Melton

Gale Research, Inc., 1989, 203 pages, \$24.95



Reviewed by Stephen C. Clark

As he went on his way Jesus saw a man who had been blind from his birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, why was this man born blind? Who sinned, this man or his parents?" "It is not that he or his parents sinned," Jesus answered, "he was born blind so that God's power might be displayed in curing him."

John 9:1-3 (Revised English Bible)

THROUGHOUT HISTORY, disease and other physical affliction have been attributed to divine wrath for forbidden acts. For example, the above scripture indicates that some Jews believed that blindness was the result of sin. Their concern was not with the blind man, but with dogma. Jesus' response was both a rebuke and a call to action: do not engage in useless speculation or judgment-laden distinctions, but instead love, nurture, and heal.

This book is one in a series of monographs prepared by J. Gordon Melton of the Institute for the Study of American Religion collecting official statements from religious organizations on social issues. It reflects how those who claim to be heirs to Jesus' teachings (or other religious traditions) continue to struggle to understand and apply those teachings in responding to the challenges of AIDS. While there is much to commend, the overall impression is that the churches, along with society's other institutions, have largely failed to provide inspired (or inspiring) leadership. Indeed, for those familiar with Randy Shilts's *And The Band Played On*, which revealed in shocking detail how the medical and political establishments failed to timely respond to the tragedy of AIDS, the title of this review, "And They All Prayed On," might seem appropriate for Melton's book.

That the churches, including some of the

most conservative institutions in our society, say anything at all on such a complex and potentially divisive issue is commendable. Almost all of the statements contain, in varying detail, straightforward information about AIDS and the virus that causes it, including reassurances that the virus is not spread through casual contact. Most also advocate respect for the civil rights and basic human dignity of people with AIDS (PWAs). Many call for increased education and research, and for the establishment of special ministries to provide counseling and support to PWAs and their families and friends.

In terms of emphasis, the statements can be divided generally into two categories that correspond to the disciples' speculation and Jesus' response: those that focus predominantly on the moral issues underlying how the AIDS virus is contracted and transmitted, and those that focus instead on the urgent human needs of PWAs and their loved ones. Thankfully, none of the statements adopt as official doctrine or belief the absurd view that AIDS is God's punishment for homosexuals or a wicked society in general. Many specifically refute that notion. But some persist more subtly in propagating a similar message, one that could be read to justify self-righteous complacency and even engender intolerance and bigotry.

The LDS church's 1988 First Presidency Statement on AIDS (174-75) is typical of the statements of the more conservative churches. The statement quotes from an April 1987 general conference talk in which President Gordon B. Hinckley referred to AIDS as "the bitter fruit of sin." While expressing "great love and sympathy for all victims," President Hinckley was careful to distinguish and show special concern for "innocent" victims "who endure such suffering, pain, and injustice, not of their own doing." They "will receive compensatory blessings through the Lord's infinite mercy." The implication is that "culpable" vic-

tims—which in context plainly refers to gay men—somehow bring their suffering upon themselves and are beyond the scope of "the Lord's infinite mercy." Amid these judgment-laden distinctions, the call to "reach out with kindness and comfort to the afflicted, ministering to their needs and assisting them with their problems," sounds muted and condescending.

By contrast, the statement of an extensive bi-national Christian consultation on AIDS (45-50) eschews easy moralizing and dichotomizing, acknowledges institutional dereliction, and calls for immediate action:

"Persons with AIDS and those with HIV infection are among us, and not separate from us; the crisis of AIDS is our crisis, it is not a we/they issue. The church must share in this experience, changing and being changed so as to enable society to provide a supporting presence for those who are grieving and suffering. The church must become part of the AIDS pilgrimage to deeper understanding; it must join the journey towards human wholeness. . . . In Canada and the United States our churches have been almost totally silent. Recent history painfully reminds us that silence equals death. Our deeply-seated fear of sexuality and our ancient habit of excluding men and women whose lives or words threaten us, have made us accomplices in the bigotry and violence we now must end. . . . We must act now. We commit ourselves to eradicating the bigotry and hatred that are feeding on this disease. Therefore, we call the churches to more than empty gestures and token actions. From our immense institutional, personal, and financial resources; the churches must provide effective support to people with HIV infection and all those affected by this crisis." (48-49.)

We are now entering the second decade of AIDS. People are still dying. In many cases, they are dying alone, cut off from the religious communities that taught them to trust and to love. Before long, given the number of those already infected and the rate of new infections among all groups and classes, we will all know, and perhaps love, someone with AIDS. Perhaps then we will begin to view the crisis in its true light, as a human tragedy that affects individuals, children of God, not some faceless, marginalized or sinful other. Perhaps, then we will reject facile judgments and grapple with the real challenge: reach out with love and without fear, to increase our knowledge, understanding, and compassion, to raise our voices against judgmental complacency, and to seek to make manifest the power of God's love. ☪

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NEWS

CHURCH DEFENDS KEEPING FILES ON MEMBERS

THIS AUGUST another chapter was written in the on-going exploration of the relationship between the independent actions of LDS scholars and intellectuals and the interests of the Church.

In response to news reports, the LDS Church acknowledged that it has a general authority committee that monitors the statements and writings of members who criticize the Church and that it turns the information over to local Church leaders. Apostles James E. Faust and Russell M. Nelson currently comprise the committee. William O. Nelson, director of the evaluation division of the Correlation Department, is the committee's executive secretary. Nelson had earlier worked as President Ezra Taft Benson's personal secretary when Elder Benson was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

According to Church spokes-

person Don LeFevre, the Strengthening Church Members Committee "provides local Church leadership with information designed to help them counsel with members who, however well-meaning, may hinder the progress of the Church through public criticism."

The existence of the committee became a public issue when *Journal of Mormon History* editor Lavina Fielding Anderson discussed it in her Sunstone symposium paper, "Dialogue Toward Forgiveness: A Chronology of the Intellectual Community and Church Leadership," on 6 August 1992 at the Salt Lake Hilton.

Anderson detailed "an internal espionage system" that maintains secret files on some members and, she said, is used to intimidate them. She reported cases where local leaders have conducted "puppet interviews" or punished members based on



information secretly supplied by high Church leaders, which the members were not able to see. "I am bewildered and grieved when my church talks honorably from one script and acts ignobly from another," she said. Anderson's paper will be published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* next spring.

During the questions and comments period following Anderson's presentation, Eugene England, author of *Why the Church is as True as the Gospel*, said, "I accuse that committee of undermining the Church." His punchy quote was widely re-

ported by word-of-mouth and in the press.

Although Anderson's paper highlighted the existence of the Strengthening the Members Committee, its name and existence had been made public last year when a confidential memo to the committee from Presiding Bishopric member Glenn L. Pace concerning ritual sexual child abuse was leaked to the press. (See SUNSTONE 15:5.)

In an initial response concerning the keeping of files on members, Bruce Olsen, managing director of the Public Affairs Department, said, "Church

FIRST PRESIDENCY STATEMENT CITES SCRIPTURAL MANDATE FOR CHURCH COMMITTEE

GENERALLY, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not respond to criticism levied against its work. But in light of extensive publicity recently given to false accusations of so-called secret Church committees and files, the First Presidency has issued the following statement:

"The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was established in 1830 following the appearance of God the Father and Jesus Christ to the Prophet Joseph Smith in upstate New York. This sacred event heralded the onset of the promised 'restitution of all things.' Many instructions were subsequently given to the Prophet including Section 123 of the Doctrine and Covenants:

"And again, we would suggest for your consideration the propriety of all the saints gathering up a knowledge of all the facts, and sufferings and abuses put upon them. . . .

"And also of all the property and amount of damages which they have sustained, both of character and personal injuries. . . .

"And perhaps a committee can be appointed to find out these things, and to take statements and affidavits; and also to gather up the libelous publications that are afloat;

"And all that are in the magazines, and in the encyclopedias, and all the libelous histories that are published. . . . (Verses 1-5)

"Leaders and members of the Church strive to implement com-

mandments of the Lord including this direction received in 1839. Because the Church has a non-professional clergy, its stake presidents and bishops have varied backgrounds and training. In order to assist their members who have questions, these local leaders often request information from General Authorities of the Church.

"The Strengthening Church Members Committee was appointed by the First Presidency to help fulfill this need and to comply with the cited section of the Doctrine and Covenants. This committee serves as a resource to priesthood leaders throughout the world who may desire assistance on a wide variety of topics. It is a General Authority committee, currently comprised of Elder James E. Faust and Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. They work through established priesthood channels, and neither impose nor direct Church disciplinary action.

"Members who have questions concerning Church doctrine, policies, or procedures have been counseled to discuss those concerns confidentially with their local leaders. These leaders are deeply aware of their obligation to counsel members wisely in the spirit of love, in order to strengthen their faith in the Lord and in His great latter-day work."

—THE FIRST PRESIDENCY



"I ADMIRE YOUR ZEAL, BROTHER EICHMAN, BUT WERE THE "STRENGTHENING CHURCH MEMBERS COMMITTEE," NOT "LENGTHENING CHURCH MEMBERS..."

membership records include every member. Such records, which include statistics and Church-service background, are not so much secret as appropriately confidential."

A week after the symposium, the First Presidency issued a statement responding to reports on the Strengthening Church Members Committee (see sidebar). They cited Doctrine and Covenants 123 as scriptural justification and command for the committee. In this section the Lord instructs Joseph Smith to gather information concerning the Church's enemies and make it public to the world.

In response to the statement, Mormon historian and outgoing *Dialogue* editor F. Ross Peterson told the *Salt Lake Tribune*, "Comparing SUNSTONE and *Dialogue* folks to people who were shooting Mormons in 1839 Missouri is unfair. . . . Files are a strange carryover from a paranoia that resembles McCarthyism."

Two years ago Peterson himself was interrogated by local Church leaders about comments he made to the press concerning changes in the LDS temple ceremony. During that interview, the leaders frequently referred to items in a file they had on the desk that contained photocopies of news reports about him and articles he had written for several

decades. Peterson was not permitted to see the contents of the file. (See "Comments on Temple Changes Elicit Church Discipline," SUNSTONE 14:3.)

BYU professor of organizational behavior J. Bonner Ritchie (who is also on the board of the Sunstone Foundation) told the *Tribune* that he wasn't shocked by the fact that the Church has been keeping files on some of its members for decades. "It's what you do with the information that can be helpful or destructive."

Discussion of the committee and the Church's response continued for several weeks in Salt Lake in the newspaper letters sections and on local talk shows.

One humorous joke making the rounds of the LDS intellectual community has members overloading the staff of the Strengthening Church Members Committee by sending in articles and letters they want to have in their files and clippings and reports on conservative members they think need investigating and on whom a file should be created.

Lavina Fielding Anderson concluded her talk with constructive proposals for LDS intellectuals and the Church to work through these tensions and revelations. Then with prayer and faith she challenged the audience to make a "more loving, less fearful, community." ☐

MORMON HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Awarded at the annual meeting in St. George, Utah, 15 May 1992

MHA AWARDS

Special Citation

PUBLISHERS, EDITORS, AND WRITERS OF THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM

For significant achievement in the compilation and dissemination of Mormon History

Journal of Mormon History Award

DOUGLAS F. TOBLER

"Jews, Mormons, and the Holocaust"

BYU Women's Research Institute Award for the Best Article in Women's Studies

LOLA VAN WAGENEN

"In their Own Behalf: The Politicization of Mormon Women and the 1870 Franchise"
Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought

Francis M. and Emily Chipman Award for Excellence in a First Book

PHILIP BARLOW

Mormonism and the Bible
Oxford University Press

Ella Larsen Turner Award for Excellence in Biography

MAUREEN URSENBACH BEECHER

Eliza and Her Sisters
Aspen Books

Steve F. Christensen Award for Excellence in a Documentary/Bibliography

JEAN BICKMORE WHITE

The Diaries of John Henry Smith
Signature Books

MHA Award for the Best Book in Mormon History

THOMAS ALEXANDER

Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff
Signature Books

T. Edgar Lyon Article Awards

Excellence in Mormon History Articles

LOWELL "BEN" BENNION

"A Geographic Discovery of Great Basin Kingdom" in *Great Basin Kingdom Revisited*
Utah State University Press

LYNNE WATKINS JORGENSEN

"John Hyde, Jr., Mormon Renegade"
Journal of Mormon History

Best Article in Mormon History

JAMES B. ALLEN

"Would-Be Saints: West Africa before the 1978 Priesthood Revelation"
Journal of Mormon History

NON-MHA AWARDS

Grace Forte Arrington Award for Historical Excellence

STANLEY B. KIMBALL

for Heber C. Kimball Mormon Patriot and Pioneer and years of research on Mormon trails

William Grover and Winnifred Foster Reese Awards for Best Thesis/Dissertation

Dissertation

STEVEN EPPERSON

"Gathering and Restoration: Early Mormon Identity and the Jewish People"
Temple University

Thesis

CHARLES R. HATCH

"Creating Ethnicity in the Hydrologic Village of the Mormon West"
Utah State University



Four of the new *Dialogue* editors: Gary James Bergera, Levi Peterson, Martha S. Bradley, and Allen Roberts.

DIALOGUE SELECTS NEW EDITORS

MARTHA S. BRADLEY AND ALLEN ROBERTS have been selected as the new editors of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. They succeed Logan-based editors F. Ross and Kay Peterson, whose five-year term ends this July. The offices of the journal will relocate to Salt Lake City by the fall.

Bradley, a BYU assistant professor of history and former chair of the Sunstone Foundation board of trustees, says the quarterly journal will still feature Mormon history and other retrospective articles, but will add a focus on "issues that affect the current life of the current member—how Mormons live today." Roberts, a Salt Lake architect and former co-editor/co-publisher of *SUNSTONE* and former associate editor of *Dialogue*, says he hopes the journal will be "progressive" and "reform-oriented" on personal and institutional levels. *Dialogue* will "not just reflect the culture," he said, "but will point in positive directions." Additionally, the editors plan to aggressively recruit new, young scholars.

Bradley and Roberts, who each recently resigned from the editorial board of the *Journal of Mormon History* to accept this assignment, recruited the following individuals to be on the executive committee: Signature Books publisher Gary James Bergera as associate editor; fiction author and Weber State University English professor Levi Peterson as fiction editor; BYU sociology professor Marie Cornwall as issues and essays editor; Utah Humanities Council director Delmont Oswald as book review editor; and Salt Lake City lawyer Alan Smith as legal counsel and financial manager. The new advisory committee, whose job is to generate article ideas, solicit manuscripts, and represent non-Wasatch Front constituencies, includes so far RLDS historian Paul Edwards, University of Washington sociologist Armand Mauss, California feminist Lorie Winder Stromberg, and Snow College English professor Steve Peterson. The office staff will be announced later.

Four-issue annual subscriptions to *Dialogue* are \$25. Send them to: *Dialogue*, P.O. Box 658, Salt Lake City, UT 84110 (801/363-9988).

NEW INTELLECTUAL GROUP TO FIGHT DEFAMATION

THIS SUMMER a group of Latter-day Saints organized the Mormon Alliance (briefly called the Mormon Defense League) to "uncover, identify, define, name, chronicle, resist, and even combat acts and threats of defamation and spiritual abuse perpetuated on Mormon individuals and institutions by Mormon and non-Mormon individuals and institutions."

The Mormon Alliance's literature states that it has four major divisions. The Reconciliation Project will intervene by request for individuals involved in disciplinary councils who have been subject to spiritual abuse in order to assure that procedures are followed according to revelation; it will also "promote the principles of justice, fairness, even-handedness, equity, and due process" of Mormons by the Church, and promote support groups for abused and ex-Mormons. The Defense Project will defend the Church and its leaders and members from anti-Mormon libel, slander, and defamation. The Case Studies Project will "compile, verify, and publish accounts of defamation and spiritual abuse." The Common Consent Counsel will communicate with Church leaders about the Alliance's activities.

Alliance organizer Paul Toscano told the *Salt Lake Tribune* that because of "certain spiritually abusive and defamatory actions recently committed by some Church leaders against Church members," the "time may have come for a reasonable, compassionate, and coordinated response. . . . We are trying to form a group of committed Latter-day Saints who want to take some action to prevent Mormons from abusing other Mormons." Currently, the Alliance is exploring what a Mormon Bill of Rights would consist of.

Some of the cases the Alliance is currently reviewing include individuals who have been called in and talked to by local Church leaders at the direction of their area presidents for expressing their views on controversial topics. One particular case involves Eugene Kovalenko, who was recently excommunicated by his stake president for "not sustaining" the Mormon leaders, showing insufficient remorse, and disobeying his local leaders. Reportedly, Kovalenko's offenses began two years ago with a speech he gave on a value crisis in the Church. The Alliance is challenging the disciplinary council's procedures, which it says intimidated at length, belittled, and violated revealed procedures by not polling each member of the stake high council nor in allowing Kovalenko sufficient time or witnesses for a response.

The Mormon Alliance's mailing address is P. O. Box 215, Salt Lake City, UT 84121.

MORMONS ORGANIZE NUCLEAR PROTEST GROUP

A GROUP of Mormons are working to end nuclear weapons testing at the Nevada Test Site. The recently organized Mormon Peace Gathering is hosting a 26-27 March 1993 spiritual retreat/protest weekend in Las Vegas and Mercury, Nevada. As stated in an MPG flyer: "In our own lives, we are grateful for the testimony of God's love we have experienced in feeling called to bear personal witness against preparations for nuclear war. We feel an obligation to talk and reflect together on the significance of what we have experienced. . . . The

Mormon weekend will provide us with an opportunity to lift and strengthen one another in an expression of faith that integrates Mormon identity with peacemaking. Like our pioneer forbearers, our faith in God challenges us to embark together upon a spiritual journey into the desert."

The weekend will include individual reflection, testimony sharing, group worship and singing, nonviolence training, and meals together. The retreat will culminate with a Sunday, desert open-air, worship service at the entry gate to the Mercury test site, followed by an optional "nonviolent direct action" protest (civil disobedience) that involves "crossing the line" onto Federal property. A Peace Primary is being planned for children ages four and above. MPG sponsored a session at the recent Sunstone symposium in Salt Lake City that explored their weekend plans (#90 on the tape ad in this issue).

The Mormon weekend is organized in conjunction with the Nevada Desert Experience, a Las Vegas faith-based organization that throughout Lent schedules weekend protests by different religious groups, including Catholics, Methodists, Episcopalians, Quakers, Jews, and Buddhists. The Mormon Peace Gathering's address is P. O. Box 520736, Salt Lake City, UT 84152 (801/595-8226).

BOLIVIA MAKES ARREST FOR MISSIONARY MURDERS

BOLIVIAN POLICE arrested Johnny Justino Peralta Espinoza for the 1989 murder of two LDS missionaries. Peralta was arrested at his mother's home. "He was very sick and thought he was dying," Bolivian Sub-Secretary of the Interior Marco Antonio Oviedo told the *Salt Lake Tribune*. "He thought this was the last chance he might have to see his mother. We've been staking her house out for years."

Peralta is the leader of the guerrilla group Zarate Willka that claimed responsibility for the killings in a statement that read: "Yankees and their Bolivian lackeys' . . . violations of our national sovereignty will not remain unpunished. . . . The Yankee invaders who come to massacre our peasant brethren are warned . . . there remains no other path of the poor than rising up in arms." The attack occurred during a strike against the Bolivian government, which was under U.S. pressure to limit peasant rights to grow coca, and after failed attempts to assassinate U.S. government officials, including Secretary of State George Shultz.

Five guerrillas were later captured and now await sentencing; Peralta was tried and convicted in absentia. The U.S. embassy offered \$500,000 for information leading to his capture. Two other leaders are still at large.

DUNN REPORTER SAYS THE PRICE TOO HIGH

MORMON JOURNALIST Lynn Packer recently said that if he had known that he would lose two jobs because of his news stories about the LDS church he would not have done them. "I'm not a martyr," he told the *Salt Lake Tribune*. "With benefit of hindsight, I wouldn't do it again." Packer said he lost a job as a reporter for the Church-owned KSL-TV because of his aggressive reporting on the Church's involvement with convicted murderer and document forger Mark Hofmann. Packer also said he was denied continued employment as a non-tenured BYU journalism instructor because of his investigations into the finances and baseball and war stories of Elder Paul H. Dunn, which were reported by the *Arizona Republic*, *Utah Holiday*, and *SUNSTONE*.

IRS SUIT THREATENS LDS TITHE-PAYING

IN 1989 the Internal Revenue Service won a U.S. Supreme Court case that disallowed members of the Church of Scientology from listing as tax deductions contributions for "auditing," a form of religious counseling required of its faithful members, because the donor received direct services for their donations. Now, in a case before the U.S. Tax Court in Washington, D.C., the IRS is again challenging Scientology donations because members receive "quid-pro" service in exchange for fees. The Scientologists counter that other religions do the same, such as Catholic donations to have a mass celebrated for deceased loved ones, Jewish tickets to the high holy days in exchange for donations, and the LDS requirement of tithing for admittance to its temples. As a result, the IRS is looking at giving in other religions, reported the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

On 14 April, LDS Apostle Dallin H. Oaks testified in Washington, D.C., and explained that tithing and temple attendance were not a quid pro quo relationship because tithing is but one of many requirements for temple attendance. Additionally, tithing is assessed by individuals rather than imposed by the Church.

BYU INDIAN ENROLLMENT IS STILL FALLING

THE 103 Native Americans enrolled last year at Brigham Young University were but a fraction of over a thousand who were enrolled during the 1960s. Rush Sumpter, director of BYU's multicultural programs, told the *Daily Universe* that the reasons for the decline in enrollment is not the result of reduced financial aid, which he says is still strong, but is due both to new aggressive recruiting from other schools with more financially attractive programs and to BYU's increasingly high academic standards, which were more lax in the 1960s. However, BYU graduate Larry Echohawk, a Native American and Idaho's attorney general, said that he believes BYU has become less aggressive in its recruiting of Native Americans and criticizes the university for not continuing as before. In a speech last year in Farmington, New Mexico, to a Navajo audience, Echohawk criticized BYU and the Church for neglecting its special Book of Mormon commission to educate Lamanites to become leaders.

Number of Native American Students Enrolled at BYU from 1977 to 1991:

1977—395	1982—324	1987—193
1978—380	1983—319	1988—149
1979—364	1984—295	1989—159
1980—381	1985—255	1990—132
1981—379	1986—238	1991—103

SOURCE: BYU INSTITUTIONAL STUDIES, JUNE 1992

EMMA OPERA PREMIERES IN NEW YORK

THIS SUMMER, Hell's Kitchen Opera Company produced the New York premiere of "Emma," a ten-woman opera composed by former BYU music professor Murray Boren. "The opera explores Emma [Smith's] decision not to go West with the Saints," Boren told the *Salt Lake Tribune*. "It deals with the question of making choices." In the beginning of the second act, Emma sings a forty-five minute aria in which she recalls her and Joseph Smith's first love, elopement, and the explosion of violence in the details of daily life, and her final loss. *New York Times* reviewer Allan Kozinn was not favorably impressed with the ninety-minute work. "The sustained slow-motion caterwauling of the first five minutes was ample warning that this

would be a very, very long evening," he wrote. "For the most part, Mr. Boren's vocal writing works against comprehension of the text, and even a listener who had read the libretto in advance had trouble making out what was being sung. An exception was the line 'Joseph is dead,' repeated at brief intervals some 25 or 30 times." "Emma" librettist Larry Samuelson said the opera provided him the opportunity to explore Mormon theology. He said he came to view Emma Smith as one of history's great tragic figures, "comparable to a King David or Antigone."

POLYGAMISTS WILL NOT BE PROSECUTED

CANADIAN AUTHORITIES in British Columbia said in June that they would not prosecute leaders of a polygamous commune in a case brought by a woman who fled the commune. They said the law banning plural marriage unconstitutionally restricts religious freedom. Rulon Jeffs, head of the United Effort Order, based in Colorado City, Ariz., a break-away Mormon sect that runs the Canadian commune, praised the ruling as a signpost on the road to legalization of polygamy. But Rob Hender of neighboring Bluffdale, Ut., fears the legalization of polygamy because "it will no longer be the religious practice that will bring [people] into the practice of God." He said legalization will "bring us into the situation where men become whoredoms."

Meanwhile in Utah, Tom Snyder filed a suit against Utah Attorney General Paul Van Dam for not prosecuting polygamists since plural marriage is prohibited by the state constitution. John Clark, counsel to the attorney general, responded by saying that most Utahns don't want polygamists prosecuted. "It's obvious from the lack of prosecutions that attitudes have changed since the '30s and '40s," he said, noting that polygamists are prosecuted on such things as welfare fraud and child abuse.

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED CLIPS COUGARS

IN ITS ANNUAL football guide, the August *Sports Illustrated* reported that BYU's football team is widely loathed for its holier-than-thou attitude and its relentless success. Author Douglas S. Looney listed several reasons why the Cougars are despised, including a perceived anti-black bias exhibited by BYU players who allegedly taunt black players on other teams and the fact that BYU's players are often older, more mature, and have more bulk because they extend their eligibility by two years as a result of missionary service. BYU coach LaVell Edwards noted that this was not considered a problem until his team started winning. He also said that if his team were actually taunting other black players, his own black players would be the first to know. After news reports of the story surfaced, Utah papers came to the team's defense. University of Utah coach Ron McBride said the "hatred for BYU is more jealousy than anything. If they weren't winning all the time . . . nobody would give a damn, would they?"

SCOUTS LOSE RELIGIOUS COURT CASE

CALIFORNIA Superior Court Judge Richard O. Frazee ruled that the Boy Scouts of America violated the civil rights of a pair of Anaheim Hills twins by kicking them out of their Cub Scout pack when they refused to say "God" in their Scout oath, and ordered the organization to readmit the boys. BSA argued that belief in God is an essential element of Scouting and that the organization is private. The boys' attorney-father, James Randall, argued that the Boy Scouts, a nonprofit organization, is a public "business establishment" and subject to civil rights laws. Frazee's ruling is the first clear-cut courtroom defeat for the Boy Scouts on the issue of religious discrimination.

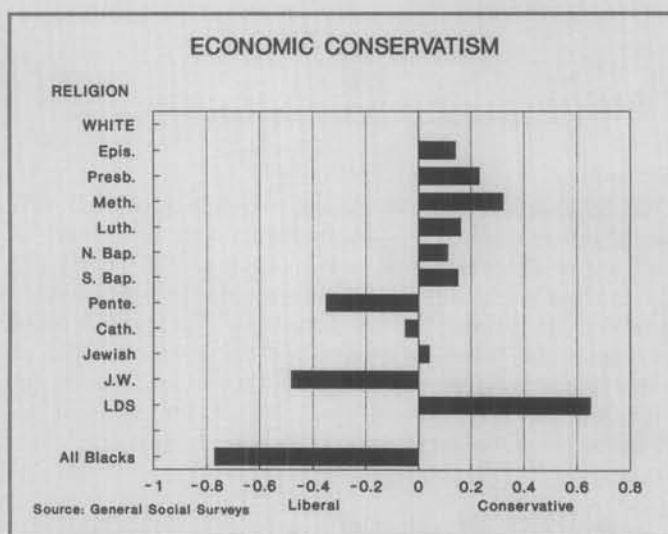
SUNSTONE CALENDAR

1992 CHICAGO SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM will be held on **16-17 October**. Proposals for papers and panel discussions are now being accepted. Contact: Becky and Kirk Linford, 961 Elm Court, Naperville, IL 60540-0348 (708/778-9551).

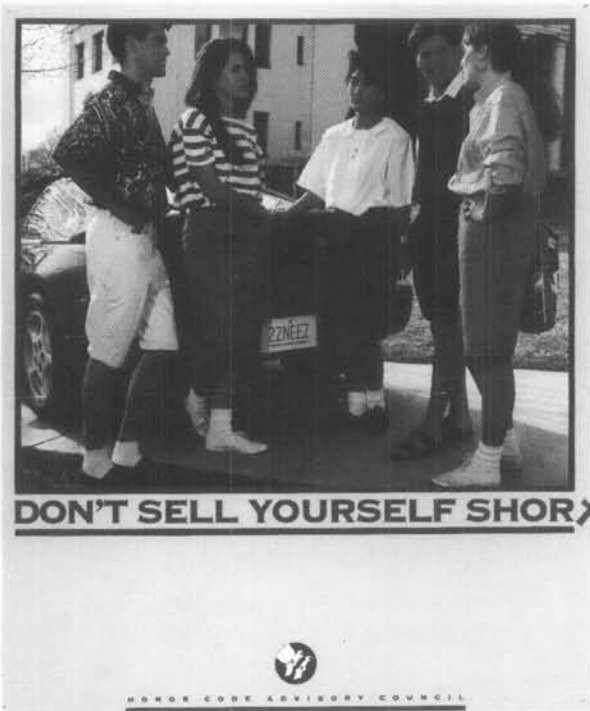
1992 NORTHWEST SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM will be held on **23-24 October**. Proposals for papers and panel discussions are now being accepted. Contact: Molly Bennion, 1150 22nd Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98112 (206/325-6868).

PECULIAR PEOPLE

ECONOMIC CONSERVATISM



IN A PREVIOUS issue we showed that Mormons are more likely than most other religious groups to be Republican. They are also more likely to oppose government efforts to redistribute income. The National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago conducts a national survey of opinions and attitudes each year. By combining several years of this survey, responses on attitudes toward economic redistribution were obtained for 194 Mormons. Mainline Protestant groups such as Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, and Baptists are somewhat more conservative than average. Catholics and Jews are not much different from the national average. More fundamentalist groups such as Pentecostals and Jehovah Witnesses tend to have more liberal attitudes toward economic redistribution. Blacks are particularly liberal. Mormons are by far the most conservative groups with a score more than .6 standard deviations above the mean. Even after statistically adjusting for income, education, employment, age, political party affiliation, marital status, and gender, Mormons are by far the most conservative group.



SHORTS CITED

IN THE 1960s it was mini-skirts; today it's shorts. A year ago, BYU allowed students to wear shorts on campus that were "knee length or lower"; but, as some prophesied, many students pushed the line. For returned missionaries, this meant not wearing their garments or creatively hiding them (often not successfully). To inspire student conformance, the Honor Code Advisory Counsel posted copies of this hip fashion poster around campus. As of now, students are not being required to kneel to prove that their shorts are just above the knee before being allowed to enter the dormitory cafeterias.

MORMON-CORRECT LANGUAGE

IN THE 1970s when the phrase *Zion society* was ubiquitously used, popularized by Hugh Nibley's BYU address, "What is Zion: A Distant View" (SUNSTONE 13:2), the word went out to Church editors and wordsmiths to eliminate the term from official Mormon usage. The Lord and his people establish *Zion*, which embraces, of course, much more than a society. In the 1980s *inactive* was changed to *less active* and *non-member* to *non-LDS*. Now, *free agency* is quietly disappearing from official Church parlance. Recently, several Church spokespersons and knowledgeable Church Office Building insiders have corrected the use of *free agency* to *moral agency*, although Church magazine editors just use *agency*, deleting *free* because it is redundant. Interestingly, *free agency* is not mentioned in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. It is not possible to document the origin of the change, but Apostle Boyd K. Packer noted it in a 1990 address: "The agency the Lord has given us is not a 'free' agency. The term 'free' agency is not found in the revelations. It is a *moral agency*. The Lord has given us freedom of choice: 'That every man may act in *doctrine* and *principle* pertaining to futurity, according to the *moral agency* which I have given unto him. . . ." (D&C 101:78 [emphasis in his address].) ("Let Them Govern Themselves," SUNSTONE 14:5).



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