

**MORMON
EXPERIENCE
SCHOLARSHIP
ISSUES & ART**

SUNSTONE

FEATURES

CHRISTINE M. DURHAM

on activist **Pioneer women** as feminist role models (p. 16)

JAN SHIPPS

on the neglected story of Mormonism that **60 Minutes** missed (p. 82)

CHANGES IN THE RLDS CHURCH

by **Roger Launius**
(p. 45)

A SAD CHRONOLOGY OF ACADEMIC WRONGS AT BYU

by a faculty member (p. 61)

BOOK OF MORMON HISTORICITY

A comparison by **Todd Compton** of books by Signature and FARMS (p. 74)

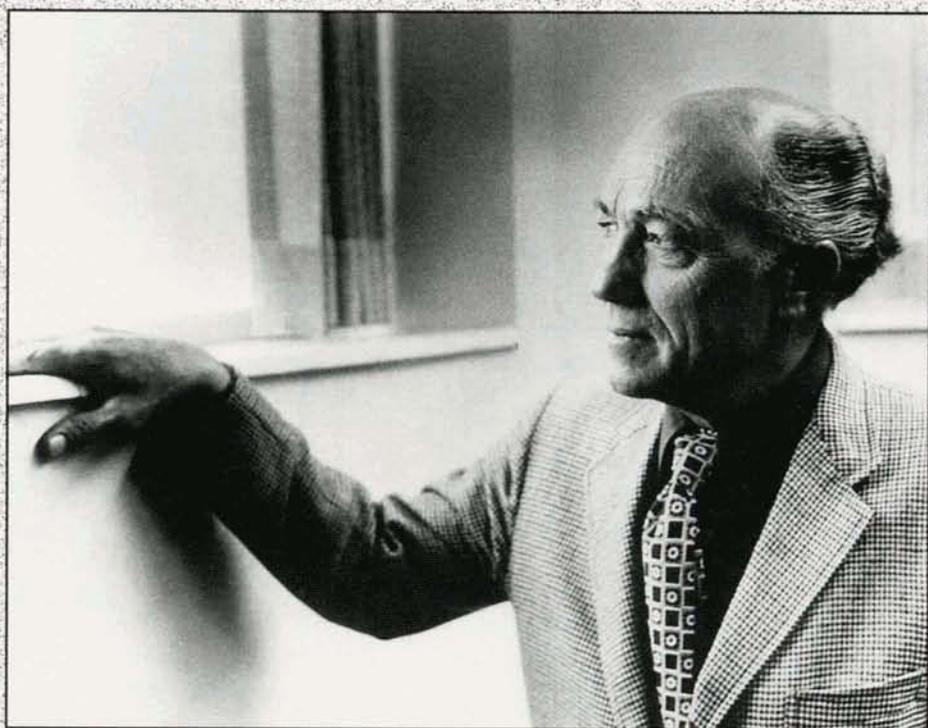
NEWS

Church makes subtle changes in the temple recommend interview (p. 87)

BYU re-accredited for another ten years (p. 92)

LDS athlete denied award because he is not "Christian" (p. 91)

Russian second-in-command calls Mormons "mold and filth" (p. 87)



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16	Christine M. Durham	FEATURES	"RISE UP, YE WOMEN THAT ARE AT EASE" <i>The Joy Anna Mathews Memorial Lecture</i>
21	Cecilia Konchar Farr	WE BELONG TO ONE ANOTHER IN FAITH	
25	Carol B. Quist	OTHER HANDS	<i>Brookie & D. K. Brown Fiction Contest Winner</i>
27	Eugene England	THE LEGACY OF LOWELL L. BENNION	
45	Roger D. Launius	THE RLDS CHURCH AND THE DECADE OF DECISION	
56	Brady Udall	BEAUTIFUL PLACES	<i>Brookie & D. K. Brown Fiction Contest Winner</i>
61	Anonymous	"CLIPPED AND CONTROLLED": A CONTEMPORARY LOOK AT BYU	
11	Frank L. Ryan	POETRY	
13	Holly Welker	MIRACLES	
20	Anita Tanner	THE SWIMMER	
26	Anne Fasulo	DITCHES	
44	Niranjan Mohanty	LAKE CHELAN	
55	Anita Tanner	GRIEF	
60	Sean Brendan-Brown	WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES, AN IMAGE	
72	C. Wade Bentley	BLUE CHINA	
		THE LAST TIME	
8	W. Grant McMurray	COLUMNS	
9	Elbert Eugene Peck	OF GOOD REPORT: A Prophetic People	
10	L. Jackson Newell	FROM THE EDITOR	
12	Ione Washburn	Latter-day Saints' Little Instruction Book	
14	Edgar C. Snow Jr.	IN MEMORIAM: Sterling M. McMurrin	
14		TURNING THE TIME OVER TO . . .	
15		Kitchens	
		CORNUCOPIA	
15	Kris Cassity	BOOK OF MORMON MUSINGS: Ms. Wisdom	
73	J. Frederic Voros Jr.	The Top 10 Biblical Ways to Acquire a Wife	
96	Lowell L. Bennion	PECULIAR PEOPLE: Average Yearly Growth in Membership by Region	
74	Todd Compton	TWENTY YEARS AGO: Never Arriving	
82	Jan Shipps	LIGHTER MINDS: Ten Thousand Serious Insights: Mormon Erudition Made Easy	
82		AN OLIVE LEAF: The Weightier Matters	
84	Jan Shipps	REVIEWS	
87		CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP AND THE BOOK OF MORMON <i>New Approaches to the Book of Mormon</i> ed. by Brent Lee Metcalfe and <i>Review of Books on the Book of Mormon</i> , vol. 6:1, ed. by Daniel C. Peterson	
		NEWS	
		ON THE RECORD	
		THE NEGLECTED STORY OF MORMONISM TODAY: WHAT MIKE WALLACE MISSED	
		EXCERPTS FROM THE 60 MINUTES INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT HINCKLEY	
		THE RLDS STORY	
		CHURCH MAKES SUBTLE CHANGES IN TEMPLE RECOMMEND INTERVIEW	
		UPDATE • AWARDS • BYUPDATE • PEOPLE THE MORMON UNIVERSE • OXYMORNS SUNSPOTS • SUNSTONE CALENDAR	

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READERS' FORUM

GETTING IT ON THE NOSE

THE RESPONSES OF both Tory Corser and Maxine Hanks (SUNSTONE, June 1996) to Pat Bagley's cover illustration for my article "Could Feminism Have Saved the Nephites?" (Mar. 1996) were my exact first response. "Oh, no!" I groaned. "This is not what my article says at all. This is exactly the opposite of what I'm saying."

Before long, my groan changed to a giggle. Of course this is not the message. Pat did not fail to "get it." The cartoon is a wonderful demonstration of the absurd notion that women do or should play the game the same as men traditionally have done. It clearly catches the reader's eye and makes her/him say, "Whoa. What is this all about?" Possibly more readers paid attention than if he had come at the message more "on the nose."

A radical non-Mormon feminist friend from Berkeley fell in love with the cover. Knowing that it was in fact an anti-illustration of my theme, she insisted that I give her a cover to frame. She called it "delightful, paradoxical, and sophisticated."

I am by no means ready, as Tory Corser is, to dismiss Pat Bagley as one who "dislikes women." I have never met Pat, much to my own loss, but I have adored his work and believe he and I could be fine friends.

As I have continued to look at the cartoon, I find myself thinking it is a good warning to women not to make the mistake of believing that feminism means we are now free to do all the things—both good and stupid—that men have traditionally done. A headline in last week's paper, "Girls, Women, Match Men for Abuse of Drugs, Alcohol," and the incredible increase in tobacco use by girls (more than boys), demonstrates how urgent it is that we as women live our lives and give our gifts from our own authenticity and refuse to follow a pattern of power that primarily has been mapped by males.

CAROL LYNN PEARSON

Walnut Creek, CA

THE RELIGIOUS ACADEMY

YOUR DISCUSSION of the parietal regulations at Brigham Young University implicitly invokes the model of the liberal and secular university and criticizes BYU for flagrantly differing from that model ("Annual Interview Now Required for BYU Faculty," SUNSTONE, June 1996). But the comparison is inapt since BYU does not pretend to consti-

tute a secular, free-standing autonomous university. It has undertaken a much more difficult, quite different, but legitimate academic challenge: to seek truth within the premises of a religious vision of the world. Quite correctly, BYU does not treat religion as generic but invokes what its founders and their heirs maintain is the one true religion. To ask BYU to conform to the norms of a secular and (in Mormon terms) gentile university ignores that for which the university stands.

The correct comparison is offered by Evangelical-Protestant, Catholic, Islamic, and Judaic centers of higher learning. In the case of Judaism, take not the case of Brandeis University, which is unabashedly secular, left-wing liberal and only residually ethnic-Jewish, but take Bar Ilan University in Israel or Yeshiva University in New York City. There the academic study of the Hebrew Scriptures (a.k.a. "the Old Testament") goes forward along lines that mark out both an academic and also a theologically appropriate territory. Everyone understands that certain areas of contemporary scholarship will not intrude. No one has to be fired for teaching the documentary hypothesis or the three Isaiahs theory because these universities do not appoint candidates who hold those views—nor do such scholars wish to teach there. All respect and accept the rules that define these communities of the faithful, and everyone joins in a quest for truth within the framework of the faith.

The religious academies want no monopoly on learning and claim none. The real criterion for an authentic university, religious or secular, is willingness to engage with the ideas of outsiders. As a non-Orthodox, practicing Jew, I have found a warm welcome at Bar Ilan University (but none at the liberal, secular Hebrew University); as a "gentile," I have found a thoughtful hearing many times at BYU; as a non-Christian, at the Pontifical University in Rome. But for all their boasted-of liberal spirit, the secular universities in our generation do not form models of that tolerance for diverse viewpoints, let alone willingness to appoint people who dissent from the norms of the community, which the ideal of the liberal secular university demands. BYU owes no apology to the academic world but offers a model of integrity: it lives up to its convictions, as well as its academic vocation. Should it turn second-rate in the academic fields, then comes the time to cavi.

JACOB NEUSNER

St. Petersburg, FL

BYUSPEAK

IN THE LAST DAYS, BYU students spread upon Provo's East Bench and began to be divided into classes. Compliance was monitored by the Referral Card ("Administration Re-emphasizes Honor Code," SUNSTONE, June 1996).

The class divisions took these forms: those with "earring" (unacceptable) and those with earrings (acceptable); those with "facial hair" (unacceptable) and those with facial fuzz (acceptable); those with "shorts" short enough to warrant the term (unacceptable) and those with shorts more appropriately called "longs" (acceptable); but, most telling, those with "other" (unacceptable) and those without "other" (acceptable).

I shall recommend to my grandchildren and great grandchildren that they attend USU, U. of U. or You-Name-It U. where diversity is considered the spice of life, where Big Brother is not your constant companion, and where free agency is still alive and well.

RICHARD F. KEELER
Nibley, UT

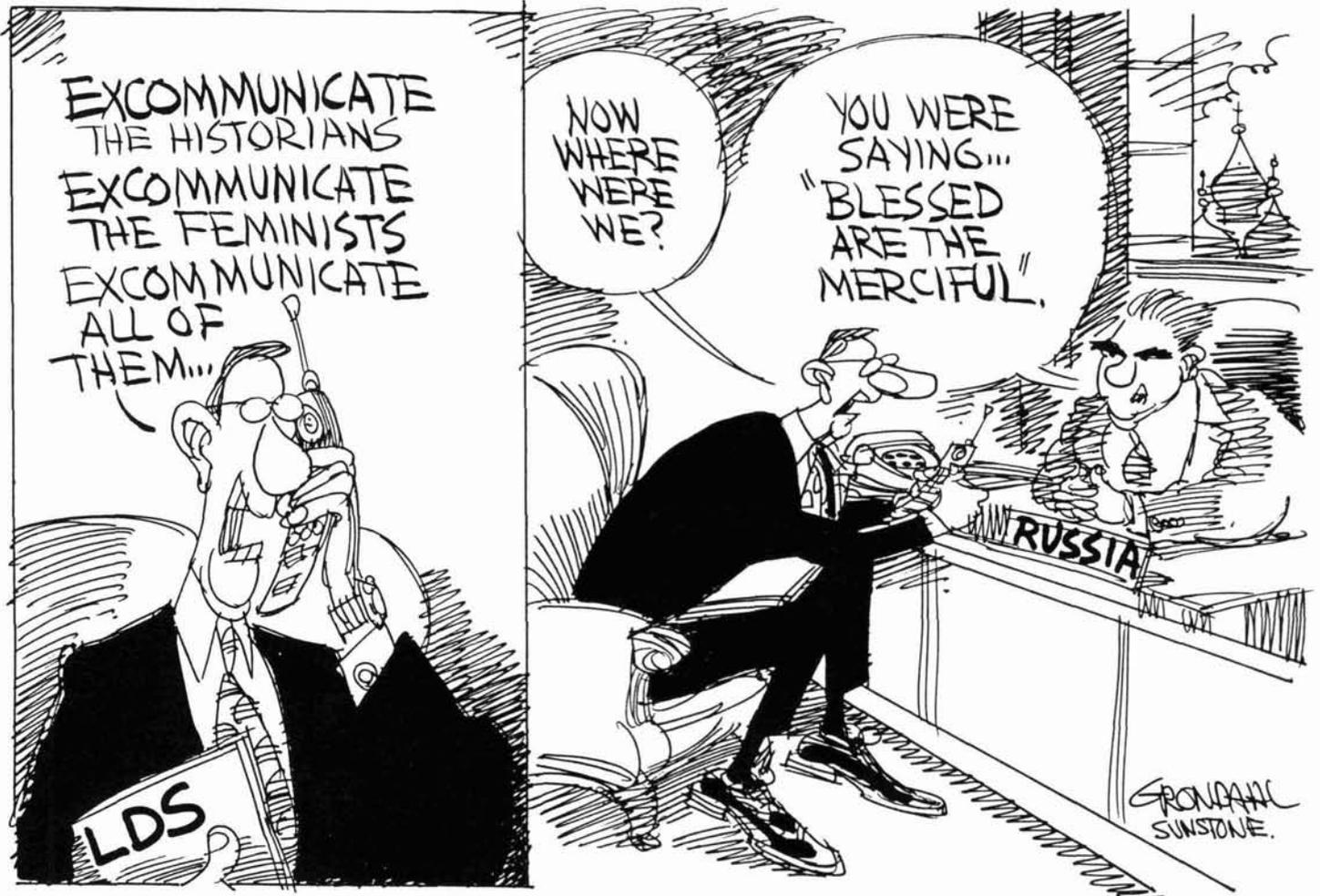
THREE REACTIONS

I OFFER three reactions to the June 1996 SUNSTONE: (1) In a generous review of my book, *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation*, Kendall White questions whether the Church's seeming turn to the right in social and political matters in recent decades was not more indicative of continuing "assimilation" with the Reagan Revolution rather than a "retrenchment" or turning away from the national consensus, as I claimed. My response is that both Church policy (e.g. in *Roe v. Wade* and the Equal Rights Amendment) and Mormon voting patterns generally antedated national trends by some years.

(2) It is not clear from the summary of the survey of BYU graduates' Church activity whether the researchers gave adequate consideration to the highly selective nature of BYU applicants as a "sample" of Mormon youth ("BYU Grads More Active than Other University Attenders"). Those who meet all the ecclesiastical requirements for BYU admission come from home backgrounds pro-

viding a high probability that they will apply to BYU and go on missions and have temple marriages and be active in the Church as adults. BYU graduation itself might have very little independent impact on their future Church activity beyond those other factors.

(3) In endnote 121 to his interesting "LDS Church Finances: From the 1830s to the 1990s," Mike Quinn takes me mildly to task for relying on a private letter from President George Albert Smith to refute the claim of another scholar that a 1945 ward teaching message was not official Church policy ("when our leaders speak the thinking has been done"). My response is (a) President Smith's letter was private only because he was replying to an equally private inquiry; (b) private or not, his letter states that the message did not represent Church policy; (c) at least since the 1986 *Dialogue* revelation of this Smith letter, it is no longer "private," and careful scholars will take due account of it; and (d) the 1978 and 1979 pronouncements Quinn takes as counterparts of the ward teaching message come a whole generation after 1945, consistent with my understand-



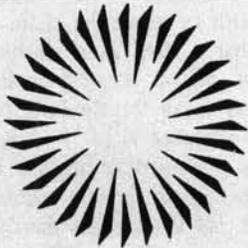
ing that they reflect the "retrenchment" mentality of more recent years, not a consistent official policy. Furthermore, I see a subtle but important difference between saying (as recent leaders have) that "the debate is over" when the Church president speaks (which implies no infallibility) vs. saying that "the thinking has been done" (which carries some implication of infallibility). Anyone who

knows the complex process by which we get our Church lessons (especially in the hazardous days before Correlation) would be reluctant to attribute "official" status to a 1945 ward teaching lesson. Saints at the grassroots are unfortunately inclined to make such attributions, but scholars ought not to do so.

ARMAND L. MAUSS
Pullman, WA

Editor's response:

The reason the researchers felt they could claim that BYU makes a difference in Church activity was because they compared two very similar groups: the bottom 5 percent of those applicants who were admitted to the university and the top 5 percent of those who were rejected. The study made no attempt to deal with those who don't apply at all.



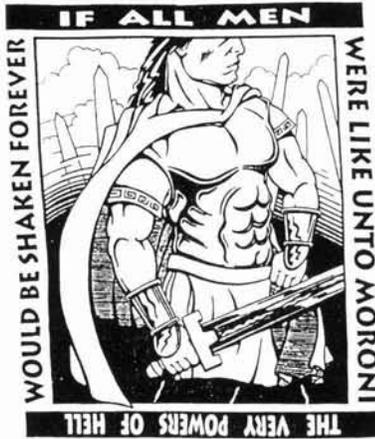
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THE SKINNY ON PHAT

WHERE CAN I purchase one of the "phat" T-shirts shown in the last issue?

JOHN COX
Alexandria, VA

Editors' response: We got ours at The Souvenir Stop at Temple Square, which is in the ZCMI Center (801/537-7766).

A COMMON PHENOMENON

MY REGARDS TO Robert Page. "An Edifying Encounter with Unrighteous Dominion" (SUNSTONE, June 1996) illustrated how a Christian might respond to ecclesiastical abuse. I reach for a Tums tablet each time I read about cases of Mormon ecclesiastical abuse in *Dialogue* and SUNSTONE. Like an insect buzzing toward a flame, I am drawn to these abuse accounts and burned with the satisfaction that comes to the self-righteously indignant: "If I were in charge, none of this would ever happen!" Page's article convinced me otherwise; Doctrine and Covenants 121:39 appears to be the key to understanding ecclesiastical abuse:

We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion [*emphasis added*].

Section 121 is drawn from a letter Joseph Smith wrote to Church leaders in Quincy, Illinois, and the context makes it clear that Joseph included members in the phrase "almost all men." I venture that "almost all men" is at least 75 percent and likely 90 percent of all men (and women, to correct the male-

centered language of Joseph's day) in authority. We have to admit that, if called to a position of authority, each of us would likely be included in this percentage. This fact does not excuse ecclesiastical abuse, but acknowledging this human weakness enables us to deal with it in a Christ-like manner.

EDGAR C. SNOW JR.
Atlanta, GA

RESISTING EVIL

ROBERT A. PAGE presented a strange and disturbing concept of unrighteous dominion. He appears to condone the ideas of political correctness and peace at any price. One is forced to be ever vigilant in one's dealings with Church members because some of the worst scoundrels masquerade as temple recommend holders. I have been seriously cheated financially and emotionally and have had to learn some hard lessons in self-sufficiency because of the "nice," soft attitudes that are commonplace today.

Recently, Laura Schlessinger commented that, "If we refuse to judge others, we allow evil full rein." Consider Doctrine and Covenants 123:11-17, especially:

we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, wherein we know them . . . —these should be attended to with great earnestness. Let no man count them as small things. . . . let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power. . . .

It is possible and even necessary to judge

righteously. We cannot afford to abdicate this responsibility in the fight against the forces of evil, or we will ultimately be held accountable, especially when we hold positions of trust and our decisions affect others.

WENDY SILVER
West Jordan, UT

REAL MORMONS

KUDOS TO Linda Rugg ("Teaching Confessions to Saints: A Non-LDS Professor and Her LDS Students," SUNSTONE, Dec. 1995) and Susan Elizabeth Howe ("The Moral Imagination," SUNSTONE, Dec. 1995), whose articles renewed my hope that literature may yet recover moral authority. Howe's poem "To the Violent Literati" precisely diagnoses the failure of moral imagination that makes much contemporary literature a socially pernicious wallow in violence.

But Julie Nichols's short story "Jesus Laughing," and Neil LaBute's play *Bash: A Remembrance of Hatred and Longing* (SUNSTONE, Dec. 1995) augment my despair. Unlike the non-Mormon Rugg, these Mormon authors never penetrate the surface of their own religion. Does Nichols expect us to believe an active woman, suddenly abandoned by her husband and desperate for financial help, would get nothing but a casserole from her ward? LaBute's group of returned missionaries who brutally beat a gay man, then pour consecrated oil on him is equally implausible.

The falseness of *Bash* is apparent in



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Michael Chandler's response to the play (in Neal Chandler's "Sabbath School Bash," SUNSTONE, Dec. 1995). She identified with LaBute's fictional Mormons up to the point where they became brutally violent; then, she being a real Mormon, the connection broke, and she was appalled. The instruction in tolerance from her parents notwithstanding, Michael can't yet completely accept a person who copulates in the woods, then kisses in public, tongue out and hands where they hadn't ought to be, who moments later hits on, kisses, fumbles with the fly of a second partner. Hetero- or homosexual, that is disgusting behavior she shouldn't accept. Of course, nothing merits the violence that follows, and LaBute deserves credit for portraying it in such a way that we identify with the victim, not the criminals.

LaBute claims to confront us but actually panders. For his audience, the dead homosexual is a perfect analogue of the dead child in Richard Evans's *The Christmas Box*. The sympathy the image evokes is automatic, as in the distaste for cardboard religious villains. Unlike, say, John D. Lee, these characters bash because they are criminals, not because they are Mormons, so the patina of conservative Mormonism serves only to confirm his audience's liberal biases.

LaBute could learn much about challenging Mormon and non-Mormon preconceptions from Rugg, whose Mormons ring true. Her BYU students called into question nihilistic, postmodern assumptions about the self

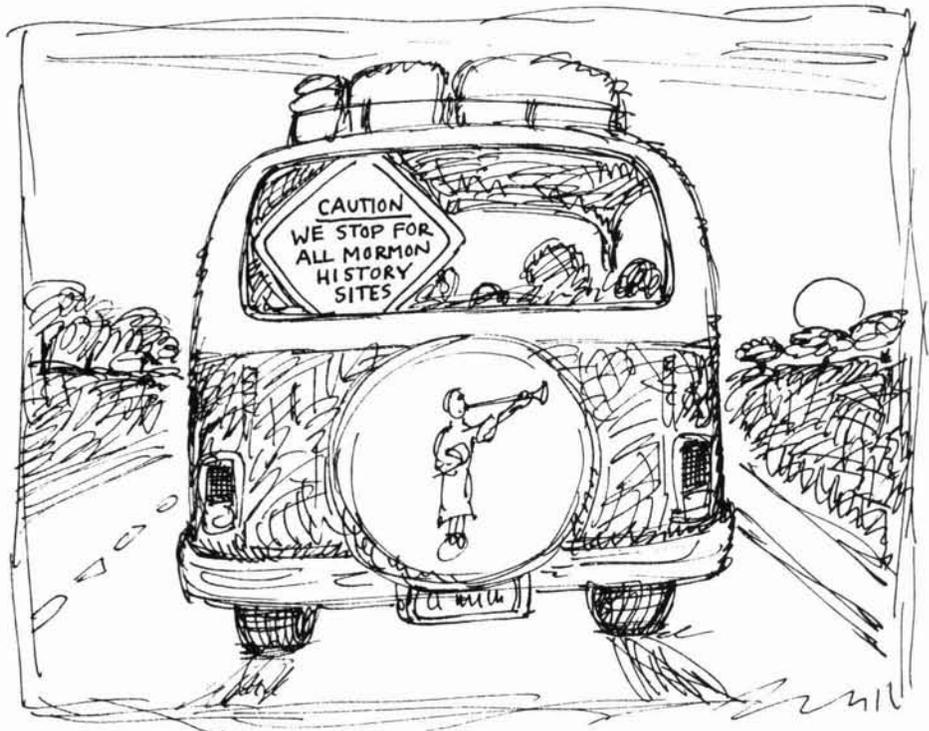
that she had not fully examined and now questions. She, in turn, deconstructed Mormon autobiographical conventions that idealize us and, thus, hide our authentic testimony from ourselves and our posterity.

VAL LARSEN
Kirksville, MO

Julie Nichols responds:

Val Larsen says that Neil LaBute and I "never penetrate the surface of [our] religion." As proof, Larsen asks if I really think my narrator's mother's ward would do nothing to help her besides give her a casserole. This is an irrelevant concern; my narrator is neither mainstream Mormon nor mainstream anything (that's more to the point than whether her active mother would receive help from her ward, though I have heard plenty of real-life ward horror stories). She's not trying to penetrate the surface of Mormonism—she's trying to penetrate the surface of her *life*, which mainstream Mormonism and its interpretation by her brother, father, mother, and the whole valley around her have denied and so convoluted that she doesn't know who or what to trust.

"Literature" can be so slippery! Here's another real-life story. A meeting was held about one of these "violent literati" that Susan Howe writes so eloquently about. At this meeting were a lawyer, a zoologist, an English professor, and a few other men. The lawyer held his nose and declared the violent fiction in question to be utterly worthless. The English professor suggested that it's pos-



sible to think legal briefs worthless, unless one knows what he wants from them. The lawyer said, "What? You mean there's more than one way to read? How should I then read this fiction?" The zoologist and the English professor discussed matters of theme, tone, imagery, and so on with the lawyer, who then admitted that he had not thought of any of these things when reading the violent literature. (What did he think about when he read *Othello*?) Nope—he was just looking at everything as if it were expository writing, a report about life, the way Larsen is looking at LaBute's and my pieces as if they were reports about mainstream Mormonism.

I do not mean to defend violent fiction (though I found LaBute's piece, and the response to it, very thought provoking). I do mean to suggest that just because a piece has Mormons in it does not mean either that the authors are mainstream Mormons (this smacks of Richard Cracroft's impossible notion that all "Mormon literature" should have as its audience orthodox Mormons ["Attuning the Authentic Mormon Voice: Stemming the Sophic Tide in LDS Literature," *SUNSTONE*, July 1993], as if all "Jewish literature" should have as its audience only orthodox Jews), or that the meaning of the piece is bound up in its literal detail. If you look again at my story, it's hard to know what details should be taken literally. Because of her thought patterns, her questioning, and her propensity for visions, the narrator finds it difficult to be taken seriously by any mainstream Mormon—now *that*, I think, might be closer to the point.

Neil LaBute responds:

Linda Rugg and Susan Howe's articles renewed my hope that Mormon literature may yet gain moral authority. In "To the Violent Literati" Howe has a passion to match her intellectual contentions.

I am sorry that Julie Nichols and I augment your despair. If our little ditties can do this, you must be easily thrust into that dark place. Take it easy, pal, it's just fiction. I am not as astute, so I cannot tell whether Nichols is trying to "penetrate the surface" of her religion. But she tells a damn good story, uses fresh and poetic imagery, and moves me with her delicacy and power of vision. I didn't realize that she was speaking for her entire fictional Mormon ward (and the actual Church itself) when she mentioned the casserole. It seemed one fictional gesture by one fictional group of characters that was spat upon by one fictional mother. Sad but true, and nothing like implausible.

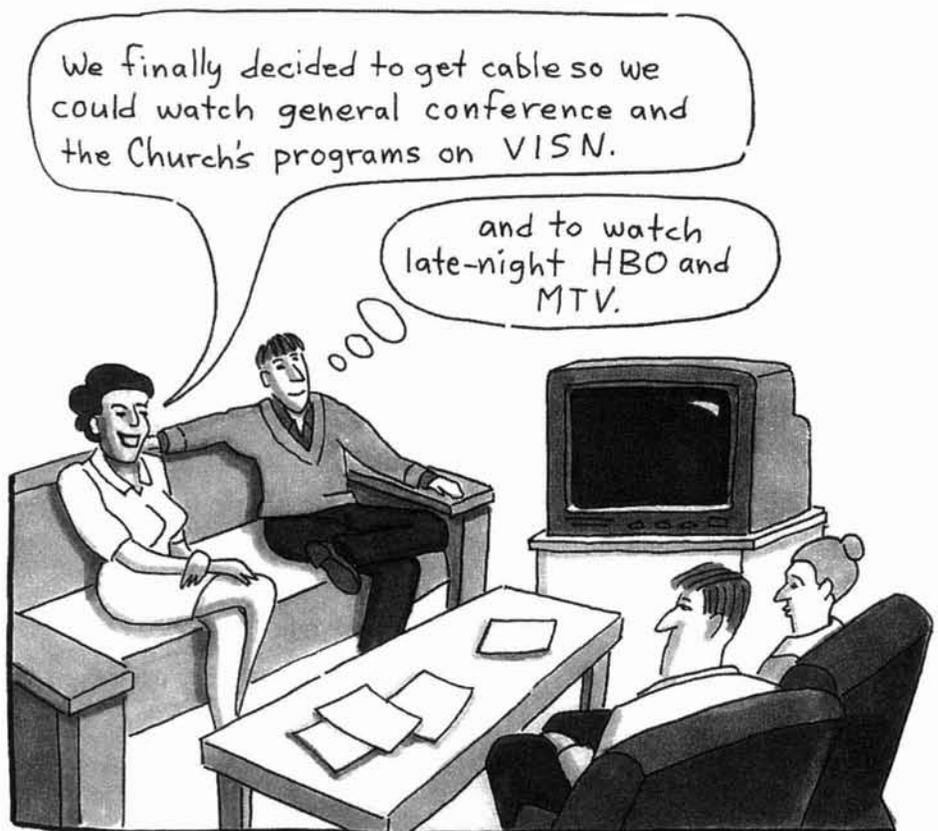
As for *Bash*, I'm glad you were careful to use "implausible" to comment on an act that I described in my preface as something that has "shocking similarity" to an actual act performed by a returned LDS missionary. You can let this young man know that his life up until now has been rendered "implausible."

Fiction has always lived comfortably within the realm of "possibility." Pithy things like "implausible" and "improbable" should roll off writers like spat-out casserole. If "implausible" stopped writers, the literary world would be lacking a Sophocles, a Shakespeare, a Dickens, the Brontës, a Vonnegut, a Card, and a Susan Elizabeth Howe or two. Are their tales of fiction *possible*, can they cling, even precariously, to the edge of the world created by their authors? That is all the reader has a right to expect. Of course a group of returned missionaries who brutally beat and pour consecrated oil on a gay man is implausible, and thankfully so! I'm thankful you weren't so bold as to use "impossible."

Your reading of my play forces me to lend more credence to Howe's notion of "naive readers." If you would read more carefully, you might have noted that Michael Chandler, like my character, found herself "shocked" at the "sudden intrusion" of the gay couple onto the "light, fun atmosphere" that constitutes the first third of the play *and* at her own "un-

deniable prejudice." If Chandler is "a real Mormon," why then has she "identified so clearly with these young people" and realized that she had "begun to share emotions with them that I had never associated with myself?" True, she is "appalled" when the boys became violent, yet she was most appalled at what "I had just seen in myself." She seems as horrified by the implausibilities she found within her own "real" LDS self as those she discovered in my little tale. More careful study would reveal that only at the time of the assault does Chandler describe herself breaking with the characters—not at or directly following when a character kisses "in public, tongue out and hands where they hadn't ought to be"—the moments you suggest that she (and other real Mormons) shouldn't accept—and certainly not when "a person . . . copulates in the woods," a moment, in fact, that does not exist in the play.

If my villains are "cardboard," so be it. I, however, take offense at "religious villains"—I have never suggested that my characters commit their momentary barbarism for any particular reason, least of all because they are Mormon. They happen to be LDS and, for the moment we view them, they break with established society, Mormon or not, and turn savage. Like William Golding's schoolboys in *Lord of the Flies* who revert when left on their



own, John and friends go wild for a bit then gather their wits and quickly get down to restoring order to their little worlds. If they hadn't been these "implausible" Mormons to start with, no doubt they would've gone to BYU instead of BC, never travelled into New York City, and certainly never walked through the park after dark. It is not impossible, however, that they do this, as others, both fictional and real, have done before them.

I'm sure there is much I could learn from the writings of Rugg about challenging Mormon and non-Mormon preconceptions. But, Mr. Larsen, if you read recent fiction and criticism as you did your incorrect paraphrasing . . . I shudder to imagine the lessons you think you've learned.

RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

WHILE J. B. Ritchie and Dave Ulrich's "The Soul of Faith: Why I Like Being a Mormon" offers some valuable insights and some good reasons for being a Mormon, their answer is indeed "too simple, too trite, too easy." If the reason for being a Mormon is the appeal of doctrine, family image, community, and fruits, in the case of the authors, or the likes of true believers, social believers, issue believers, or traditional believers, in the case of some others, does one then cease being a Mormon when likes become dislikes? Is it analogous to my grandchild's abruptly changing from liking to disliking walks among beaver ponds when she slips on the mud and falls into the water? Is it similar to

preference of Rotary over the Lions Club?

The simple, profound, and difficult reason for being a Mormon is because one has received a witness of the Spirit. Then one can endure dislikable things and situations as did such people as Abinadi, Paul, Joseph Smith Jr., and Jesus Christ. Likes help; testimony born of the Spirit endures.

JOSEPH B. ROMNEY
Rexburg, ID

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OF GOOD REPORT

A PROPHETIC PEOPLE

The new RLDS president explores the dynamics of religious unity and diversity

WE ARE VERY DIFFERENT people, as should have been evident in our good-spirited disagreements throughout our legislative sessions this week. We have different priorities, different understandings of the gospel, different experiences upon which we draw, different ways of celebrating and praising and worshipping. We really have just two choices for coping with those differences.

We could try to resolve them by persuading others to be like us. I could try to persuade you to embrace my tastes in music, my theological reflections, my understandings of the world. And you could do the same with me. We could vigorously plug away at each other in an effort to wipe away our differences and achieve consensus over how we think, pray, and worship. To do so would keep us busily engaged for this next millennium.

Our alternative is to embrace our differences and focus not on making us all alike but on creating a sense of shared mission in which the perspectives of all have a rightful place. This requires that we be tolerant and understanding; not that we give up our particular form of expression, but that we allow others to be different from us, recognizing that they might very well reach people we could never touch. . . .

But it is also important that we not allow our commitment to pluralism to lead to sloppy and mindless theology. Now more than ever before it is urgent that we be learners, studying especially the scriptures in order to broaden our understanding of the sacred writings that shape our thought. We must guard against being fad-



Pres. McMurray's ordination at the RLDS general conference.

dish, grabbing hold of the latest popular religious icon or book title and claiming for it the authority of all time.

Instead, we should seek knowledge from the richness of Christian thought, from respectful dialogue with each other, and in interfaith forums whereby we can explore together the nature of our spiritual journeys. We should not be afraid to sit at the table with those who come from different religious communities. We have much to give. We have much to learn.

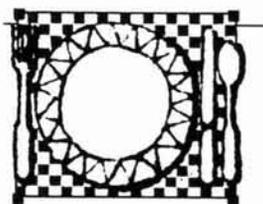
But make no mistake about it. I want nothing to do with a plain vanilla, one-size-fits-all, generic expression of the Christian faith that has no story, that has no heroes and villains, that has no sacred places, that has no soul.

I am a restorationist. By that I mean that I have embraced as mine the story of this people who struggled to understand God's call to them. I do not claim it as the only story descriptive of God's work in the world. I do not claim it as a story that defines from out of history the way God would have us create the future. I do not claim it because of some intellectual argument that it is authoritative. I claim it for just one reason—because it is my story, because it is the place where I have discovered the love of God and where I have sought to live out the meaning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. ☐

RLDS PRESIDENT W. GRANT MCMURRAY
1996 RLDS World Conference Sermon
21 April 1996

Sunstone welcomes submissions for this section.

FROM THE EDITOR

LATTER-DAY SAINTS'
LITTLE INSTRUCTION BOOK

What does it mean to be a good citizen in God's kingdom?

By Elbert Eugene Peck

A LITTLE WHILE AGO, trapped in the purple bowels of the St. Louis airport, I bought and read H. Jackson Brown Jr.'s latest *Life's Little Instruction Book* (the sequel is never equal!). A few days later, I undertook to write a similar dos and don'ts list for Mormons. It's harder than it looks—to craft rules that constructively engage us in simple ideas that will make a qualitative difference in our lives and the lives of fellow yoke-bearers. I'm no Moses; most of my laws had trivial impact and were discarded. It's easy to multiply commands that, if strictly obeyed, guarantee Sainthood but which consume all of one's time and make us average Saints weary in well-doing ("Volunteer for every thing the elders quorum or Relief Society president asks"; "Split with the missionaries once a week" . . .). So, too, is the temptation to issue edicts that redesign the Church based on your personal gripes and hobby-horses, but are really matters of style not substance ("Change the sacrament water to grape juice"). Many abandoned points stated the obvious or were simplistic—chaff ("Respect meetinghouse property"). But, then, it's the simple things that make a difference, and reading them emphasizes their overlooked importance. Whatever.

Here are some little instructions to enhance Church life as "presently constituted."

1. Compliment quality: a beautiful organ prelude, a moving lesson, an inspiring sermon, and any ward newspaper.
2. Sit near the front of the class.
3. Give each departing and returning missionary at least twenty dollars.

4. When praying publicly, don't preach; speak conversationally and briefly, and concretely answer these questions: What do we truly yearn for? and How has God touched our lives?

5. Make a point to talk to one person with whom you never do each Sunday.

6. Sometimes, sit in silence in the temple celestial room for a long time—until the anxious, day-to-day mental clutter clears, allowing the still, small voice to speak peace.

7. When visiting or home teaching, don't preach; engage in easy religious conversation that shares personal ideas and experiences.

8. Show your thanks by the usual sign(ature)—write a thank-you note when one's service makes a difference in your life.

9. Never let a children's class out early.

10. Offer to hold a fussy kid for a frazzled mother.

11. Use the sacrament to purify your soul. Prior to taking the sacrament, reconcile yourself with one person with whom you're estranged.

12. Ask questions that prompt constructive discussions on gospel living—such as "How can personal prayers be more meaningful?"—and avoid doctrinal speculations.

13. Sing hymns with joy, gusto, and volume, even if off key.

14. Don't ask single adults why they aren't married yet or couples why they don't have children.

15. Read the lesson text before class.

16. Converse with teenagers as equals.

17. Assume most people feel inadequate; speak encouraging words.

18. Bring more food to potluck socials

than your family will eat.

19. Preface opinions, even ones you know are true beyond a shadow of a doubt, with the words, "It seems to me that. . . ."

20. Give anonymous donations when you learn of a person's financial need.

21. Make a point of chatting with old people at church. Ask them their opinions.

22. When giving a talk, share personal experiences with the subject.

23. Refreshments make Family Home Evenings memorable.

24. When tragedy strikes someone, write or call. Say, "I'm sorry; I feel terrible" if you don't know what else to say.

25. Say "Amen" audibly after each talk.

26. Be vulnerable: share your feelings and personal experiences first, and others will reciprocate.

27. What's the hurry? Linger and converse in the foyer after Church.

No one can do even these few good things all of the time, but reflecting on them assumes that we care about being a good Church citizen, and such thinking affects our actions. Paul called Saints "citizens," which implies not only rights but responsibilities. Generally, I prefer to see myself as a citizen in God's republic rather than as a subject in his kingdom. The first metaphor calls out better things in me. Citizens matter; the social body requires their daily, free-will contributions.

Recently, after I read *Life's Little Instruction Book*, I was solicited to help a police charity. I don't recall whether "always support the police" was one of Brown's rules, but recalling the book's spirit, I gave, thinking to myself, "This is what a good citizen should do." Mormonism has a similar community service ethic, and reflecting on it can similarly call out the best in us on unexpected occasions.

One good citizen-Saint can't change a whole ward, but as the little chicken replied when told to lower her hands because she alone couldn't hold up the falling sky, "One does what one can."

But, just as one cigar can flavor a nine-room house, one person's small deeds do make the difference at a party or a Sunday School class. From small things proceed that which is great. Our rich LDS spiritual life is embedded in countless social interactions and goodwill contributions. If they become hum-drum, our spirituality dies, too; when they flourish, Church life approaches that of a Norman Rockwell painting.

Share your "instructions" for a future installment. (Sunstone now has e-mail: SunstoneUT@aol.com.) Who knows, perhaps we'll produce a best-selling Mormon book and set Sunstone for life. ☐

IN MEMORIAM

REMEMBERING
STERLING McMURRIN

By L. Jackson Newell

WITH POWERFUL WHINNIES, Bridger and Isis took their liberty as we unfastened their halters. In seconds, they were racing across the high pasture toward their companions on Kolob Plateau. Bill and I watched in the morning light, then settled without words on a big log to savor our thoughts.

We each knew what the other was thinking: Sterling McMurrin and his brother Keith, Bill's father, had died this spring within three weeks of each other. They had loved these horses and this place where they had come together every summer for decades. Sterling had even remarked not long before he died that if he were granted another life, he would choose to be a horse in southern Utah, wintering near St. George and summering on Kolob.

This scene captured the spirit of Sterling McMurrin. He was a man of intense loyalty to family and friends, he loved horses and Utah ranch country, and he exercised his

L. JACKSON NEWELL recently completed a biographical study with Sterling McMurrin entitled, *Matters of Conscience: Conversations with Sterling McMurrin on Religion, Education, and Philosophy*. It will be released this fall by Signature Books.

freedom with uncommon delight. He was, of course, also a man of distinction—many distinctions.

In the larger world of affairs, Sterling McMurrin served President John F. Kennedy as United States Commissioner of Education—a position from which he advocated racial integration of the public schools, broad elevation of academic standards, and more serious teacher preparation in both liberal and vocational education. He raised a stir, and he made a difference in Washington. At other times in his long career, McMurrin spent five months in Iran as an official envoy, represented his country at many international conferences on education and economic development, and served as a director of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Many of these opportunities—and others—grew out of lifelong friendships he forged with business, labor, and government leaders whom he taught as a bright young philosopher at the Aspen Institute in the 1950s and '60s.

In his native Utah, McMurrin was known as a brilliant writer and teacher and a fearless exponent of reason and justice in human affairs. He said what he thought, and he thought deeply and often. He believed religious and educational leaders and their insti-

tutions have a special duty to set high ideals and to live by them every day—after all, these public institutions, more than any others, shape the values and inform the minds of each rising generation.

Sterling served on the faculty of the University of Utah for forty years, often in high academic offices, and he turned down its presidency more than once. More important, he was appointed E. E. Erickson Distinguished Professor of Philosophy in 1964 and held that chair for nearly a quarter of a century. His memory was almost photographic, and he never lectured from notes—although he occasionally carried a fistful of blank pages to the podium to forestall criticism that he had not prepared properly. In his later years, the university endowed three professorships in Sterling McMurrin's honor.

McMurrin's relationship with the LDS church was especially complex. He was born and reared in the faith, he taught in the seminary and institute system for a half-dozen years between earning his master's degree and his doctorate, and he was widely recognized as the foremost authority on Mormon theology—which he described as “much stronger than our leaders make it appear.” Two of his early works are without peer: *The Philosophical Foundations of Mormon Theology* (1959) and *The Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion* (1965). Sterling was Mormon, through and through.

McMurrin regarded himself, however, as a “good heretic,” which he defined as someone who loved the Church but could not accept all of its claims. For Sterling, loving the Church meant caring enough to speak out if he thought it was making a mistake—and to speak in its defense if he thought it was being attacked unfairly. Few critics do both, but Sterling did.

He expected the Church and its leaders to live up to their ideals, and he spoke and wrote courageously when he thought the institution failed morally, as it did until 1978 in withholding the priesthood from men of African descent. His was also a clear and strong voice against church intolerance (either official or rank-and-file) of free thought—including the use of excommunication and other sanctions intended to suppress the expression of creative thought or thoughtful criticism.

The moral leaders of every generation choose their duties—embrace their special challenges. The removal of racial barriers in religion and education was one of McMurrin's major aims in life. And he and his peers achieved a measure of success. Sterling and others like Lowell Bennion,

however, whose consciences helped to carry the moral burden of the sixties and seventies in Utah and in the Church, were sensitive to the unresolved manifestations of discrimination.

They knew that church policies and federal laws can change without changing peoples' attitudes, and that it is within individual minds and hearts that the real problem must be solved. They were also aware that priesthood barriers to women are as offensive as those to blacks. While they left this challenge for another generation, Sterling—and

Lowell—offered special encouragement and extended heartfelt support to women writers and leaders in the Church. Both of them were especially offended whenever these women were punished for expressing unpopular views.

Sterling McMurrin's life and work revealed an uncanny capacity to reconcile the competing demands of duty and freedom, loyalty and principle, self and society. He not only reconciled these often-conflicting but fundamentally complementary values, he also lived and expressed them with a

flourish. In an era when tensions among these values are increasingly ducked by escaping into cynicism and alienation, or simply ignored by accepting without question institutional demands as a necessary good, Sterling McMurrin reminded us that there is another way. He lived with uncommon delight for eighty-two years—running free, while packing powerful messages about truth, and justice, and integrity. No wonder he was controversial. No wonder we loved him. ☞



MIRACLES

In the voice with which they told us *recess*
 the nuns said that if we kept our eyes
 on the priest at Holy Mass we might see
 Christ on the host at the Elevation.
 It had happened, as most holy things did,
 to a poor boy somewhere in Ecuador.
 I tried it, watching the priest intensely,
 missing the Alphonse and Gaston sideshow
 of the Mutt and Jeff, Frick and Frack altar boys,
 the fun when someone kicked Tommy Byrnes
 who said *Christ!* like that in a voice
 that rattled around like a stone in a can.
 But I never did see the face of Christ
 through I have gazed with love's fierce regard
 at birth and death, the taking of a wife,
 purchase of a house by note,
 the movement of a golden pendulum
 within my pulse, and other joyous
 or sober trials which require
 a new suit, magistrates, the cold, sure grasp
 of a banker or a diamond cutter.
 Perhaps we see best with an inverted eye
 such bright events as the face of Christ, the sun,
 spring fields yellow-thick with common flowers.
 Perhaps he is not the center of our lives
 but an eccentric at the radius,
 flung there from a merry-go-round
 whirling too fast for one without a grasp
 on a pony and now just one of the crowd,
 another screamer on the roller coaster,
 another sharpshooter out for the stuffed toys.

—FRANK L. RYAN

THIS SIDE OF THE TRACTS

KITCHENS

By Ione Washburn



My kitchen is an altar to my life; it connects me to the generations of women who are my foremothers.

THE KITCHEN IS a magnet where my personal history clusters. It is the place where my grandmothers, aunts, and mother taught me to be a woman. Although the technology of their kitchens—with outdoor water pumps, wooden churns, ice boxes, and wood burning stoves—was light years away from today's, these women and I still share an intangible bond. The preparation of food somehow serves to open the doorways of time and let generations of my foremothers into my kitchen. They, too, learned the intimate secrets of products of the earth. They saw how the leaves of a head of lettuce clasp together in curved, crisp crinkles. They were intimate with the feel of a tomato's slippery seeded insides. They discovered the ease with which new potatoes release their skins after they've been boiled.

IONE WASHBURN is a writer living in La Crescenta, California. Portions of this essay were originally printed in Sun Magazine.

Whenever foods release their secrets to me, I feel the presence of my foremothers.

My early years were spent in the homes of my grandmothers and aunts. Their multipurpose farm kitchens were the central stage where women played their roles. Periodically they would disappear into the wings to sleep, tend their gardens, or visit friends. Once a week they went to church to listen to male Church Leaders tell them what it was all about. To the Church, they gave hours of service, taught Sunday School, played the organ, and conducted bake sales. Although early Christian history tells us that women had no souls, my Mormon foremothers were told that their souls were destined to be subservient to the men in the after life as well as this one. (I guess that is progress of sorts). When these handmaidens returned to their kitchens, they reclaimed their original soul of Eve, which God had created in Her image, and mocked the power of the patriarchs. From this queendom, they wielded power

and influence. They played a multitude of roles: general manager, doctor, nurse, minister, psychiatrist, housekeeper, teacher, cook, storyteller, and spiritual adviser, to name a few.

It was in these kitchens that women socialized their girl children. They taught me how to recognize the alphabet letters in the "Charter Oak" label on the stove, how to dip a ripe peach in boiling water and slide the skin off with one or two deft motions, and how to peel an apple and have the skin come off in one spiral shaped piece. There was only one right way to do the dishes—with two pans of hot water, wash, then rinse and dry the glasses first, silverware second, dishes third, and pots and pans last.

During the summers, I watched with fascination as the women boiled the fruit jars, lids, and rubber rings, and then filled each jar with picture perfect bounties from the garden. It was a source of pride among women of the valley to have row upon row of cellar shelves filled with a winter's supply of bottled fruits and vegetables.

Always the air was laced with a smorgasbord of smells—the sweet, tart scent of rhubarb pie, the deep, purple wildness of huckleberries simmering on the stove, the sweet fragrance of fresh-baked bread that floated out the door to greet the children home from school. During the winter, the first thing we heard in the morning was the sounds of a grandfather or an uncle building a fire in the kitchen stove. It wasn't until the soul-satisfying smell of bacon and perking coffee reached us that we knew the kitchen was warm enough for us to venture downstairs.

When I was ten years old, my mother built a summer cabin by a creek. As she drew up the plans, she said "A woman should always have a window by her sink so that she can look out at beauty while she works." I still remember that view. If I looked to the south, I saw the sparkle of water at the bend of the creek. If I looked straight ahead, I saw Grandpa's raspberry patch against a backdrop of wooded hills. And if I looked north, I saw Aunt Vi's apple orchard and the clothes drying on her line. Ah, the sweet smell of sun-dried clothes!

Outside Aunt Jennie's kitchen window was a row of hollyhocks all dressed up and nodding their morning greeting to the woman at the sink. Aunt Jennie's kitchen was a wonderful place to be. She not only had an electric stove, but there were lots of cousins and their mothers in and out. She was more like my sister, and talked to me like I was a grown-up. Sometimes, we would gang up on

her two older sisters (one of whom was my mother) when we thought they were being too bossy. Aunt Jennie was a small woman with red hair, who, with humor and surprise attacks, punctured all egos the minute we got "too big for our britches."

This activity was punctuated at mealtime by the appearance of an uncle with a hearty laugh and an authoritarian voice. He insisted we follow a dietary regime laid down by Bernarr McFadden, and took us swimming in ice cold lakes hidden in the surrounding hills. Each year, for a couple of days, he took us children "huckleberrying" in these same hills. When night fell, he would make a bed for us out of pine boughs covered with canvas. We slept under the stars and told ghost stories and jokes, and Uncle Frank played his mandolin and we sang ourselves to sleep. The next morning, he made us a wonderful breakfast over a campfire and we went home the next day with purple tongues and fingers and buckets of huckleberries.

We children helped pick vegetables, shell peas, gather eggs, weed the garden. We eavesdropped on the women's quilting bee gossip and secrets by hiding under the frame that the quilt covered.

Aunt Vi had two tubs and a washboard, and on washday I loved to watch the ballet of her hands as she smeared the clothes with soap and rubbed them up and down on the washboard. When they were clean, she rinsed them and put them into a huge copper tub on the stove to boil. A teakettle was always humming to itself on the back of the stove. On Saturday nights, another tub of hot water was prepared in which we children were immersed and scrubbed unmercifully.

So many memories were stored in the kitchens. Once I was shelling peas for my grandmother and I saw her eyes well with tears. "Carlyle used to sit there and shell peas for me," she remembered. "Who is Carlyle?" I asked. "My little five-year-old," she answered. "He died during the typhoid epidemic." Surprised that there were people in my family whom I had never heard of, I asked her, "How many children did you have?" "Eight," she answered. "Mary and Abel, my twins, died at birth." I imagined that the dead babies were brought into the kitchen to be washed and made ready for burial.

This grandmother lived long enough for us to become friends. Once she gave me a piece of bacon rind, assuring me that my warts would disappear if I rubbed them with the rind of bacon under a full moon. I was then to throw the rind over my left shoulder. I watched how she mixed up poultices of

molded bread and milk to treat grandfather's carbuncle. She carried herself like a queen and fretted about my adolescent posture. She showed me how to hold a broom handle behind my back with my elbows. "Your body will be straight and proud if you do this every day," she told me.

Years later, I had my own kitchen. The appliances were 1948 state of the art. I cooked and cried there, and tried to please the man I had married. I painted the walls and cabinets a cool ivory color on the outside, but inside, I painted the shelves blood red—the color of my broken heart. But even that kitchen came alive when Bill came in with a bag of groceries, a bottle of wine, and his good carving knives. He sang opera, sliced vegetables and cooked fabulous meals! My children were happy. I was happy. My kitchen smelled good and the house was full of song again.

My kitchen is quiet now, and it is very different from those in the past. The only sound that comes from it is the beep of the microwave being programmed; or the buzz of the blender mixing up a frozen concoction. My children are grown; the foremothers are gone; and I am nearing the end of the allotted time for my generation. I have a wonderful herb window over the sink in which I place treasures that I love to look at—a sea shell from Fiji, dried baby's breath in a blue honey-pot, a sculpture of a little child looking into a candle flame, an African violet, a cactus garden, a piece of bark covered with moss, a peacock feather, and stones I've carried back from Findhorn, Fiji, Portugal, and Bear Lake.

Still, my kitchen is an altar to my life; it connects me to the generations of women who are my foremothers. 



THE SWIMMER

He was in the Red Sea, skin-diving, when God
gripped his forehead and told him,
"Grow your hair long now"
and made the fish around him resonate
like a configuration of door knobs
before someone who wants to go outside.
So it was true:
God, the universe's greatest spy,
knew how he packed his suitcase,
knew how much oxygen remained in his lungs
as he extended his arms
and fluttered his legs
twenty feet below the ocean's surface
surrounded by blue and black and yellow
fish, their tiny jaws clicking open and shut
like the latch to the room
where, he knew now,
God had been watching
the day he arranged his dreams
into a wreath of inconsolable flowers
unfolding with reckless grace
until their petals dropped out
in clusters and clumps and utter defiance
of the lavish capture of time
he had first sensed was possible
when one day in the library
every body of water
in the book on *The Lovely Lakes of Europe*
had seemed to him a flawless blue masterpiece
and the best reason he could give
for wanting to learn to swim.

—HOLLY WELKER

CORNUCOPIA

Book of Mormon Musings



In the lists compiled of female characters in the Book of Mormon, I don't think anyone ever includes wisdom (or ships, or the great and abominable church, for that matter).

MS. WISDOM

O how marvelous are the works of the Lord, and how long doth he suffer with his people; yea, and how blind and impenetrable are the understandings of the children of men; for they will not seek wisdom, neither do they desire that she should rule over them! (Mosiah 8:20.)

THREE GENERATIONS AFTER ZENIFF (WHO IS usually referred to in the Book of Mormon as “overzealous” Zeniff in the same way our journalists usually referred to Manuel Noriega as “Panamanian Strongman”) and his party went back to the land of Nephi to reclaim the Nephite land of first inheritance, Limhi and his people were visited by Ammon’s group sent in search of Limhi’s people. Limhi had previously sent a group in search of the Nephite colony they had previously left, but the search party got lost and discovered the Jaredite remains instead, mistaking them for the Nephites. The group returned depressed at the presumed destruction of the Nephites, but with souvenirs: metal armor and a stone with writing on it that no one could read. When Ammon arrived, Limhi was excited to see that the Nephites had not been destroyed. When Ammon tells Limhi that King Mosiah can translate the writing on the stone, Limhi

can’t contain himself any more and breaks into the poetic ecstasy above.

What appears to me to be unusual about this piece of extemporaneous creativity is that Limhi refers to wisdom as “she.” In the lists compiled of female characters in the Book of Mormon, I don’t think anyone ever includes wisdom (or ships, or the great and abominable church, for that matter). In Joseph Smith’s day, it was not unheard of to refer to the abstract quality of “wisdom” as a feminine thing. Hurricanes (until recently) and other things are referred to as feminine items for perhaps a variety of reasons. Also, those of us who speak languages other than English realize that it is not uncommon for nouns to have a gender: the sun might be male and the moon female, and so forth. In ancient Hebrew, the term “hochmah” refers to wisdom, God’s pre-existent female counterpart, as indicated in the Book of Proverbs and elsewhere. (See Raphael Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess* [New York: Avon, 1978], 101–36, 300–10; Prov. 8:11; 9:1.)

So what is going on in Limhi’s statement? I think it equally likely that wisdom is described as “she” merely as a quirk of translation as it is likely that it is a literal translation of Limhi’s exact words referring to an ancient Hebrew feminine noun for wisdom or it is a primitive, undisclosed Nephite belief in a Mother in Heaven. While I like to think of all of these possibilities, the point is still clear regardless of the resolution of these ambiguities: wisdom should but she rarely governs our actions.

—EDGAR C. SNOW JR.

Sunstone Top Ten

THE TOP 10 BIBLICAL WAYS TO ACQUIRE A WIFE

DIRECT FROM OUR HOME OFFICE IN MERCUR, Utah—the top ten biblical ways to acquire a wife:

10. Find an attractive prisoner of war, bring her home, shave her head, trim her nails, and give her new clothes. Then she’s yours. (Deut. 21:11–13.)

9. Find a prostitute, and marry her. (Hosea 1:1–3.)

8. Go to a party, and hide. When the women come out to dance, grab one and carry her off to be your wife.—Benjaminites (Judg. 21:19–25.)

7. Cut 200 foreskins off your future father-in-law’s enemies, and get his daughter for a wife.—David (1 Sam. 18:27.)

6. Become the emperor of a huge nation, and hold a beauty contest.—Xerxes or Ahasuerus (Esth. 2:3-4.)

5. When you see someone you like, go home and tell your parents, "I have seen a . . . woman; now get her for me." If your parents question your decision, simply say, "Get her for me. She's the one for me."—Samson (Judg. 14:1-3.)

4. Kill any husband, and take HIS wife (Prepare to lose four sons, though).—David (2 Sam. 11.)

3. Wait for your brother to die. Take his widow. (It's not just a good idea, it's the law.) (Deut. 25:5-10.)

2. Don't be so picky. Make up for quality with quantity.—Solomon (1 Kings 11:1-3.)

and the number one biblical way to acquire a wife is . . .

1. A wife? . . . Are you kidding me?—Paul (1 Corin. 7:32-35.)



CUSTAVE DURE

Number 5: When you see someone you like, go home and tell your parents, "I have seen a . . . woman; now get her for me."

Twenty Years Ago

A UNITY OF THE FAITH

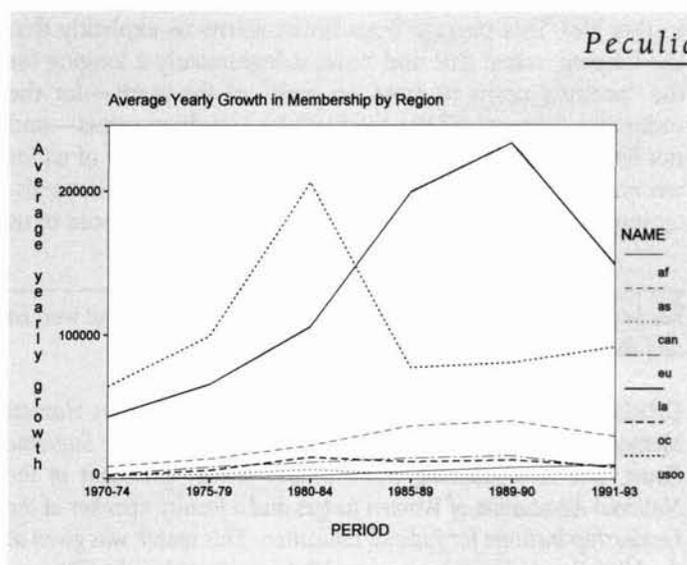
THE FOLLOWING IS AN EXCERPT FROM SUNSTONE Managing Editor Kris Cassity's vol.1, no. 3, editorial:

"SUNSTONE is founded upon the belief that members committed to a gospel of love can differ in their perceptions and still work together toward a unity of the faith. Moreover, the journal rests upon the conviction that diversity is not only tolerable, but necessary. Since every person has the sacred right and obligation to pursue truth to the best of his or her ability and belief, every person must be allowed to express that truth as life has revealed it to him or her. 'Both creative science and revealed religion find their fullest and truest expression in the climate of freedom . . .,' said Hugh B. Brown. 'God himself refused to trammel man's free agency even though its exercise sometimes teaches painful lessons.'

"An independent and non-authoritative undertaking such

as SUNSTONE depends upon the tolerance and mature convictions of the entire Mormon community. It is very probable that some who express themselves through the journal will represent views that are unacceptable to others. As long as there are enough forums to express the opinions of all, then this is as it should be. Certainly we must each be willing to withhold judgment of others' beliefs and allow, as Joseph Smith counselled, that only 'time, and experience, and careful and ponderous and solemn thoughts' can find out the full complexity of life and eternity. Hopefully, there even is enough room for each of us to be wrong at times—it is so easy to be mistaken about so many things."

Peculiar People



AVERAGE YEARLY GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS REPORTED in the *Church Almanac* show important shifts in the location of growth. Until the mid-1980s, more new members were added in the United States than in other major areas of the world. Since then, Latin America has surpassed the U.S. as the major region of growth. Asia provides a growing but relatively small share of new members each year. In comparison, Europe, Oceania, Canada, and Africa add only a small share of the new members each year.

The Joy Anna Mathews Memorial Lecture
*A distinguished Mormon celebrates the activist values lived and
 taught by a Pioneer woman that still apply today.*

“RISE UP, YE WOMEN THAT ARE AT EASE”

By Christine M. Durham

MY COMMENTS ARE OFFERED IN HONOR OF a generous family's gift to Sunstone, itself offered to honor a loved mother and friend, a Mormon woman who cared about other Mormon women. My hope is to celebrate, in a microcosmic way, the infinite array of gifts—ways of living, ways of thinking, ways of being—that belong to Mormon women. I speak personally of one story that is particularly meaningful to me, not for the purpose of proposing patterns for others' lives, but rather to illustrate the beauty I find in diversity of patterns. I have taken my “text” from the thirty-second chapter of Isaiah, which elaborates on the relation between God and Israel. In contrast to all the occasions when the Old Testament ignores women, this chapter contains injunctions specifically directed to them:

Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones. . . . They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous

city; Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be dens for ever; a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks; Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places. . . . (Isa. 32:9–18.)

Is there a woman among us who does not, in the corners of her life, long for places of “peaceable habitation” and “sure dwellings” and “quiet resting places?” And is there one of us who ever comes to enjoy any of these things in a sustained way in this life? This passage from Isaiah warns us explicitly that the longing, while true and pure, is legitimately a longing for the “pouring upon us from on high” of the spirit—for the order of judgment and the productivity of righteousness—and not for the ease of carelessness. It suggests that those of us for whom life contains trouble and trembling are perhaps listening, or trying to listen, to the voice of God; that those of us

In memory of his late wife, Joy Anna Mathews Hansen, David W. Hansen established an endowed symposium lecture, dedicated to constructively exploring and expanding the participation of women in the Latter-day Saint community. Joy was a partner with her husband, David, in Fourjoy Enterprises, an investment and real estate development firm. As a homemaker, mother of three girls, a teacher and leader in girls' youth organizations, and a volunteer crisis counselor, she strived for excellence and fairness. She once wrote that “as important as making a living is, learning how to live well

has been most important to me.” Joy had deep feelings about women and their roles and ranking within the Church.

CHRISTINE M. DURHAM, the first Joy Anna Mathews Hansen Memorial lecturer, is an associate justice of the Utah State Supreme Court. She is a founding member and former president of the National Association of Women Judges and a faculty member at the Leadership Institute for Judicial Education. This speech was given at the 1995 Sunstone Symposium on 12 August in Salt Lake City.

who are too much "at ease" in our minds and hearts are instead careless and out of touch with God's expectations of us.

Some who know me well will suspect some degree of self-rationalization in this theory, and perhaps they are right. But at midlife, I am convinced that the successful life is one that makes a positive difference in the lives it touches; that where gifts are bestowed, service is required; and that God expects his daughters to honor their gifts by enlarging and sharing them. Let me clarify the nature of these gifts—they include the full range of talent, capacity, and aspiration that belongs to the entire human race: gifts of the spirit, of intellect, of bodily strength and coordination, of music, of artistic expression, of cheerfulness, of nurture, of leadership, of endurance, of patience, of compassion, of healing, of humor, of teaching, of language, of conciliation, of advocacy, of humility, of bringing grace to ordinary things, of strength, of kindness, of generosity, of vision, of survival. There have been times and there still are places in this world where women have not been understood to partake of this full range of possibility in their lives, and in the obligations thereby imposed. We are fortunate to live in a time and place that acknowledge the complete humanity of half of the human race, and to have access to religious teachings that underscore the solemnity of both the possibilities and the obligations. No one who encourages women to be "at ease" in the world, or to fail to care about important things, understands the message from our text in Isaiah.

We are accustomed, in Mormon culture as in human communities generally, to look to our history for the roots of our traditions and values. Mormon women, also, have looked to their foremothers for stories and examples of how to build lives.

I WILL share with you details of one such life, because it has for years symbolized for me one remarkable woman's response to God's injunction to "rise up" and cease to be at ease.

Quite by accident, I married into a family of remarkable Mormon women, and shortly after my marriage was introduced to one of them through an essay which my father-in-law had had transcribed and copied and gave to us for Christmas.

It was Susa Young Gates's biographical sketch of her mother, Lucy Bigelow Young, my husband's great-great-grandmother. It was as fascinating for its insights into Susa's own experience as for her mother's story. Over the years, Susa has been the subject of numerous essays, but at that time, many of them either had not yet been written or were not published, and I knew nothing about her. Her great-granddaughter, Carolyn W. D. Person, was working at the time on a biographical essay¹ and shared her research with me. I hope that, even for those for whom some of this information is not new, it will be fresh in its implications. It still seems a great loss to me that we do not, in Church education, focus more on the lives of great Mormon women. In the words of another essay:

Undoubtedly the major theme of [Susa's] life will

be her willingness to jump in and begin the impossible. No one can avoid a profound respect for her energy, self-discipline, far-sightedness, and the regard she showed us by refusing to leave the undone undone. Her work was accomplished under great personal tensions, suggesting great personal courage. We owe her as much as we do almost any leader in our history, and yet she has been mostly forgotten.²

Susa was the forty-first daughter of Brigham Young and the second child of Lucy Bigelow Young, the first child to be born in the Lion House. In her history of her mother, she writes:

Lucy, as she was delivered of her child, was bitterly disappointed to find she had another girl instead of the son she longed for. In the pioneer vernacular she asked Aunt Zina, "What is it?" "A little girl," replied her midwife-nurse. "Oh

shucks!" said Lucy. "No, it isn't shucks; it's all wheat and full weight at that!"³

Susa later wrote that this story was "a thumbnail sketch of my life ever since. Someone always either inside of me or outside



CHRISTINE DURHAM

I am convinced that
the successful life is one that makes
a positive difference in the
lives it touches; that where gifts are
bestowed, service is required;
and that God expects his daughters
to honor their gifts by enlarging
and sharing them.

of me, is usually saying 'shucks' after my hurried entrance most anywhere. And I am usually trying to convince my other self and the rest of the folks that 'it's all wheat and full weight at that.' Sometimes of course I don't care and let it go at 'Shucks.'"⁴

Susa deserves a book, and perhaps will get one someday. What follows are excerpts from a biographical sketch believed to have been written by Susa herself around 1916, when she would have been seventy.

The first child born in the Lion House, 18 March, 1856, Susa Young, daughter of Brigham Young and Lucy Bigelow, was a studious and imaginative child . . . a natural musician . . . star pupil (in "shorthand") of David Evans the Church stenographer . . . a popular actress. . . She attended the B.Y. Academy in 1878, and there organized the Music Department. . . She organized and taught Domestic Science Department in 1896 in the B.Y.U. Since 1894 she has been a Trustee of the great school. . . she was a trustee of the Utah Agricultural College. Married Jacob F. Gates in 1880, she has borne thirteen children. . . Mrs. Gates was a member of the General Board of the Y.L.M.I.A. for over twenty years, and founded and edited, during that time, the Young Woman's Journal. . . Placed on the General Board of the Relief Society in May, 1911, . . . she was . . . Corresponding Secretary . . . Editor of the new Relief Society Magazine . . . Historian of the Society and is now engaged in writing the history of the Society and of the Mormon women.

She was the first person baptized in the St. George Temple, Pres. Woodruff officiating with her father, Pres. Young, confirming her for the dead. She was a

worker there at the opening of the Temple and three years thereafter, chiefly acting as a recorder. . .

Mrs. Gates has lived in St. George, . . . Provo, . . . New York and has been to the Sandwich Islands twice, . . . to Europe three times, and many times East, in the interests of women's organized work. She was a speaker at the great London International Congress of Women in 1899, was the United States delegate to Copenhagen in 1901 and was a United States delegate and speaker at the late Woman's Congress in Rome in 1914. Organized the Utah Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and associated with Senator Reed Smoot and John

Caltrin of Provo, organized the first Utah Pioneer Society—the Sons and Daughters of the Utah Pioneers in 1894; served a term as Director of National Household Economic Association and was the United States delegate of that Association to Canada in 1898. . .

Her writings are voluminous, and besides editing two magazines she has written many short stories, some verse and three books; "The Life of Lydia Knight," "The History of the Y.L.M.I.A.," and "John Stevens' Courtship" [the first Mormon novel]. She has written for the local magazines and papers since she was fourteen years of age and for ten years has edited the Genealogical Department of the Saturday Evening News and the Sunday Morning Herald-Republican.

Her greatest work outside of her home life has been the creative efforts put into the cause of genealogy and

in the assisting of that work, both in the Genealogical Society of Utah and in the General Board of the Relief Society. She wrote the Genealogical Lesson Book now in use, developed the class work and has been of great



ARISTAKI

SUSA YOUNG GATES

Her greatest legacy to us lies in her willingness to be "troubled" by things that she thought needed change, her unwillingness to be at her "ease" in the world, her understanding of the obligations of women in the Kingdom.

assistance to the General Board of the Genealogical Society and to the women of the Church in this line of endeavor. She is also Genealogist for her father's family and has secured over 16,000 Young names from the Utah books and other sources, all properly recorded and indexed.

. . . [S]he is an ardent Republican and has been a leader and organizer in that party for twenty years.

With all her public work, however, Mrs. Gates has been devoted to her husband, home and children, and they are her most adoring lovers and fastest friends. She is an excellent cook and loves to entertain her friends in a social capacity. It is said of her that she is a human dynamo; growth, activity, development, progress—all these are the ruling forces of a busy and conscientious life.⁵

Susa, if she was the author of this sketch, left family for last, but it is obvious from all accounts of her life that they came first always in her thoughts and affections. She was close to both her parents and wrote biographies of each. She often quoted an admonition from her father that she seems to have deeply respected:

Daughter, use all your gifts to build up righteousness in the earth. Never use them to acquire name or fame. Never rob your home, nor your children. If you were to become the greatest woman in this world, and your name should be known in every land and clime, and you would fail in your duty as wife and mother, you would wake up on the morning of the first resurrection and find you had failed in everything; but anything you can do after you have satisfied the claims of husband and family will redound to your own honor and to the glory of God.⁶

She had a long and successful marriage to Jacob Gates, which she described as a "blessed union." One of the treasures included in her manuscript on Lucy's life is a letter to Susa which sheds considerable light on the nature of her relationship with Jacob. Susa's son-in-law John A. Widtsoe, then a young graduate student in Germany, wrote to her in 1899:

You may be sure that I have been proud and thankfully satisfied when I have heard from time to time of your noble work among your sisters for the purification, the bettering of mankind. The honor that has come to you is much, and makes us all happy, but the spirit which urges you on to spend time, comfort and thought in these matters I hold, as a gift from heaven, above all. I believe, that to be a Latter Day Saint, without feeling an impulse to help the world is impossible. And the individual mission which we have must be active, aggressive, and eager for success, not for the sake of success, but for the sake of glorifying that mission. Every member of this church, man or woman, is as if standing on the housetops, crying some soul-lifting message to the multitudes upon the streets. If one of us does not feel that mission-prompting, he must look closely at himself, for he is

stagnating. Our missions vary, as our gifts. You are using your gift nobly. . . .

I am interested in your work, and admire you for it. I also admire Brother Gates. Without his willingness, you could not do so much. So few men are willing to undergo a little personal inconvenience to let their wives do anything. The exceptions are loved so much the more. A man's life is not measured alone by what he accomplishes. More than that, is what he enables others to do. Self must be forgotten in the life of the noble nature.⁷

Of the thirteen children she bore, Susa raised five remarkable children to adulthood, and the record reflects that she often administered to them when they were ill and blessed them in need, as was common for Mormon women in those days. One of her granddaughters, my husband's mother, always claimed that each of Susa's five grown children was convinced that he or she was their mother's favorite.

Lest we lose touch with the real humanity of this remarkable woman, let me note: in addition to losing eight children, Susa experienced divorce from her first husband in a time and place when divorce was nearly unthinkable, and she was separated from her two children of that marriage for much of their early lives. She suffered what we would probably call a nervous breakdown, brought on by exhaustion, overwork, and grief, in the early part of this century. She lived the hectic, overburdened life of every mother of young children, as described in this excerpt from a letter written while she was living in Hawaii on a mission with her husband in 1888:

I want to whitewash and clean my old house here before Conference. In fact I've got so much to do I don't know what to do first. My little baby dresses are all worn out so I must make a new supply.

Then Lule's clothes are all worn out, and Cecil [is] wearing Violet's and Freddie's, and Joe's old clothes. I shall have to make up a supply for him. Then of course our clothes to travel in will have to be made before I am sick [confined in childbirth] as I shall hardly be able to do anything after.⁸

Finally, and perhaps most remarkable of all, Susa acknowledged in later life that she had not received a spiritual conviction of the gospel until her fortieth year. Susa described in a pamphlet published in 1931, *Why I Believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ*, how she spent a "year of lent and prayer" in an attempt to get a testimony. "I disciplined my taste, my desires, and my impulses, disciplining my appetite, my tongue, my acts, and how I prayed!"

Then one day—about 15 years after father's death—it came to me while I was sweeping, one of the most humble chores women can do, I heard the voice of my father saying, "You know it is true! Never doubt it again!" And I never have! All other truths and facts and philosophies which came to my attention, and come today, I measure by one standard of truth: Does this or that idea or theory agree or does it conflict with the truths of the Gospel as taught in the ancient

and modern scriptures—if it does it is mine! If it does not, I cast it out.⁹

Judging by some of the remarkable women I know who are direct descendants of Susa, including my own daughters, I have long suspected that she must have had her difficult side. One account comments:

Among her more irritating qualities was her impatience. Her neighbors knew her only by an occasional meeting on the sidewalk—"Hi, how are you, I'm so busy." A slow-moving store clerk would have discovered a less charming side to her nature. Colleagues found her abruptness annoying: "Mrs. Gates had a knack of sizing up a situation quickly, finding an answer, and accomplishing something before many persons were clear as to just what the issues really were." Sometimes she acted on a decision before everyone was quite agreed upon it, giving the appearance of a bulldozer in motion.¹⁰

I know I would have liked her immensely.

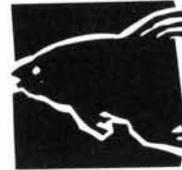
The story of Susa's accomplishments can be intimidating. It is altogether fair to say that she was an articulate advocate on the national and world scene for the Church and for Mormon women, a committed genealogist and temple worker, a successful and loving wife and mother, an activist in community and political spheres, and a dedicated defender of women's legal rights and educational needs. But it is also fair to say that she was a woman who shared the griefs, disappointments, and trials we all know: she buried loved children; she was scarred by the experience of an early divorce; she was on occasion passed over or slighted by people with power in her world; she had spiritual epiphanies while sweeping floors, and she knew what it was to scrub cellars and sew baby clothes and be exhausted and depressed. She wrote and said many things in her public and private life about women's lives and roles—many of them self-contradictory and many of them deeply rooted in the generally accepted views of her times. Her greatest legacy to us, however, lies in her willingness to be "troubled" by things that she thought needed change, her unwillingness to be at her "ease" in the world, her understanding of the obligations of women in the Kingdom.

For me, the point is that she *cared* and she *acted*. She would have approved of the comments I saw quoted in the *Salt Lake Tribune* by the national president of the League of Women Voters: "It is not enough to care. You have to do. Women complain about working all day and having kids at home and aging parents. These [suffragists] had all of that, too. But they made a difference." It is not given to many women to live lives on the scale of a Susa Young Gates; but it is given to us all to put our hands to making a difference, in ordinary ways perhaps more often than extraordinary ones. She and I might disagree on some questions concerning women, if we ever have the chance to converse, but I am quite sure on one thing: her life is one I admire and contains much that I aspire to emulate. I hope when mine is done, she would regard it with approval. I will end with one of her statements with which I wholeheartedly agree. "Women are the developers of embryonic life, and

the moulders of all social group existence. This makes it imperative that man and woman should, in a measure, share the burden and half the responsibility of living both private and public.¹¹ I think it indicates Susa's response to God's command: "Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice ye careless daughters; give ear to my speech." 

NOTES

1. Carolyn W. D. Person, "Susa Young Gates," in *Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah* (ed. Claudia Bushman, Cambridge, MA: Emmeline Press Ltd., 1976).
2. Rebecca Foster Cornwall, "Susa Young Gates: The Thirteenth Apostle," *Sister Saints*, ed. Vicky Burgess-Olson (n.p., 1978), 86.
3. Susa Y. Gates, "Lucy Bigelow Young" (unpublished manuscript, 1931).
4. Cornwall, "Susa Y. Gates," *Sister Saints*, 64.
5. Excerpted from a life sketch of "Mrs. Susa Young Gates," which G. Homer Durham felt was authored by Susa. Copy in my possession.
6. Susa Young Gates, *The Life Story of Brigham Young* (London: Jarrolds, 1930), 232.
7. Excerpt from a letter by John A. Widtsoe to his mother-in-law Susa Gates, 5 March 1899. Copy in my possession.
8. Gates, "Lucy Bigelow Young," 131.
9. Susa Young Gates, *Why I Believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1931).
10. Cornwall, *Sister Saints*, 81 (citations deleted).
11. The quote is Cornwall, *Sister Saints*, 83.



DITCHES

Down the long winding
we ran across Father's fields,
following ditches,
farmer made, farmer cleaned,
floating chips of wood, leaves,
or paper-made ships
between the folds in the land,
wearing ditches around our barefeet,
canvas irrigation dams
making the fields a waterland.
Trout, crawdads, and frogs
throbbled through
the headgate on the hill,
swam down our swift glance,
animated the soft banks—
inexhaustible gifts
channelling through our lives
as we ran along those water lines,
exultant, amphibious.

—ANITA TANNER

Pillars of My Faith

I knew there was something different for me out there. My sense of my own divinity—my belief in myself, the knowledge of my divine potential—comes from being a Mormon.

WE BELONG TO ONE ANOTHER IN FAITH

By Cecilia Konchar Farr

YOU MAY RECOGNIZE MY NAME, BUT I FEEL A BIT detached from what you may associate with it. Lately, I have been much more talked about than I have talked.

There are several reasons why I haven't spoken much about my experience at Brigham Young University. The first involves the activism of the student feminist group VOICE (BYU's Committee to Promote the Status of Women). My policy and that of my co-advisor, Tomi-Ann Roberts, was that students should speak first when reporters called, because VOICE was a student organization. We also tried, in the entrenched hierarchies of BYU, to get students to be the ones the administrators approached, the ones who were responsible for the actions of that group, because, in actuality, they were. The second reason for my silence was that after my incident with BYU, I had an attorney whose policy was that if I had something to say, I should say it in my appeal hearing with the administration or save it for court. Finally, BYU's policy that "Cecilia should most definitely keep her positions to herself and be an objective academic like the rest of us," free of the corruption of politics, made it difficult to speak without repercussions.

So, I have been created and constructed and reconstructed and deconstructed until I feel there's very little of me in the public image, because the images that most people have of Cecilia Konchar Farr are the heretic, the feminist, the unorthodox, the challenger of patriarchy, and the in-your-face activist. I am also the oldest daughter in a working-class family of eight children from a town near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. My dad was a millworker, a truck driver, and a construction worker, and my older brother, my grandfather, my uncles, and

my cousins all worked in steel mills; my brothers are still truck drivers, and my sisters are waitresses. Three or four of us are still Mormon. My dad never was, but my mom is fiercely, faithfully, eternally Mormon. I, myself, am committed passionately to two things—two things that give me stories to live by, two things that give me a voice to speak and a life that I feel blessed to be living: education (especially feminist education) and the LDS church.

FIRST, education. You would have to have grown up in a town like Butler, Pennsylvania, to understand what I mean when I say my options were limited. I lived on the outskirts of that decaying, perennially Democrat, union-loyal town right out of a Bruce Springsteen song. My parents, both children of Eastern-European immigrants, created a wonderful family life for us, encouraging everything we did, but they knew very little about education and where it could take us. In my high school things were grim. It was a huge school (just over 1,000 in my graduating class), so I never, that I can recall, attended a class with fewer than forty people in it. In spite of almost constant academic success, I never knew that I could do anything significant. In that atmosphere, I seldom felt special in any way. Even so, I did go to college, because that's what my Mormon friends in the stake were doing, and that's what my patriarchal blessing told me to do. And college, of course, meant the Y. Now, that was culture shock! I lasted two semesters, and I retreated, painfully, back to Pennsylvania. At that moment, as an eighteen-year-old woman, I realized how few my options were, and I, pretty literally, had a nervous breakdown and started over from scratch.

When I started over, it was literature that reclaimed me—Jane Austen and Louisa May Alcott novels, Edna St. Vincent Millay and Emily Dickinson poetry. The idea that there were more things out there for me to learn tugged at me and gave

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me reasons to go on. I decided then that I was going to make more options for myself. I got an education at that great bastion of the intellectual elite, Slippery Rock State College, which you may know for its football team. After graduation, I worked as a reporter for a few years. Then I started to get a feminist education, which was a different education than I had gotten before. Reading feminist thinkers gave me words to describe what I had felt for a long, long time; it helped me understand what I was seeing as a reporter and experiencing as a woman. It gave my thoughts life, gave me a voice.

NOW, the LDS church. Through the Church, I created a vision of myself beyond what Butler would allow me. I tell my students that sometimes I still think I am a fraud, that I should be living in a trailer park surrounded by children and working as a waitress. But I knew there was something different for me out there. My sense of my own divinity—my belief in myself, the knowledge of my divine potential—comes from being a Mormon. Like the characters I love in the scriptures, Joseph sold into Egypt, David the King, Joseph Smith the seer, John the Beloved, and Mary the Mother of Christ, I have personal, moral integrity and agency. I can speak with God, and God can speak with me, and wants to. Those were important lessons for a little girl in a large family, in a large school, in a working-class town in Pennsylvania.

I have a sister, Elaine, two years younger than I, who never learned those lessons. She was beautiful, talented, intelligent and conflicted. She was alcoholic, and she died when her car crashed into a parked tractor-trailer truck after she passed out at the wheel late one November night. She was only twenty-one. I knew by then that my problem of a life narrowly circumscribed by gender and class expectations wasn't just my problem. My feminism turned from philosophical to activist as I determined that what happened to my sister—the despair, the lack of vision and of options—wouldn't happen to anyone that I had access to and could love. Never again would I stand idly by and watch a woman's life fritter away into hopelessness. I would love women—our art, our music, our literature, our conversation. I decided that I would see the divine potential that so many fail to notice in women, and then I would encourage that potential. I would create spaces where women could grow. I would share stories that would give shape to our lives and ideas that would give life to our dreams. So I followed my heart, powered by my Mormonism and my feminism, and that's what I try to do as a feminist educator.

I should probably also add, especially for my husband, that I also love men and believe in their divine potential. I even helped create a little man, who is now eighteen months old. (I confess I had a hard time at first figuring out why Heavenly Father would send me a little boy, but I sure like the little guy!)

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I believe in men's divine potential as well, but so do a lot of other people.

So I have chosen to focus where I can do the most good, because I am dangerous enough to really believe that I can change the world. You won't often find me criticizing patriarchy (surprise, surprise: that's not all feminists do!) or condemning literature by men for not being feminist enough. I never purposefully undermine the Church or what I believe to be the inspired authority of its leaders. I am Mormon to my very core. I believe in Jesus Christ with a perfect brightness of hope. For me, no logic of my intellectual being

can undermine or do justice to the power of this statement: "I believe." And I do believe, even though I have rigorously questioned and contested that belief many times.

I want to get to what has happened to my beliefs in the last four years, but let me take a brief detour. Let me add that as I affirm my faith, I don't mean to affirm an orthodoxy or an unrighteous exercise of authority that harms people. I hope that my continued participation in the Church is seen for what it is, a belief that I locate in Jesus Christ, and that you—my friends, my brothers and my sisters, who have been put in a position where this institution has hurt you—won't view this as adding to your pain. Many people I love have chosen to leave the Church, and I don't want them to feel condemned in any way by my professions of belief in Christ's gospel.

FIRST, let me offer a list of my crimes from the perspective of the BYU establishment. I am an activist, a feminist, an intellectual, and a Mormon, and I believe, with Laurel Thatcher Ulrich and many of you, that those identities do not make me an "oxyMormon."¹ You can be a Mormon *and* a feminist. But my greatest crime is that I act on my feminism. I am committed to social change, or, in Mormon terms, to bringing about Zion. I came to BYU expressly to fulfill the greatest desire of my heart: to affirm women's divine potential, to acknowledge that God speaks to us as well, and to share that belief through both the literature and the feminist theory that I teach.

As you may have heard, I did several things that incurred the ire of some administrators, some members of BYU's board of trustees, and some adherents of the radical right in Utah and elsewhere. I assume they first determined that they should be noticing what Cecilia Konchar Farr was doing when VOICE became involved in some really interesting activism around violence against women, such as Take Back the Night and our Teach-in in 1992. Shortly after, I was invited by some local feminist groups I participated in to repeat a position I had taken publicly several times in favor of choice for women on the issue of abortion. Now, I would never call myself an abortion rights activist, though I am very much pro-choice, a distinction lost in the current heated political climate and, as

many of you know, a distinction that is controversial even among feminists. My position, which is against abortion and concerns, mainly, who should legislate this very sensitive moral issue, is one that I (and my bishop and stake president) found to be in harmony with the Church's statement on abortion, otherwise I would not have stated it so confidently and so publicly at a large pro-choice rally in the Utah State Capitol Rotunda. Parts of that free choice speech were televised, and the story, as I understand it (as it was repeated to me on different occasions by BYU administrators Bruce Hafen, Todd Britsch, Rex Lee, and Stan Albrecht), was that a member of the board of trustees saw it that night on the local news. He was angry about my having given a speech that he perceived to be pro-abortion and unbecoming a Mormon, so he called the administration and said, "Fire her, now!" The university administration, to their credit, said, "Thank you for your input, but we can't really do things that way."

Instead, several months later, I was "called in," not by my bishop but by an administrator who told me that the Church has a policy that no Church employee, including a BYU faculty member, can take a public pro-choice position. He read a statement from a board of trustees meeting to that effect, a statement that followed a discussion of my speech in the minutes. Well, I was as upset as any Mormon would be that general authorities had been discussing my action in negative ways. But I found the courage to ask, "If I am supposed to be bound by this contractually in my employment at BYU, could you please give me a written copy of that?" "No." I was told. "They are not prepared to release this statement yet." What I understood, then, from my initial meeting with the administration was that when they did release the statement, I would be obligated to live by it or leave the university.

Ironically, given those terms, I would have considered the option of leaving the university. But the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has a statement on academic freedom, which says that limits on a faculty member's academic freedom or political involvement need to be clearly delineated as written policy—and only then can a university rightfully enforce them. Religious institutions like BYU are allowed some leeway on academic freedom, but the leeway is contingent on the policies being clearly defined for faculty.² If these policies are not written down, if they are, instead, part of a folkloric conduct code that everyone is supposed to live by but no one really knows, then the university is acting dishonestly. I held on, for a long time, to the idea that my university administrators would not purposefully act dishonestly, and that, given time and opportunity, they would clarify their policy.

Eventually, the administration fired me. They fired me because members of the board of trustees told them that they must. They fired me for my feminism. How they did it is an-

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other story.³ In several documented instances, administrators interfered with the faculty review process that is part of the third-year review for promotion and tenure.⁴ My sense is that faculty members who were involved were "prudent Mormons" who believed, as Allen Dale Roberts wrote in a recent essay, that any mere suggestion from a general authority should be taken as a commandment.⁵ At the department level, the review said I had an impressive scholarly record and an impressive teaching record, and though, the committee wrote, there had been questions raised about my university citizenship,

these were not sufficient to undermine my review. When the review file got to the college level, I had bad articles and bad teaching and bad citizenship. And by the time it got to the university review committee, I had no articles and horrible teaching and university citizenship that was just too appalling to discuss. The only difference in that time period was the power of suggestion from the interference of people who were not, or should not have been, involved in the faculty review process. Thus, my scholarship disappeared. My positive student evaluations were suddenly testament only to my power as a dangerous, charismatic leader out to undermine my students' faith. My collegiality was characterized by negative reports of two incidents where I had spoken my mind openly, honestly, and without anger—in fact, without much emotion. These incidents were, of course, reformulated to demonstrate my movement "from difference to contention, from discourse to divisiveness, and from conversation to confrontation."⁶ I interpret that as meaning I wasn't nice—I am, after all, an Easterner.

Though I can joke about them now, comments such as these were really quite devastating to me as I read through my university file in the summer of 1993. Some of the things my colleagues on the College Review Committee wrote, for example, can't be more kindly labeled as anything but lies. I felt especially betrayed by my department chair who had had one-on-one discussions with me on several occasions. I bore my testimony to him. He knew what I was doing and had professed belief in my sincerity. But it was more important for him to obey his leaders than to support or trust a colleague, so his comments for my file were some of the harshest. That was very difficult. Other people who were cruel to me I sort of expected cruelty from, because they had never been anything but. In their world, cruelty to a feminist colleague was not a breach of Christian ethics but a demonstration of conservative commitment. In my characteristically poor way of dealing with emotional difficulty, I went into avoidance mode. I decided not to think about it anymore. Sometimes I was successful at not thinking, but I never managed to stop feeling, so I cried a lot.

Here is where I am now: I have decided that I will think about it some, and I'll talk about it, but mostly I'll try to write

about it. I have a quote from Terry Tempest Williams that has been my mantra this summer:

Writing becomes an act of compassion towards life, the life we so often refuse to see because if we look too closely or feel too deeply, there may be no end to our suffering. But words empower us, move us beyond our suffering, and set us free. This is the sorcery of literature. We are healed by our stories.⁷

Thank you for this opportunity to share my story.

LET me tell you, finally, what I think I have learned from this experience. The hardest part was learning that the men who had caused me the most harm were also men who had done others, including some of my dearest friends, a lot of good. I wanted to hate them with wild abandon. I called them Satan on many occasions—but they weren't. These were the kind of guys you go to church with every Sunday, your stake presidents and your bishops. Except for a few blatant exceptions whom I still insist on calling Satan, these men, I came to realize, are all, in fact, good people. So what do you do with that—when good people make bad things happen? When their good trees bear bad fruit? It didn't fit.

I learned a long time ago, on a local level, that leaders are fallible—and some of you who grew up in the east, with the dearth of male leadership many of us had in our home wards, can testify that it was a good lesson to learn. I also learned that my testimony can survive that knowledge, that my testimony was not about whether or not my leaders made mistakes. It would do Utah Mormons a lot of good to talk more about the humanness of our leaders than of their authority. When was the last time you heard a good Joseph-Smith-leg-wrestling story about one of our current leaders?

My testimony, four years after coming to BYU, is still the same one that I had when I was baptized, when I was eight years old and listened to the missionaries and felt the Spirit for the first time. It is a testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I know that God lives, that Joseph Smith restored Christ's gospel, that God communicates to us still through the scriptures and through the power of the Holy Ghost. I believe that Mormons should feel heavily our responsibility to practice hearing the still, small voice so that we can recognize it when it communicates to us. It is our responsibility, always, relentlessly, to exercise that great gift.

As Eugene England and Margaret Toscano and others have written, it was no accident that Eve chose, in the garden, between two paradoxical commandments, and that one of them was to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.⁸ *The action of making that choice was what revealed truth to her and Adam.* It is in choosing that we learn. It is in exercising our divine gifts that we become divine. When Adam and Eve exercised their divine gift they rejoiced—now the Atonement could happen. As Lehi says in the Book of Mormon, we have “become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for ourselves and not be acted upon” (2 Ne. 2:26). To act, to choose, to think, to exercise agency—this is our gift, and this is our divinity.

But it is also our humanness, because inherent in the ability to choose is, of course, the ability to make really bad choices. I do that quite often, and I still think I'm a pretty good person. So I can live with what happened to me at BYU because I rejoice together in my humanness and in my divinity, and I rejoice in the humanness and the divinity of my colleagues and my Church leaders. I don't expect them to be more than human, yet I hope for them to be divine. That's how I love the people I love most deeply. That's how I hope to love my enemies.

A passage from Zora Neale Hurston's autobiography *Dust Tracks on a Road* resonates with me, where she writes about what it's like to be an African-American woman riding a train and seeing her people doing things that embarrass and humiliate her because they reinforce the stereotypes that white people use to belittle and oppress them. But she looks at these other African Americans, and she doesn't push them away; she sees them, still, as her people. And in her shame and embarrassment, there is pride in her unity with them as she exclaims, “My people! My people!”⁹ I've felt that many times—that pain, that embarrassment, that joy as I look at other people who are my Mormon people. Since the day I was baptized, certainly since I joined that polygamous Farr family which goes way back to Kirtland and beyond, Mormons have been my people. And they, even the “theys” we push from us in our dread of repression, the “theys” who enforce narrow orthodoxies, the “theys” who think their violence and lies serve God, they are also our people. We belong to one another in faith.

So, after four years in what my dad would call the School of Hard Knocks, what I would leave with all of you, especially all of you women, is this message: Know your divinity. Believe in it, exercise it, embrace it. But when you see humanness, know it, too, and embrace it. Learn to love it. It is also you, and it is me. And it is our people, our Mormon people. ☐

NOTES

1. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, “Border Crossings,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27:2 (summer 1994), 1 and throughout.
2. The AAUP's 1940 “Statement of Principle on Academic Freedom and Tenure” is reprinted with permission in *Freedom and Tenure in the Academy*, William W. VanAlstyne, ed. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 407–409, which also includes several helpful contemporary interpretations of the document, especially with reference to private religious schools.
3. For more details, see Bryan Waterman's and Brian Kagel's Sunstone Symposium session, “BYU and the Farr/Knowlton Cases: A Preliminary Sketch,” (#SL94-134).
4. From letters in my official university review file, now in my possession.
5. Allen Dale Roberts, “Academic Freedom at Brigham Young University: Free Inquiry in Religious Context,” in *Religion, Feminism and Freedom of Conscience: A Mormon/Humanist Dialogue*, George D. Smith, ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 60.
6. Neal Lambert, BYU English department chair, from a review file letter dated 9 March 1993.
7. Terry Tempest Williams, “Undressing the Bear” in *An Unspoken Hunger: Stories from the Field* (New York: Pantheon, 1994) 57.
8. From various readings in *Strangers in Paradox* by Margaret and Paul Toscano (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990) and *Dialogues with Myself* by Eugene England (Salt Lake City: Orion, 1984).
9. Zora Neale Hurston, “My People! My People!” in *Dust Tracks on the Road* (New York: Harper, 1991), 157–172. Originally published in 1942.

1993 Brookie & D. K. Brown Fiction Contest Winner

OTHER HANDS

By Carol B. Quist



"Men think power is physical. Women, whose bodies are always vulnerable, know it isn't."

THE FIRST TIME SISTER SAXON LEFT HER BODY, she didn't even know which prayer had finally worked. Someone much like . . . mother wrapped her in the first hug in years that didn't grip her crotch. As Viv cried, the mother whispered, "Stay as long as you can. Then we'll show you the way back."

Mother hadn't said the way "home." And sisters surrounding her also seemed to know that the house she kept for Errol wasn't home. No, upon this giving yet sustaining . . . firmament? . . . was the home she hadn't known since childhood.

Cleansed and clothed by the sisters' eyes and coached by the child's hand, she walked, then ran for what seemed hours beneath warming light. She read, talked, watched. And no one criticized or interrupted.

But, oh, how painful was reentry. Left kneeling at the sofa, her body had crumpled into cramps. Crawling to the tub, writhing out of her clothes, she'd rolled into the warm water just as Errol burst in, bawling, "Viv! Where are you, Viv?"

"Ouch!" she said. He hurt.

CAROL B. QUIST is a writer who lives in Salt Lake City.

Grunting, he reared back, then left.

Other hands massaged the knotted muscles, lingered on her shoulder as she later made dinner and parried Errol's questions.

From then on, she was careful to leave her body at rest. And she left it often, seeking learning in freedom. Her classmates varied, also coming when they could. She came to know them on earth, too, in the caring places.

Once she overstayed and returned to Errol's crushing CPR. "Breathe! Breathe!"

"Get off!" she finally gasped as sirens flared, then paused outside. Paramedics—sisters—burst in.

At the hospital, the head internist introduced the heads of neurosurgery and plastic surgery—also sisters. They granted Errol's request to give Viv a complete physical and bed rest.

While running standard tests, physicians reconfirmed the unlikelihood of Viv's bearing children.

"But she was perfectly fine when we married," Errol protested.

After the silence during which everyone looked at him, the gynecologist said, "Our infertility and adoption services are the

best in the nation. And you should have that wart removed.”

But Errol would not consider adoption either, even of the foster children he'd come to care for through Viv's volunteering at the shelter.

At the hospital, she never left her body. She had no need. And Errol might come at any time, too. Later, she learned to make the firmament transparent and monitor her body regularly. She realized she should probably care for it more while in it, too.

She considered what would happen if she grabbed Errol's crotch when she hugged him. How much was he a prisoner of his body? In her journal, she often listed the qualities she'd loved enough to marry, still loved. His constant courtesy, whether to beggar or bank president. His generosity—he'd buy Scout-A-Rama tickets from everyone who asked. His participation in any service project. His strict honesty. His respect and devotion to their parents. She was grateful for such temporal, spiritual, and cultural support and identity and status as Errol gave her. She began to ponder what status she gave him, why he seemed to need to control their activities and choices.

One afternoon as she was about to embody, Errol's—no, some other man's head pierced the firmament and turned to her. No one even screamed as the eyes bulged and head tilted. Instinctively Viv hugged the sister beside her, the man's wife. Instantly, the neurosurgeons and plastic surgeons were there.

“Men think power is physical. Women, whose bodies are always vulnerable, know it isn't.” The two surgeons spoke as they sutured between the man's gaping shoulders in the second bloodless operation Viv had seen in—how long had it been?

The firmament had done the first—causing Viv to try to recall the physics about equal and opposite forces. Now she was in that sister's house, still hugging, marveling at stitches beginning deep in muscle tissue and rising to the skin. Why hadn't she gone mad, and how could the firmament cauterize?

“Shock, and we don't know either—yet,” the surgeons answered sorrowfully. “We can only repair.”

“He found and somehow used my journal,” the sister said, pulling Viv to where it lay open on a nightstand.

“You have a hard choice,” the surgeons said almost together. Shedding their gloves, they stepped forward. Sirens sounded as they reached for the journal.

“No!” the sister cried, “I can't lose all I've learned, won't!”

The surgeons bundled their equipment and other evidence.

“But I'm not finished here, either,” the sister cried at Viv.

Was that her sister's choice? To leave her body beside his? Or to become a fugitive on earth?

“A ‘witness protection program,’ isn't it?” Viv cried, “to dodge a murder charge. New face, hair, even toeprints and fingerprints—” she told the sister staring at her.

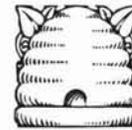
The sirens whined down as Viv envisioned her sister checking into the hospital alone, assuming a new name, having all memory removed, really being reborn all because—“I'll nurse you!” Viv vowed. “I'll—become a real nurse?” she asked herself.

Hope rose and fell in her sister's eyes as the surgeons shook

their heads.

“Well, risky now, maybe,” Viv nodded, “but I'll find a way to spare others this pain and—I will!”

She was already gone when the paramedics, certainly sisters, entered to help deal with the head and body. And already, even before her appointment with the mother, she was planning to prevent the head and body ever being Errol's. ☐



LAKE CHELAN

Someone moved the lake, or swallowed part—
it looks like the first Chinese brother was here.
My husband (the old quarterback) paces a first down,
tells me the length, three football fields.
We walk toward the water, past bleached stumps,
four dead buoys attached to concrete, a mooring
dock that stands alone, directionless.

First our feet filled with good intentions
remember beachcombing.
We collect pebbles, petrified wood,
follow sandtracks of birds, crisscross words drawn
with a stick, *Karen was here*.
Wind makes little waves; they break with a surf sound
like low tide at the Jersey shore—we laugh
“You should have seen the Atlantic in the old days . . .”
We miss salt, broken shells, the lifeguard stand,
digging holes to find China at the other end.

When the sun drops, we look up at last;
we are surrounded. Mountains protect
with great brown flanks, some bristle
with trees, some are hung with cloud-smoke
hiding the peaks of snow. Ah Chelan—
all that is mysterious and deep,
glacier-fed and green in August,
past memory, not telling its secrets,
only whispered native names
Wapato . . . Okanogan . . . Stehikin . . .
soundings not accessible to travelers
on foot. Ice gouges places
deeper than we know.

—ANNE FASULO

*Lowell Bennion is Mormonism's greatest practical philosopher.
Fifty years from now I hope everyone will be quoting him often.*

THE LEGACY OF LOWELL L. BENNION

By Eugene England

LOWELL BENNION ONCE changed my life with a question. In one of his classes at the Salt Lake Institute of Religion at the University of Utah in the winter of 1953, we were discussing God's equal love for all, his being "no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34), when one student asked why, then, a difference between persons existed in the Church for Negroes, who couldn't receive the priesthood or enjoy temple blessings. I quickly raised my hand and said, "We've also been talking about God's justice, and since Negroes were neutral in the War in Heaven, they are simply being punished for that now." Brother B. didn't fulminate or bear down on me—as I have sometimes done to such students since. He mildly asked, "How do you know Negroes were not valiant in the pre-existence?"

Of course, I had no good answer—it was simply an unquestioned tradition in my home and my Sunday School classes. I listened carefully as Brother Bennion gently suggested that the God he knew would surely let his children know if they had done something wrong, so they could repent. And since he hadn't revealed anything about Negroes in the

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SELECTED BOOKS BY LOWELL BENNION

Max Weber's Methodology (dissertation, 1931)
 What about Religion? (1934)
 Youth and Its Religion (1939)
 Contributions of Joseph Smith (1940)
 The Religion of the Latter-day Saints: A College Course (1940)
 The Church of Jesus Christ (1941)
 The Church of Jesus Christ in Ancient Times (1951)
 Goals for Living (1952)
 Teachings of the New Testament (1953)
 An Introduction to the Gospel (1955)
 Developing Abilities and Skills in Leadership (As a Preparation for Missionary and Other Church Service) (1959)
 Introduction to the Book of Mormon and Its Teachings (1959)
 Religion and the Pursuit of Truth (1959)
 Six Fundamentals of Good Teaching and Leadership (1961)
 Fundamentals of Leadership (1965)
 Scriptures of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (1968)
 Looking Towards Marriage (1972)
 Husband and Wife (1972)
 On Being a College Student (1972)
 The Things that Matter Most (1978)
 Jesus the Master Teacher (1980)
 Understanding the Scriptures (1981)
 The Essence of Love (1982)
 I Believe (1983)
 The Book of Mormon: A Guide to Christian Living (1985)
 The Best of Lowell Bennion: Selected Writings 1928-1988 (1988)
 Do Justly and Love Mercy: Moral Issues for Mormons (1988)
 The Unknown Testament (1988)
 Legacies of Jesus (1990)
 How Can I Help?: Final Selections by the Legendary Writer, Teacher, and Humanitarian (1996)

pre-mortal life, perhaps it was best to believe that, as the Book of Mormon claims, all are indeed alike unto God, black and white (2 Ne. 26:33). As I listened and considered this idea, my whole way of thinking about the gospel began to change. I realized with shame that many of my beliefs, central ones that affected my way of seeing the world and treating other people, were based on very flimsy and unexamined foundations and were inconsistent with some great central principles that I claimed to believe—such as that "God is no respecter of persons."

That crucial and permanent change was not imposed on me by a new outside authority. I hadn't substituted Brother Bennion in place of tradition or the speculations of some Church teachers. It was educed, led out of me from inside, in the central act of education that was Lowell Bennion's great gift and the heart of his legacy. In both his teaching and his writing, he could merely suggest, by a question or phrase or story or new juxtaposition, new possibilities for thinking

about the gospel and our relation to it—possibilities that resonated with sound logic and simple goodness in ways that spoke to what Lincoln called the "better angels" of our nature as children of divine beings.

Brother B. once wrote, "A Christian believes in plain and simple living and high thinking."¹ He certainly lived plain and simple, with his cow and garden and home-made bread and

Church and Religion

Life is not only something to be thought about but also is to be lived. The living must go on continuously and cannot wait upon a completely satisfying theoretical orientation. Religion gives to the believer a moral way of life born of long experience and, he believes, of divine wisdom—one that has stood the test of time. (*Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 113.)

Religious ordinances and rituals are vain if they do not encourage spirituality and morality. (*The Unknown Testament*, 47.)

We should never hold a meeting, teach a class, or plan an activity without asking ourselves: *How is this going to affect the people who will participate?* Because, ultimately, the only measure of our labors is this: . . . A class is no better than *what happens to the people who attend.* (*Six Fundamentals of Good Teaching and Leadership*, 9.)

[C]orrelation has inadvertently reduced the creativity and contributions of women to their own programs. I believe this is regrettable, not only because women understand women and girls better than men do, but because any net decrease in the amount of productivity and creativity in a given organization is ultimately detrimental to that organization, creates a smaller pool of leadership, and restricts growth. (*Do Justly and Love Mercy*, 38.)

[A]uthority is not a way of discovering the truth, but is a method of transmitting knowledge gained in other ways. And no one has the right to be authoritative in any field of knowledge—in science, philosophy, or religion—who has not earned that right by having gained knowledge and insight through reason, experience, or revelation. (*Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 27.)

famous battered Ford truck, used mainly to haul manure for his garden or to take donated goods to needy widows. At his funeral last March, President Gordon B. Hinckley, his neighbor for fifty years, mused that Lowell had never had a car as nice as any in the parking lot that morning.

Besides plain living, Lowell Bennion clearly believed in—and for nearly seventy years consistently practiced—high thinking. From his missionary diary to the last collection of his essays and his last book, both of which are being published by Aspen Books this year, he has produced a greater volume of writing, concerning a greater variety of subjects related to Mormon thought and religious practice, in a greater variety of publications, than any other writer. Throughout that huge quantity (over thirty books and manuals and over 200 articles and essays) he has maintained a consistent high quality, a unique voice, and—despite the variety of subjects—kept his focus on a few central ideas.

One of those ideas is contained in a favorite scripture, the first great commandment, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matt. 22:37). Lowell Bennion’s life exemplified the second part of that scripture, the second great commandment, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (vs. 39) and the subtitle of Mary Bradford’s fine biography, *Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, Counselor, Humanitarian* (Dialogue Foundation, 1995) captures that part of his legacy. We who have known him personally will long continue to be influenced most by those legacies of teacher, counselor, humanitarian, by his remarkable, life-enhancing and life-changing influence during three careers: director and teacher at the Salt Lake Institute from 1934 to 1962, then ten years as a dean of students and professor of sociology at the University of Utah, and finally his remarkable leadership of Salt Lake’s Community Services Council until he was past eighty. But many thousands of others have been, and, I believe, thousands will be far into the future, most influenced by his thinking and writing, and that is the legacy I focus on here.

THOUGHTFUL TEACHING, COUNSELING, SERVING

LOWELL BENNION’S thought is unique and important partly because it cannot be separated from those other great legacies. His books and articles, especially until the 1970s, when he left academia, were either written at first as manuals or lessons designed for Church teaching and counseling or grew directly out of classroom experience and students’ problems and questions. He believed that *teaching* should be focused in great, central principles and ideas, one at a time; that *counseling* should connect directly to a person’s fundamental needs, which derived from their eternal nature as divine beings, children of God with very specific needs related to that nature; and that *service* should be skillful and intelligent, based on recognition of those same needs—for instance, that people need to be creative and productive as well as well-fed and warm.

Brother Bennion’s writings will always derive their partic-

ular power less from their literary beauty than from the moral authority of his life and the presence of his life in those writings, and he sometimes seemed to belittle theory over practice—when he left the U. he said, “I used to teach religion; now I practice it.” But he knew well the value of ideas and the power of words to move and motivate. In “Teaching Religion by Word of Mouth,” a 1939 essay printed in the *Millennial Star*, he reviewed the great value of learning religion through personal experience and through the example of others. But then he explored an equally valuable third way, through the spoken and written word: “The skillful writer with eyes to see and ears to hear and the talent to express his keener insight and deeper understanding . . . holds our attention to that expression until we feel it more intensely than life itself.”² He saw Jesus as “the Master Teacher” chiefly because he was an “artist in parable.” Brother B. was such an artist, constructing parables from his own and others’ experience, creating thought-experiments and logical connections, and using the scriptures with great power. A primary example of the spiritual and literary quality of his writing is a very short essay published in SUNSTONE in 1978 called “The Weightier Matters” (reprinted in this issue). Read it and see how, in just over 700 words, this great practical thinker and writer can use both others’ and his own experience, connected to scriptural example and teaching, to create a masterpiece focused in one great idea that moves us to action. The idea in this essay is that we Mormons, who properly focus on paying tithing and offerings, performing ordinances, and carrying on the spiritual and social functions of the Church, also should and can attend to what Christ called the “weightier matters” (Matt. 23:23), can perform just and merciful and loving service, both in the Church and in our communities.

AN EFFECTIVE TRANSLATOR

LOWELL BENNION is Mormonism’s greatest *practical* philosopher. Reading over his work, I am struck that he doesn’t quite fit on a list that might run from Orson Pratt to B. H. Roberts to Sterling McMurrin to Truman Madsen to James Faulconer, a list of more theoretical philosophers. He often quoted Goethe’s maxim, “What from your father’s heritage is lent, earn it anew to really possess it.” He stands apart as one who did just that: he took the great central principles of the restored gospel and the functions of the restored Church, rethought them, and discovered anew and expressed elegantly their implicit intellectual structure and potential consistency—and then he showed in original ways how they can provide motivation and guidance in living, from courtship and marriage to working out a personal philosophy of life to caring



The Church exists for people, not people for the Church. The Church was established to help people become true followers of Jesus Christ. . . . I would rather be a good follower of Jesus outside the Church than an indifferent one in the Church. (*How Can I Help?*, 143.)

for the sick and elderly. His constant theme (harking back to his study of the Hebrew prophets in graduate school under the influence of Max Weber but reconfirmed by what he then found in the New Testament and the teachings of Book of Mormon and modern prophets) is that true religion is rooted in chaste, meek personal living, in faith in a personal God, and in courageous social morality based on the conviction that God loves all his children equally and expects those who claim to love him to love those children as well.

Brother B.’s signature scripture is from one of his beloved literary prophets: “What does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Micah 6:8). His own particular integrity, which cost him much, was that for well over sixty years, with a clarity and consistency rare and satisfying as water in a dry land, he spoke and wrote in favor of positive, integrated religion, based in affirmative and universal principles. He spoke out fearlessly against unchastity, drugs, idleness, intellectual pride, materialism, racism, and sexism—against prejudice of all kinds. At a time when our unparalleled growth in numbers and wealth and power has tempted us Mormons to forget “the least of these,” Lowell Bennion did not forget. And at a time when many of us have spoken out against the failings of our brothers and sisters in the Church with judgment and harshness and even self-congratulation, he remained conciliatory and non-confrontive, never disparaging those he disagreed with nor striking back at those who judged or attacked or even injured him.

While I was rereading Lowell’s work, just after his death, I heard Chieko Okazaki give a speech that made me think of a quality of his writing that we might all well imitate. Sister Okazaki told of a recent tour, in her capacity as first counselor in the general presidency of the Relief Society, where she visited Korea, Tonga, and Mexico. She remembered that she had been blessed by President Hinckley, when she had been set apart six years ago, that (perhaps partly because she is of Japanese ancestry, raised in Hawaii) she would bring a unique quality to the presidency, would represent, to those outside the United States and Canada, their oneness with the Church, and that “you will be free in speaking, that your tongue may be loosed as you speak to the people.” When she reread that

C hristian Living

Learn to like what doesn't cost much. Learn to like reading, conversation, music. Learn to like plain food, plain service, plain cooking. Learn to like fields, trees, brooks, hiking, rowing, climbing hills. Learn to like people, even though some of them may be different . . . different from you. Learn to like to work and enjoy the satisfaction of doing your job as well as it can be done. Learn to like the songs of birds, the companionship of dogs. Learn to like gardening, puttering around the house, and fixing things. Learn to like the sunrise and sunset, the beating of rain on the roof and windows, and the gentle fall of snow on a winter day. Learn to keep your wants simple and refuse to be controlled by the likes and dislikes of others. (*The Best of Lowell Bennion*, xxiii.)

Romantic love, while ecstatic, is based on our physical natures and by itself can become fickle and unstable. Friendship is creative togetherness, a sharing of common interests and values, a sheer delight in each other's company, a mysterious kind of kinship where spirit meets spirit. . . . Christian love is a genuine interest in the well-being of the other person. It is kind, considerate, thoughtful, forgiving, tender, and selfless, whereas romantic love tends to be self-seeking and demanding. The ideal love in marriage consists of romance enriched by friendship and refined by Christian love. (*How Can I Help?*, 53.)

Never marry anyone with whom you have not served on an ongoing committee. (*The Essence of Love*, 10.)

[L]ife is frequently better understood through literature than through one's own immediate and direct experience. (*Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 101.)

Latter-day Saints ought to devote at least as much reading time to the classics of other religions and cultures as they do to their own. (*How Can I Help?*, 112.)

blessing as she prepared for her upcoming tour, she felt "filled with a great desire to speak to [each native people] in their own language." She was especially anxious about Korean because "I knew that Korea and Japan have not always had good relations, and I wanted to show my concern and love for my Korean brothers and sisters" by speaking "to them directly from my heart without an interpreter." She wondered if she would be able to read Korean, because the pronunciation is very difficult and quite different from Japanese. She had her talk translated into Korean and had a Korean sister record the talk so she could play it over and over to hear the pronunciation. She prayed and practiced and practiced and prayed, but she couldn't get it right and was ready to give up and use an interpreter. Early one morning, as she lay in bed sorrowing over her failure and praying, begging for help, a voice came to her mind that said, "Write out the talk in *hiragana*," which is the Japanese set of writing symbols for all the various sounds. Though at first that made no sense, she took the Korean version of the talk and painstakingly wrote it out syllable by syllable in *hiragana*—and gradually she came to understand the grammatical structure of Korean and thus its intonation and pronunciation. When she arrived in Korea and got up to speak without an interpreter, the people were at first puzzled, then assumed she had memorized her greeting and would soon be joined by an interpreter. When she kept going they began to stare, their mouths dropped open, and then tears came to their eyes. Sister Okazaki writes,

They listened with their whole hearts. . . . I felt a spirit rise within me, a spirit of love, of energy, of connectedness. I could feel the words coming . . . and I could see, on the faces of the people before me, the meaning of the words. They came to me afterwards, some of them weeping and unable to speak. Elderly women pressed my hands and groped for words and then began to speak to me in Japanese [a long unused, perhaps previously hated, language for them]. Many of them said, "Thank you, . . . You are like us!"³

I believe that Brother Bennion often prayed and practiced, practiced and prayed, until he could translate his ideas, many of which were based ultimately in very esoteric and complex thought and sometimes unpopular positions, into clear, concrete sentences, with specific, practical illustrations and moving images and summaries—and, perhaps above all, the right intonation—so he could communicate with all of us. A tendency of most of us, certainly I have it, is to put our energy into researching the facts and arguing our unusual conclusions and connections—rather than in that final, crucial effort Lowell Bennion and Chieko Okazaki have given themselves to, *translating* our work, finding the right *tone*, so that all our readers, or at least most of them, can understand, can feel our love and concern. Thus they can hear what we say and be genuinely affected by it (rather than merely offended or made defensive), because they know that our "faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death" (D&C 121:44) and can say in their hearts, "You are one of us!"

Just after I heard Sister Okazaki speak, I reread Brother

Bennion's great classic, *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth* (Deseret Book, 1959), and I immediately saw there an example of effective translation. That book, his best and most important single work, is the only LDS book devoted to epistemology, to what is, perhaps, the most basic and important question for mortals: *How do we know anything? How do we find the truth, know what to trust, decide whom to obey?* Certainly the answers to every other question of life depend on

how we answer that one. Brother B. characteristically gives the book a practical focus by first reviewing the particular challenges a university student faces when he comes, usually with a rather simple, inherited faith, to a place devoted to skepticism, to questioning present beliefs and offering new kinds of authority and many competing claims. Then Brother Bennion defines truth, using the excellent scriptural as well as general sources, and he rejoices over the search for it. He introduces the four ways truth has traditionally been sought—outside authority, reason, personal experience, and some form of inner assurance or revelation—and thoroughly surveys the strengths and weaknesses of each. He then discusses the great fields of knowledge, science, philosophy, art, everyday life, and religion, and he lists the particular contributions and limitations of each. In an appendix, he discusses the scriptures as a source of truth, their unique strengths and their dangerous limitations if misread or pitted against other forms of knowledge as a sole authority, and he gives some guides for best appreciating and gaining truth from them.

REVELATION AFFECTED BY WORLD VIEW

IN the appendix to *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, Lowell Bennion lays out two of his most unusual and important ideas, which anticipate by at least twenty years the ideas of postmodern Mormon philosophers about scriptural language. First, that the Doctrine and Covenants definition of "truth," usually misquoted and misunderstood as "things as they are, were, and will be" (see D&C 93:24), actually says truth is "knowledge of" such things. It thus suggests that truth is always a function of its knowers a product in part of each knower's point of view, not an absolute that anyone can encompass and judge perfectly from the outside—which is a position central to the thought of all contemporary philosophers and literary critics.

The related second idea is that we live in an ongoing, continually developing universe in which God is a genuine and nonabsolute participant. In fact, God is himself in important ways a creature of language and its limitations. The Doctrine and Covenants informs us that God definitely speaks to us through his prophets but does so "in their weakness, after the



As a missionary.

After class one day, [a student] asked, "How can you stand to teach the same subjects year after year?" . . . I replied, I don't teach the same subject matter year after year. I teach new students every quarter" (*The Book of Mormon: A Guide to Christian Living*, 47.)

manner of their language" (D&C 1:24), which seems consistent with contemporary ideas about how language functions relative to the world view and rhetorical resources of the speaker and the "discourse community." Both of these scriptures seem to suggest that there is no way for knowers, to get completely independent of nature and language for an absolute and therefore universally compelling "meaning." The consequences of this view are enormous and very challenging, but Brother Bennion created a wonderful, carefully intoned, translation that was approved by the board of Deseret Book, including general authorities, and was read with great profit by a whole generation of Mormons of great diversity. Here is a sample:

Revelation not only reflects God, but also man. God is concerned with both the prophet and the people to whom he is speaking. Therefore, the scriptures should be read not only with God in mind, but also the persons who wrote them and the people to whom they were directly addressed. . . .

Much of the harshness and cruelty in Joshua and Judges, and some of the deception practiced in certain episodes related in other Old Testament books are inconsistent, in our judgment, with the spirit and teachings of the Master. . . . When we find teachings or interpretations of history therein which are wholly inconsistent with the character and purposes of God as revealed to Jesus Christ or to the prophets, then we should look for an explanation in men—either in the writers, copyists, translators, the people for whom they were intended, or in our own lack of understanding as readers. With Moroni we should, ". . . take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God. . . ." (Moroni. 7:14.)

Brother Bennion ends this long caution about misreading the scriptures with a quotation from Brigham Young:

"[I]t is impossible for the poor, weak, grovelling, sinful inhabitants of the earth to receive a revelation from the Almighty in all its perfection. He has to speak to us in a manner to meet the extent of our capacities."⁴

When I read this again, with Sister Okazaki's example of

Creativity and Action

We have only limited control over the fruit of our actions. Man proposes, life disposes. How other people react to my thinking or doing is their prerogative and beyond my control. I am learning to put my heart and mind into what I am doing and to not work for success or rewards. In this way, I am not serving two masters. (*The Book of Mormon: A Guide to Christian Living*, 31.)

Rules become outmoded; principles do not. (*Legacies of Jesus*, 50.)

Religion teaches that man is in the image of God. Since God is the great Creator, man cannot satisfy his nature unless he, too, becomes a creator in his own right and sphere. He must view religion as an opportunity more than a possession—an opportunity to love, to serve to walk boldly by faith in the great ideals of his religion. The Christian faith is, in the words of Paul, a call to liberty. (*I Believe*, 71.)

One way in which we can all learn to be creative, even as Jesus was in a supreme manner, is in human relations. We have the capacity to treat others with courtesy, respect, encouragement, and brotherly love, in ways that will motivate them to be their finest selves. This can be perhaps our most divine way of becoming a Creator in the image of the Lord. (*I Believe*, 50.)

In the pursuit of values we discover that life is within, not outside us. The beginning and end of life is to experience it deeply in all of its finest expressions. Self-realization or self fulfillment—to be what nature and God intended us to be—appears to me to be the ultimate meaning of life. Salvation is a process of becoming, not a reward given us at the end of our journey on judgment day. Life goes on and will continue. Let it be in search of meaning. (*The Things that Matter Most*, 62.)

earnest, prayerful translation in mind, I was chagrined, even ashamed. I looked again at a passage in my new book, *Making Peace*, on an ethics of diversity, where I argue, based on Brother Bennion's great insight, that the passages in the Book of Mormon that seem clearly racist are not evidence, as some read them, that God is a racist, but rather reflect the world view of those who wrote and received them. But I did not pray and practice, practice and pray, until I got the tone right, and I'm afraid my essay did little to make peace with those whom I wanted to reach—it may even have simply offended them because they saw in my words merely an accusation that the Book of Mormon prophets were racists.

RICHLY PLAIN AND SIMPLE

LOWELL BENNION early developed and always maintained that remarkable ability to translate very sophisticated and sometimes quite radical thinking into the proper language and tone needed to communicate to his audience. His versatility is one evidence: he wrote manuals for nearly every age and variety in the Church, from Junior Sunday School and ten-year-old Blazers and Bluebirds through all ages of the old Mutual Improvement Association, both young women and young men, as well as institute and Church education classes, and on to Relief Society, priesthood, investigators', and gospel doctrine classes. His Sunday School manual *An Introduction to the Gospel* was used for both gospel essentials and gospel doctrine classes throughout the Church from 1955 to 1970. He learned to speak with equal ease and effectiveness, about serious religious and intellectual matters as well as common feelings and aspirations, with young boys and local cowhands at his ranch in Idaho, with the brightest graduate students and faculty at the University of Utah, with members of the Salt Lake Ministers Association, with friends in study groups, with ward members he served as a bishop, and with the widows and elderly he constantly served. It isn't that he varied his language for his different audiences. Rather he developed, with prayer and practice, a language and tone that was clear and simple and yet rich enough that he could use it with equal ease and effectiveness in a worship service, a graduate seminar, a Sunstone symposium, or general conference.

The style is deceptively plain and straightforward, rising only occasionally, almost shyly, to eloquence or passion, rarely personal, using instead other's experience (or his own but somewhat camouflaged or at least slightly abstracted) to create something more like parables than concrete examples. His work will often move progressively from what seems rather obvious common ground, through definitions and scriptural support, to new concepts tentatively examined—to finally be captured in something like an epigram. Here he is in *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, writing on the nature and value of faith:

Faith is adventurous and creative. It not only is the sphere of the possible, but is also the power which often makes the possible come into being. Faith is that remarkable quality of the human spirit which

first envisages the possibilities of life, then lives as though these possibilities were realities, and by this action often makes them real. In the realm of knowledge, one conforms to what is; in the realm of faith one creates life after the image carried in his heart.⁵

And here he is, a few pages later, on the *limits* of faith:

One can also place his trust and faith in that which is not true. This experience turns out to be blind faith—not the kind that is based on knowledge and experience or quickened by the Spirit of Deity. And yet it is commonly called faith and has feelings in common with it. . . . A couple marries with little understanding of each other's personalities and with even less knowledge of the nature of marriage. But their minds and hearts are full of hope, adventure, confidence—attitudes which accompany the feeling of faith. Their blind faith often leads them not to bliss, but to the divorce court.⁶

Brother Bennion has the consistent power he admires in Jesus, the Master Teacher—to give a large idea a recognizable, almost homely, concrete form, and then move from that in a kind of crescendo to a restrained but unmistakable celebration of the idea:

The search for knowledge is a great adventure consistent with man's need as a child of the great Creator to be creative. The quest for knowledge, the activity of learning, is as satisfying to the mind as is the final discovery; plowing and planting the field are as meaningful as reaping the harvest; writing a book is often more rewarding than the reading of it. Growing things live and bear fruit. Reality is of such magnitude that it will take an eternity of progression to formulate propositions relating to it which are comprehensive and true.⁷

That was written when Brother Bennion was fifty years old; now consider his tone just after he turned eighty, in his last book that was published while he was alive, *The Legacies of Jesus*. Lowell is writing here of meekness, with his own humility but with a characteristic edge of implied criticism as well:

[T]he meek are those who are teachable and open-minded, those who will learn from their fellow human beings as well as from God—not because it is the intellectually correct thing to do, but because they are not concerned with themselves and can truly listen and, therefore, learn. I have perhaps a rather unorthodox view of the humble as those who feel no need to continually take their personal pulse, analyze



With his wife, Merle, in Paris, 1931.

Take pride in being yourself. Envy no one; copy no one. Rejoice in your original looks, talents, feelings, and thoughts. . . . Listen to others, read widely, and heed counsel; but do your own thinking, draw your own conclusions, speak your own words, determine your own actions. (*How Can I Help?*, 106.)

how they feel about a given topic, or develop and express an opinion on every item of conversation.⁸

As one who seems to feel a need to rise to every controversy, I feel the bite of that; do you?

BLACKS AND THE PRIESTHOOD

Of course, for all the mildness of his writing and manner, Lowell could and did occasionally rise to controversy, and his humble desire and loving effort to translate his words to be understood did not, of course, protect him completely from misunderstanding and trouble. He spoke out in 1976 for consideration by Mormon law makers of the Equal Rights Amendment on its own merits and against capital punishment in 1992, when those were extremely unpopular positions, even deemed apostate by some of his fellow Mormons in Utah. He never spoke out publicly or wrote on the subject of blacks and the priesthood nor *initiated* a discussion on the subject, but when he was pressed, he spoke with clarity and passion about the inconsistency between our basic gospel ideals and scriptures and a policy of discrimination, arguing particularly against the unofficial idea that blacks were being punished for their ancestry or some unknown failing before mortality. And he stated clearly, almost fiercely, his conviction that we should think and try to act in accord with our principles.

In an essay he wrote in the early 1970s, a time of great pain for any devout and compassionate Mormon like him as the pressure concerning denial of priesthood to blacks rose to a climax, Brother Bennion discharged his feelings and conscience on the issue. But he kept his essay in his desk and did not publish it until 1988 when he let me include it in my collection of his works. Here is a sample:

Since student days contacts with individuals of minority groups continue to instruct and inspire me. A Negro lady of fifty came to a Mormon Doctrine class at the Institute of Religion years ago. Learning that she was a daughter of a Protestant minister and devout in her own faith, I asked her why she had come to us. Her answer I shall never forget:

"In the summer I am a recreation worker on a play-



Faith

Faith is adventurous and creative. It not only is the sphere of the possible, but it is also the power which often makes the possible come into being. Faith is that remarkable quality of the human spirit which first envisages the possibilities of life, then lives as though these possibilities were realities, and by this action often makes them real. In the realm of knowledge, one conforms to what is; in the realm of faith, one creates life after the image carried in his heart. (*Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 125–26.)

Faith as “reason grown courageous” will ever be an essential need of life. (*Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 130.)

[F]aith and reason will never see “eye to eye.” There will always be some tension, conflict and differences existing between them. If a marriage is to be consummated between reason and faith, it will have to be of the same kind we know between husband and wife—one that respects individuality in their respective natures and roles. (*Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, frwd.)

If God exists, then the things we cherish most—truth, love, beauty, goodness, integrity, and freedom—are not ultimately at the mercy of any unscrupulous individual, the hazards of mortality, or the menace of nuclear holocaust. Faith in the existence of a personal divine being means also a faith in the eternal life of human beings. If personality is in command in the universe, human personality can be preserved. (*The Unknown Testament*, 30.)

I am glad to live by faith. Faith is a searchlight which takes us beyond the boundaries of knowledge. It is creative, futuristic, dynamic, adventurous, and even risky if we put faith in the wrong things. Faith leads to knowledge, but knowledge opens vistas to the need for more faith. (*The Book of Mormon: A Guide to Christian Living*, 69.)

ground in Ogden. White as well as black children come to me with questions and problems. Many are Latter-day Saints. I have come here to learn your teachings so my answers will be right and not hurt their faith in any way.”

One reason I did not recognize my racial prejudice in the days of my youth, I believe, was because my view of the Gospel must have been fragmented if not pulverized. I must not have seen it in one piece, in a framework of fundamental concepts, as I am beginning to now. Nor was I particularly interested in the implications of the Gospel for the social issues of the day. High walls separated religion from daily life in some areas. . . .

Prejudice is not easy to overcome. Even after one has restructured his thinking to cast it out, feelings and attitudes of bygone years may remain. Perhaps our only hope to be able to conquer negative feelings is by finding ways to express positive feelings of good will toward our brethren of all races and culture.

I ask God and my brothers of another color to forgive me the folly of my youth, my pride, and my insensitivity in the past to their feelings and their innermost needs. And I promise to never again prejudge a man because of the color of his skin and I would hope for no other reason either.⁹

“LOVE . . . AND INSIGHT”

ONE of the most dramatic moments in Mormon intellectual history reveals both the radical courage and compassion that drove Lowell Bennion’s thought and also the remarkable tact and humility of his effort to translate that thought into the face-to-face encounter with others who might disagree with him. Mary Bradford describes it in detail in her biography. In the summer of 1954, at the Church Education System convention for all seminary, institute, and BYU religion teachers and administrators, two sessions were held that consisted, as reported in the *Church News*, of “graduate courses in religion [mainly conducted by] General Authorities.” A three-week session in July on “Advanced Theology,” under the direction of Elder Harold B. Lee, with lectures by the executive committee of the Church Board of Education, all apostles, was followed in August by a session on “Problems in Teaching Religion.” On 25 August 1954, Apostle Joseph Fielding Smith spoke on his new book, *Man, His Origin and Destiny*, repeating much that he had taught earlier in the summer, including that the earth was 6000 years old and that there had been no death before Adam’s fall. He concluded by insisting that if the teachers did not take him literally, they had no place in the system, and Lowell rose to respond during the question period. Consider carefully his tone, the way he translated his deep concerns so Elder Smith could hear him: “I’m interested not only in the questions discussed here, but in how to put them across to our students so that they may keep faith in the gospel. . . . I’d like to take just a minute or two to con-

fess my faith in my method to see if it's sound in your opinion."

He talked of the welfare of his students, his desire to help them mature in their faith, both in the gospel and in reasoned inquiry. He told how as a young teacher he had tended "to pit religion against science and defend religion," but he had learned that "wasn't very successful in terms of building faith and converting people." For one thing, he realized he didn't know enough about science to be authoritative,

so he learned another method, which he went on to demonstrate right there to Elder Smith. He bore his testimony of God, Christ, and the prophetic mission of Joseph Smith, then he told how he had learned to concentrate on those convictions with his students, to defend the gospel when science seemed to directly contradict it—such as in some interpretations of evolution that claimed there is no God behind the creative process. "But," he went on,

when it comes to details like the exact process of how God created Adam on this earth and brought forth things on the earth, I say in the name of religion we don't know, and also that science has not come far enough along to be convinced either. . . . I try not to get the student agitated against science, get him prejudiced against geology. . . . I do everything in my power to help them believe in the gospel and respect the scientific method, but be critical of its findings.¹⁰

He pointed out that some prominent Mormon scientists disagreed with Elder Smith, but, as Mary Bradford notes in her account, he tactfully refrained from mentioning that some general authorities, including President McKay, disagreed, too. Then he asked, "President Smith, am I justified in teaching as fundamentals . . . the laws of faith in Christ and the church . . . and teaching my students to keep an open mind in those things that are not wholly unified or absolutely sure, [in order] to hold those young people (who may believe in the geological age of the earth) to the church?"

Right after the conference, T. Edgar Lyon, Lowell's colleague at the institute, wrote him a letter, saying he wanted to put in writing what he knew Lowell would shrug off or make a joke of if he told him in person. He regretted that the conference had hardly mentioned students:

Your words fell like manna from heaven on a starving people. . . . A Y man sitting back of me . . . said to me in a low voice as you finished, "What a thrill it must be to work with a man of love, vision, wisdom, and insight, as well as great faith. You are to be envied."¹¹

Yes, T. Edgar was to be envied, and all of us are who knew Lowell Bennion, who were blessed by his unique presence, his example, his voice that combined love, insight, and faith in an unparalleled way. The voice survives best in his writings, and I



As an Institute director.

I suppose the the main reason I continue to believe in God is that I know for myself that the basic values and principles that Jesus and the prophets taught are true, that is, that they give meaning and fulfillment to life. I have witnessed their fruit in the lives of my fellowmen; I have experienced in a modest way the fruits of gospel living. (*I Believe*, 8.)

beg you to read and reread them, in order to recover and preserve that sweet quality of concern for the student, for helping young people, children of God, realize their full potential, without fear, without being forced into false dichotomies between the evidence that comes from heaven and that which comes from the earth, without having to choose between obedience and integrity, between faith and reason, between loving God with their hearts and with their minds.

A LOST OPPORTUNITY

AS I have thought about Lowell and read again his writings, I have mainly rejoiced in a life uniquely well lived and the unique written legacy he has left. Truly Sterling McMurrin could say, "He was the only person I have known who could die with a clear conscience." Lowell himself, quoting from Brigham Young's funeral directions, *could* have said, though in modesty he never would, "let my earthly house or tabernacle rest in peace and have a good sleep until the morning of the first resurrection; no crying or mourning with anyone as I have done my work faithfully and in good faith."¹²

But I *have* mourned, nevertheless. For me, one of the greatest tragedies of modern Mormonism is that Lowell Bennion, the person and the voice I believe was most blessed by the Lord to be a peacemaker in our time and an intellectual and ethical model for our maturing world religion, didn't really succeed. For all his enormous intellectual and spiritual gifts and saint-like humility and temperance, his willingness to pray and practice, practice and pray until he could effectively translate his ideas so that *anyone* should have been able to say, "You are one of us"—for all that, Lowell was attacked and ultimately betrayed by a few people who would not *let* him be one of them. At the height of his abilities, just when there was an unparalleled opportunity to use his powerful intellectual creations and moral example to establish Church education on the firm foundation of an integrated theology that put people and their God-like needs first, that affirmed social morality as central to true religion—just then, in 1962, he was essentially fired from his position as director of the Salt Lake Institute and became a dean and then professor of sociology at the

R eason & the Intellect

Faith should not be considered a substitute for knowledge. Whenever knowledge is available, it should be used. For it is generally better to live by knowledge in particular things than by faith. (*Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 128.)

Reason is a good guide and a needed one, but feeling is the dynamics of living. We love and hate, fear and hope, desire happiness and hunger and thirst after truth and goodness. (*Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 84-85.)

Faith takes us beyond knowledge, but I don't see how any interpretation of scripture can be enlightening if we don't understand it. I think too that we should question interpretations that contradict common sense, good judgment, verified experience, and the counsel of wise and good men and women. I believe reason should confirm what we believe to be the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and I believe that we should also check our own thinking by the Holy Spirit. (*Understanding the Scriptures*, 38.)

Many people are disturbed when they find doubts intruding into their faith. . . . Jesus did not rebuke the father for his unbelief, and the father confessed his unbelief for the Savior in the context of asking for help. I believe that our Heavenly Father is pleased with such confessions. What could make for healthier growth than expressing doubts in a context of faith? Indifference, it seems to me, is far deadlier to faith than doubt. (*Legacies of Jesus*, 45.)

Only when an intellectual is arrogant, lacking in humility, disrespectful of faith, or intolerant of other approaches than the rational is he or she to be criticized or pitied. Religion deserves our best thinking. We are to love the Lord our God with all our minds as well as with all our hearts. (*Do Justly*, 90.)

University of Utah. At the time, he was the Church's most prolific as well as effective writer, with periods when his manuals were being used simultaneously by two or three different classes in Sunday School and MIA, both in English and other languages, his study courses (on everything from courtship and marriage to the Book of Mormon) were being used in many institute and BYU religious education classes, and he had an article appearing in every single issue of both the Church official magazines, the *Improvement Era* and the *Instructor*. He had been asked to give devotionals at BYU, the baccalaureate address at the University of Utah's 1956 commencement, and, in 1958, to speak in the priesthood session of General Conference on achieving happiness in marriage. His influence was widening beyond Church education as he gave a keynote address at a "Religion in Life Week" at the University of Colorado in 1962, addressed an "Inter-faith Dialogue" of religious leaders on Mormonism in 1963 and 1964, and after years of being courted for both administrative and faculty positions at the U., he took them and became increasingly successful and respected for his work there.

But after 1962 his output of manuals and articles for Church magazines and opportunities to speak in Church forums gradually diminished. He remained on the Church Correlation Committee for Youth and was asked again by President McKay to address the general priesthood session of Conference in 1968, but his influence on Church education was essentially lost by the 1970s.

ORTHODOX, RATIONAL RELIGION

AS I look around, there is much to mourn. That speech Lowell Bennion gave at General Conference in 1968, which reviewed the history of the LDS commitment to education and encouraged Mormon youth to continue that tradition—that wonderfully affirmative speech nearly thirty years ago—was the *last* speech given to a general Church audience that unapologetically and unqualifiedly praised the life of the mind. Every speech since that I know about that has discussed learning, even at our Church university, BYU, has focused entirely or at least mostly on the *dangers* of intellectual activity and the pitfalls of education. Listen to Brother B.'s voice in that conference address, and consider what we have lost:

You and I were not only created in the physical image of our Father in heaven; we were also created in his spiritual image. And if the glory of God is intelligence, then the glory of man is also intelligence. If God is Creator, man must be creative to satisfy his soul. If God is love, man must be loving. If God is a person of integrity, then we must also be honest, to be true to our own nature, which we have inherited in part from him. . . . [I]t is not enough to believe the gospel; it must also be understood. . . . The gospel has a beautiful structure about it. It has form. It is something like a beautiful Greek edifice, if you will. The Ten Commandments . . . hang together beautifully.

They strengthen each other. The Beatitudes form . . . a map of life, each one building on the preceding one. The wonderful attributes of God reinforce one another and give us a marvellous basis for a relationship with him. It seems to me we need to reflect deeply upon the gospel of Jesus Christ in terms of its great fundamentals, and then we need to relate these fundamentals to the issues of the day.¹³

Since 1962, it seems to me, that sane, comprehensive, orthodox religion of Lowell Bennion, based in the great fundamentals and connected to the great life issues, has been gradually replaced, in much Church education, preaching, and publishing. Even in the "unsponsored sector" there is a piecemeal, anti-rational emphasis on searching out official doctrines (or merely esoteric ones), with no sustained effort to integrate or evaluate those doctrines in terms of fundamentals or to relate them to the issues of the day, but only to confirm them by authority or mere feeling. As Lowell Bennion gradually no longer wrote manuals, and those he had written gradually went out of use by 1970, the best and finally only voice for that orthodox religion, that was speaking within the system, was stilled. In fact, according to the testimony of Albert Payne, one of Lowell's colleagues from the 50s who stayed on into the 70s to work on curriculum for the Church, one person who was brought in over him (a convert from right-wing evangelical Protestantism) took as his self-appointed mission to remove all vestiges of Lowell's emphasis on social morality from the curriculum.

Lowell, of course, was not bitter about all this. He went on to have two other effective and satisfying careers, as counselor/professor at the U. and as a full-time humanitarian, directing the Community Services Council and his Boys Ranch, helping to establish and guide the Lowell Bennion Community Center at the U., serving his ward as a bishop and teacher, and continuing to serve his neighbors, even the elderly who were younger (and less physically impaired) than he, into his late eighties. And he always remembered the wisdom he found in a Hindu scripture, which served to remind him personally that "to action alone thou hast a right, not to its fruits." That is, we cannot judge our own efforts by how well they succeed, but only by whether they express our integrity and love, the things that matter most.

I have a friend, a thoughtful academic and long-time Church leader, who believes that fifty years from now it is Lowell Bennion whom everyone in the Church will be quoting. I hope and pray he is right, but that prophecy now probably depends most on us who love his teachings, either



Speaking at general conference, 1968.

All who think must think their own thoughts. A parrot is not a thinker but a mimicker. (*Do Justly and Love Mercy*, 87.)

because we knew him or, increasingly, because we make the effort to find and read his work—and quote and republish and expand upon it. It may depend most on how we take his example to heart, and how we learn to give the gospel new formulations in language that is relevant to the great spiritual and moral issues of the twenty-first century and is translated into a tone that can reach out to others.

For instance, Albert Payne has recently written a little book of theological ruminations for his family, in which, based in Lowell's example and principles of analysis, he develops a convincing argument that Doctrine and Covenants 76 does not, as it is usually read in the Church, damn certain people, on the basis of their life on earth, to be forever excluded from God's presence. Instead, it opens up, consistent with a God of unconditional love, a vision of eternal possibilities for us all, even including advancement from kingdom to kingdom. A recent letter in *SUNSTONE* asked the independent press to try more ardently to relate gospel insights to current social issues and needs.¹⁴ All of us could use a little mentoring from Lowell Bennion as we take on these tasks, so, in the space remaining, I will review some of his main contributions and books.

LOWELL'S MENTORS

TWO major influences on Lowell's intellectual development were his father, Milton Bennion, Dean of the School of Education at the U., a long-time leader, including general superintendent, in the Deseret Sunday Schools and the author of *Moral Teachings of the New Testament*, and Apostle John A. Widtsoe, the author of *Joseph Smith, Scientist* and *A Rational Theology*, who was so impressed with the twenty-four-year-old Lowell when he met him in Europe in 1932 that he chose him to found the Salt Lake Institute two years later. But the greatest influence was the German sociologist Max Weber, who had died in 1922 and was still unknown in America in the 1930s but whose increasingly influential work was introduced to Lowell by Eric Voegelin in 1932 in Vienna, where Lowell, after his mission, was studying for a Ph.D. in political science.

Lowell shifted to social philosophy and learned from Weber how to study human behavior as a science, creating "ideal

S ervice & Justice

Much of the Old Testament ritual rejected by the prophets, such as burnt offerings, has little meaning for us today. To sense the full impact of these prophetic teachings, we need to use present rituals. Wouldn't we be shocked if a prophet today speaking for God should say to the Saints: "I hate your baptisms and sacrament service. I will not hear your prayers and songs any more. Amen to your priesthood. Be honest in your dealings, be merciful to the poor and afflicted, be understanding to the needs of others. Then my spirit will be with you and you will be with me." (*How Can I Help?*, 32.)

We sometimes have trouble with brotherly love because it is so very hard to love all men. Some just aren't very loveable. . . . You don't have to like a person to love him. A person can be obnoxious to you in a way and you can still love him, because love means that you treat another person in . . . their interest and not use them as a means to [your] ends, nor ignore them. (*The Best of Lowell Bennion*, 37.)

One of the very real dangers in trying to be a good example is that we may actually think we are succeeding. . . . To be a good example to others, one must forget his own righteousness and lose himself in love for others. This does not mean to lose one's virtue, but to lose consciousness of virtue through love. (*Jesus the Master Teacher*, 60-61.)

Theological differences divide people; whereas justice and mercy tend to unite them. Religious wars have been fought . . . over theological and traditional differences, but not over ethical ideas. This does not mean that an individual or a people must give up their distinctive faith or hide it under a bushel. It does mean that if we wish to unite people through religion, justice and mercy must speak louder than theological beliefs. (*Do Justly and Love Mercy*, 9.)

types" and excluding value judgments until understanding was increased and *then* bringing in personal ethics and religion. Bennion's Mormon optimism and concept of eternal progression warmed to Weber's view of science and history as open-ended. Weber's analysis of the Hebrew prophets helped Lowell gain a life-long appreciation for their greatest contribution, which Weber dubbed "ethical monotheism," the idea that deity is ethically consistent with himself and requires us to love and serve his other children as the chief way to approach him. Weber's distinction between the priestly and prophetic functions of religious leaders, the organization-preserving administrator and the radical spokesman for an ethical God, helped Lowell appreciate the value of both kinds of impulses in Mormon leaders and to be loyal to them without being either over-awed by them or troubled by differences between them.

When Hitler came to power and Lowell could see the early stages of anti-Semitism and anti-intellectualism in Austria, he transferred to Strasbourg and completed his doctorate in December 1933 under Maurice Halbwachs, a disciple of Henri Bergson and Emile Durkheim. His dissertation, *Max Weber's Methodology*, was the first book in English on Weber and the first to summarize and analyze his unique methodological concepts. Despite its small press run, Lowell's book was cited regularly by American Weberians from Talcott Parsons onward and in the fall of 1992 was partially reprinted and evaluated in an article in the *American Sociologist*, "A Piece of Lost History: Max Weber and Lowell Bennion."¹⁵ Thomas O'Dea, the great Catholic Weberian and author of *The Mormons*, whose classes in the sociology of religion Lowell took over when O'Dea left the U. in 1967, once said in a lecture, "[I]f Lowell had really concentrated on Weber when he got back from Europe, he would have preceded [Talcott] Parsons. . . . That would have put him in a position to be the main expert in America."¹⁶

THE EARLY WORK

BUT, of course, Lowell Bennion did not take that direction. A hint of where he might go instead could be seen in the chapter of his book which evaluates Weber's ideas on religion. Bennion unapologetically and very cogently surveys Mormon history and thought in order to show how the Mormon experience confirms Weber's thinking about the inadequacy of Marx's historical materialism to explain religious movements. Here is some of the flavor of this work, written when Lowell was about twenty-five:

It is clear that the Mormon ethic based on religious conviction embodies the essential elements of the methodical, rational manner of every-day life indispensable to the spirit of modern capitalism. History has recorded the remarkable achievements of the Mormons in economic undertakings. Social, economic, psychological, as well as religious forces, have greatly influenced this development. Professor [E. E.] Erickson explains the first stage of Mormon development (1830-1847) as a maladjustment between

Mormons and non-Mormons which produced and shaped the Mormon group life. This maladjustment was based chiefly on differences of religious belief, as he clearly states. He then proceeds to interpret Mormon religion and group life as products of this maladjustment. It must be borne in mind, however, that this religious movement which brought about the maladjustment was founded on religious motives and doctrines, the most important of which had been proclaimed before any maladjustment was present. In fact, the very proclamation of the new doctrine preceded any Mormon group life, its being the necessary presupposition for the very existence of the Mormon group.

. . . [The Mormons] made their way to the unknown, barren Rocky Mountain region because Joseph Smith had prophesied in none too enticing words that they would go there and because Brigham Young, their second leader, claimed to have seen the desert in a vision and knew where he was going . . . The fact that the Mormons remained in the desert, after having seen it and tasted of its "fruits," is hardly explainable from the struggle between nature and man alone.¹⁷

A year after he wrote that, Lowell had accepted Elder Widtsoe's call to start the institute at the U. and had written his first manual for the Church's sixteen- to eighteen-year-old M-Men and Gleaners, *What About Religion?* His first "Church" book, it is a remarkably engaging and thoughtful application of some of Weber's ideas to an argument to young Mormons to consider religious ideas and feelings as a crucial part of any complete and satisfying philosophy of life. Leonard Arrington, at the memorial service for Lowell at the Salt Lake Institute on March 17, told us that he got a copy of that book as a beginning college student in 1934. As he held his battered copy up before us, Leonard related how he had treasured it all through college and into World War II, carrying it in a foot locker through North Africa to Italy and back home into graduate school and his beginning scholarly career. He has read it fourteen or fifteen times and finds in it, in embryonic form, all the great ideas of Lowell's later books and manuals such as *The Religion of the Latter-day Saints* and *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*. In it, Lowell summarizes the nature and values of science and experience, but notes their final inability to answer the question, "What ought I to do with my life?" Then he writes:

Consider the two possibilities: (1) a life in which man is left entirely on his own resources to solve the



At the Teton Valley Boys Ranch.

It is not easy to help others in ways that do not degrade them. Good will and good intentions bless the giver but not necessarily the recipient. (*Do Justly and Love Mercy, 17.*)

mysteries and problems of life, and (2) a life in which another Being, far superior in intelligence and far richer in experience, points the way and offers a guiding hand. One may argue that both possibilities are challenging. That is true. The difficulty with the first is that it involves a tremendous amount of waste and often disaster and failure. The individual life seems often to be wrecked before one discovers what one ought to do.

The second possibility, in which God plays the directing role, is by no means without a challenge or devoid of the chance of being both ingenious and courageous. No one in his right mind has ever insisted that we know too much or that God has done everything for us. Life is still teeming with problems and questions. Man is still engaged in a struggle with nature, with man, and with himself. The difference in these two proposed possibilities lies in the fact that under the direction of God, we are all sure of our goal and the journey of life can be enjoyable and profitable. . . .

Mormonism claims to be a revealed, and not a man-made, religion. We have seen the need for such knowledge that God could give to man. If that need is felt, then let us consider together in ensuing discussions what the message of religion is and finally on what grounds such a message and answer to our problem rests.¹⁸

LOWELL ON JOSEPH SMITH

AS Lowell prepared his classes at the Institute, two other influences besides his father, Max Weber, and Elder Widtsoe gradually took their central place—Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. Brother Bennion found in Joseph Smith a Weberian ideal type, a religious questioner, whose open mind and generous spirit enabled him to reveal the great concepts of the nature of God and humans, of their relationships and potential, that lie at the heart of the Restoration. Lowell gave radio talks on this subject in the 1940s and in 1949 was invited to give the annual Joseph Smith Memorial Lecture at the Logan Institute, where he

T eaching & Leadership

David O. McKay said to me . . . , "Remember, words do not convey meanings, they call them forth." How true! I speak out of the context of my experience. People hear me out of the context of their feeling and thinking. No wonder communicating is difficult in marriage, in dialogue, on talk shows, and between nations. (*How Can I Help?*, 21.)

I have less confidence in the persuasive power of preaching and pointing out faults. . . . [M]ost people—even rebellious teenagers, negligent parents, and slothful public servants,—do not really need to be reminded of the "shoulds" and "oughts" in their lives. I cherish those occasions when repentance can begin with an act of forgiveness rather than an act of judgment. (*Legacies of Jesus*, 12.)

Young people (and older ones too) have some basic needs. When these are met through church activity, people will come to church even as cattle come to a manger. . . . What are these needs? Young people like to feel that they belong to the group—that they are needed, wanted, accepted, and loved by others. . . . This feeling of belonging to others does not come to one in rich measure hearing a sermon or a lecture or by reading the scriptures. "Belongingness" must be felt, known through experience. It comes when people talk and listen to one another; when they think and play and work together; when they create and serve as a team with respect and appreciation.

A second basic need . . . is to function creatively, to find satisfactory ways in which to express himself. . . . The primary task of the church leader of youth, then, is not to restrict, restrain, deny and protect, but to enable youth to give full vent to their inherent need to create, to give, to serve, and to produce. . . . Without the opportunity and freedom to create, man goes through life frustrated, unfulfilled, seeking satisfaction in the pale and reflected light of others who are creative. ("Creative Participation" in *New Dimensions in Leadership*, 88–91.)

spoke on the Prophet's "Creative Role in Religion." He reviewed how Joseph received his revelations in response to his own deeply felt questions and desires and how those revelations, including the Book of Mormon, connected gospel principles to involved, creative, living:

The Prophet's own experience with revelation had taught him that God speaks to man when there is a need, when man is aware of that need, and when man is seeking, learning, desiring, and pleading in humility and faith with a eye single to the glory of God and his work.

It is quite self-evident, I think, that when it comes to living the great principles of religion, faith, humility, and love, they have absolutely no meaning to man unless they are experienced and participated in creatively by man.

Joseph Smith also made of the religious life an everyday creative experience. The Book of Mormon, in particular, is filled with exhortations to us all to have love, charity, compassion, and tolerance for fellowmen.

King Benjamin links theology and religion beautifully when he says: "And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God." (Mosiah 2:17.) A little further along in the same sermon he adds this note: "And now, if you believe these things see that ye do them." (Mosiah 4:10.) . . .

I wish time permitted to show you that the priesthood, the gift of the Holy Ghost, temple marriage, as well as baptism and the sacrament, have no power or influence in our lives except as participation in them teaches us the true meaning of discipleship of Christ and inspires us to realize his kingdom. How I love this intimate marriage of the ordinances and ritual of religion with the moral life throughout the works of the Prophet Joseph Smith!¹⁹

ON THE BOOK OF MORMON

I N 1936, as a young teacher developing his first Book of Mormon classes, anxious to do the very best by his students, Lowell went to Seattle for the summer and took a course in the archaeology of ancient America at the University of Washington. He studied carefully and read widely in scientific journals. After the course ended, he secluded himself for a week, reading the Book of Mormon and trying to relate his summer's work to it. He found very little connection. Though he later recognized, in 1985 when he published his *The Book of Mormon: A Guide to Christian Living*, that Book of Mormon archaeology had come a long way in fifty years, he still remained convinced that "the relationship of this book of scripture to external evidence remains problematical because the Book of Mormon peoples were not the only migrations to the Western Hemisphere" and sorting out Nephite or Jaredite remains from

others is impossible. But he still valued his study back in 1936, especially that final week of “intensely satisfying,” concentrated reading, in which he “discovered that the Book of Mormon is not a textbook in any science, not even mainly an historical account or a theological treatise,” but “a religious record of three migrations.” It is a book written by prophets whose purpose it is to persuade “people to believe in God, to have faith in Christ, and to forsake evil for good. I felt their faith and resonated to their testimony.”²⁰

In the past thirty years, as his Book of Mormon study guides have no longer been used, Bennion’s approach has been greatly neglected in Church education and too often forgotten by all sides in the often unseemly battles in the Mormon intellectual community over the “historicity” of the Book of Mormon. Many who write about the Book of Mormon seem more interested in proving, by external evidences, that it is or is not *inspired*—rather than in examining how *inspiring* it is, how well it can move us to Christian faith and Christian living.

Surely, if God wanted to, he *could* provide us the artifacts to prove without doubt that the Book of Mormon is what it claims to be. That he doesn’t, and that the best efforts of a lot of devoted and reasonably intelligent people (I have tried myself in a few essays) have not moved us very far beyond Lowell Bennion’s judgment in 1936—that the proofs of historicity are “problematical.” All that *ought* to suggest to us that God doesn’t *care* much about such proof. Perhaps he knows from much experience that simply knowing the scriptures are historically “true” doesn’t help much to make his children more faithful or moral—or kind to each other.

It is particularly fitting that Lowell Bennion’s week of concentrated rereading of the Book of Mormon produced what to me is his most original and powerful religious insight, one that bears much continued study and further explication. I mean, of course, his insight into the Atonement of Jesus Christ. From Book of Mormon scriptures, particularly Alma 34 and 42, he came to understand that Christ’s redemptive work and sacrifice was not so much a *payment* for past sins, a mystical balancing of God’s justice with his mercy, as it was a powerful *motivation* to help us overcome future sins—that God was not interested in vicarious punishment (*Atone-ment*) but in healing and bringing us back to him (*At-one-ment*). Lowell saw in the Book of Mormon that people could know through prophecy, even hundreds of years before it happened, as the Nephites did, or could read the scriptural witnesses hundreds of years later, as we do, about the Atonement. Thus, through language and the emotional, psychological, and spiritual power of faith, all mortals can respond to Christ’s unconditional love. His suffering in the Garden as he vicariously felt the pain of our shame and guilt and his voluntary death on the



At the food bank.

A good lesson is *one idea*, organized and illustrated, that is *applicable to the lives of students*. . . . [T]he mind is not satisfied with smorgasbord offering. It needs to concentrate on a single idea of consequence. (*Jesus the Master Teacher*, 52.)

cross can move people at any time in history with what the Book of Mormon calls “*means unto repentance*” (Alma 34:15). All believers can receive actual power to change, because Christ’s mercy can break the bands of justice within them and release them to a life as new creatures in him.

THE POWER OF ATONEMENT

I SAW the power of that great liberating idea, that true principle, when, as a young missionary in Hawaii, faced with a man who knew the gospel was true but couldn’t repent, I remembered Brother B.’s insight. I led the man to gain that insight and conviction for himself through reading the Book of Mormon scriptures and saw him change overnight. I learned what it is to apply the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. Many years later, a young returned missionary approached me and told how, during a time on her mission when she was near despair at the black, guilt-ridden despair of a whole branch, she had read an essay of mine in which I summarized Lowell’s great insight; she taught that insight into the Atonement to the branch and saw them bloom spiritually with joy and mutual support as they accepted Christ’s mercy for themselves and gained the strength to give it to others. This is how Brother Bennion wrote about that idea:

Some theologians in Christendom have thought of the atonement in this way: When Adam fell, through sin, as they believe, all mankind was lost. God, in his anger, became estranged from men and, as it were, turned his back on them. Christ, by dying for the sins of men, restored men to favor in the eye of God, bringing about an at-one-ment between the Creator and his creatures. In other words, according to this view, Christ’s mission was *to reconcile God to fallen humanity*.

As Latter-day Saints, we believe God to be the loving Father of all men. Never has he turned his back on them. He is not estranged from men. The opposite is true. Men frequently estrange themselves from God. Men leave God—the fountain and source of their lives and, like the Prodigal Son, go into a far country to spend their lives in riotous living. God,

Gospel Teachings

No longer do I believe that a person must earn forgiveness. If he had to, then only justice and reciprocity would prevail in relationships between man and man and man and God. But "give" is the main root of the word forgiveness. And there is grace operating. . . . Man is asked to repent to receive forgiveness . . . not because the Lord is not forgiving . . . , but because he knows that man cannot accept forgiveness and renew his life without himself taking some steps to change it. (*The Best of Lowell Bennion*, 117.)

[W]e are unchristian and inhuman to live in luxury in a world where so many lack adequate food, clothing, and shelter, let alone medical attention and education. . . . There are those who feel they have a right to enjoy any standard of living they have earned. I do not judge . . . , but I do question their point of view. (*Do Justly and Love Mercy*, 44.)

The solution to materialism is simplicity. (*Do Justly and Love Mercy*, 15.)

[L]uxury does not imply that we should not have high quality clothes, cars, houses, furniture. Quality is often less expensive in the long run. Luxury, however, by its very definition means going beyond need. I also see a strong motivation of self-indulgence and vanity. (*Do Justly and Love Mercy*, 44.)

The finest experiences of life are those which have great meaning and value in and of themselves, irrespective of external values like what future good it could bring or what others may think of us. I am thinking of such things as friendship, . . . looking deep into the eyes of a beloved companion . . . , enjoying a walk through a spring garden, listening to the thunder and passion of Beethoven, or drinking a glass of fresh orange juice. . . . The more that life can be lived for its own sake, the richer life is and the greater our own integrity. Our relationship to our Father in Heaven and to Jesus belongs in this category. (*The Unknown Testament*, 119.)

like the Father in the Parable, is waiting for his children to return and is ready to run to meet them.

If we may carry the analogy one step further, we may add that the Father has sent Jesus Christ, his only Begotten Son, to bring man back to him. Christ lived and died not to reconcile God to man, but to reconcile man to God. It is man who must have a new vision, a change of heart, and be born again if he is to be one with God. . . . In speaking of his death on the cross, Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John 12:46). . . .²¹

No longer do I believe that a person must earn forgiveness. If he had to, then only justice and reciprocity would prevail in relationships between man and man and man and God. But "give" is the main root of the word forgiveness. And there is grace operating whenever anyone is forgiven.

Man is asked to repent to receive forgiveness, I believe, not because the Lord is not forgiving whether we repent or not, but because he knows that man cannot accept forgiveness and renew his life without himself taking some steps to change it.

And Christ is not only forgiving, but he is a source of strength to those who would change their lives so they can be forgiven, not least of all by themselves.²²

President Hinckley noted, at Lowell's funeral, that the central reality of Lowell's life had been his knowledge and his testimony of the Savior Jesus Christ. Certainly that's true. It is the constant refrain, the steady foundation, of all he wrote. His touchstone for assessing conflicting scriptures was Which are most consistent with Christ's repeated teachings? His model for teaching was Jesus the Master Teacher. His model for Church leadership was Jesus the humble servant of all, who served with a clear sense of his purpose, focused in people, not in rules or institutions.

Lowell's third major work, next to *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth* and *An Introduction to the Gospel* in quality and value, and like them worthy to be republished—often—is *Teachings of the New Testament*. The last of his "little books" (which, to their credit, Bookcraft and then mainly Deseret Book published in the 70s and 80s when his star was in decline) is *The Legacies of Jesus*. This is what he wrote in its preface in 1990:

Few who have ever lived can equal Jesus of Nazareth in the extent and diversity of his appeal to the people living since his day. Radical feminists and unreconstructed patriarchs, skeptical scholars and those who read the scriptures as totally literal, sinners and saints, rich and poor, revolutionaries and conservatives are drawn to him. Architects, painters, composers, and writers have found in his life and teachings the inspiration for countless works of art.

In this brief work, I explore some of the reasons for his great appeal to me. I cannot do justice to his life or teachings. I cannot argue in a scholarly way for a particular point of view. Rather, I write to express my intense gratitude for what he has come to mean to me.

In quiet ways, throughout my life, I have sensed what I hope is a growing closeness to him. As my life draws toward its close, I find myself thinking of him, not only with the love of a lifetime but also with the anticipation of my future.²³

HOLDING ON TO LOWELL



In his garden.

I do not accept any interpretation of scriptural passages that portray God as being partial, unforgiving, hateful, or revengeful. It is more important to uphold the character and will of God that it is to support every line of scripture. (*Understanding the Scriptures*, 36.)

FOR the revival and continuation of your interest in Lowell Bennion's legacy that I am advocating here, you should, of course, first get Mary Bradford's biography. Sadly, only one of Lowell's books is currently in print; in order to confirm my claims for the unique quality and continuing value of his thought, you need to dig out old copies of his manuals and books from your own or your parents' libraries or order used copies from places like Sam Weller's, Benchmark, or Alpha Books in Salt Lake City. My collection, *The Best of Lowell L. Bennion*, will give you a sampling of his work to 1988. Two books coming out this year will give you the results of his remarkable continuing output, despite increasing illness, since then. *How Can I Help? Final Selections of the Legendary Writer, Teacher, Humanitarian Lowell L. Bennion* was published in May, and *Unto All Nations: Selected Wisdom from the World's Living Religions* will come out later, both from Aspen Books. I close with a selection from the latter, a book that provides short essays, each on one great idea that Lowell has learned to better appreciate because of its emphasis in one of the great religions. In a time when we aspire to be a truly world-wide and world-class religion, it is a typical, humble reminder of the quality of company we are in, of some things we might still want to learn from others, and of an approach we might take in relation to others that is true to our highest Christian ideals.

The chapters on Judaism and Christianity, toward the end of the book, show Lowell's consistent devotion, from his early study of Max Weber and the Hebrew prophets to his last writing in his late eighties about the Savior, to a basic idea—that true religion is grounded in social morality at least as much as in pious spirituality, that it is grounded in true living, with Christ as our model, as much as in true doctrine about him:

People have found many ways to worship God: they develop faith in him, they study the scriptures, they participate in rituals, they attend religious services, they pray to him, they offer sacrifices to him, and they praise him in prayer and hymns. However, according to Judaism, none of these behaviors is acceptable to an ethical god unless they are accompanied by decent, honorable living in everyday human relationships. This is the oft-repeated teaching of the

prophets of Israel. [Bennion then cites the great Hebrew prophets, Amos and Micah, as they castigate the chosen people, in the name of God, for social injustice.]

These verses for me are absolutely pivotal in the scriptures. They changed my life and how I regarded my religion. I believe that anyone who has read and understood Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, or the words ascribed to Moses will never be the same person again. He or she will know that there can be no spirituality without morality, no true worship of God without equal concern for fellow beings. We will know that the Church is not a substitute for righteous living but one place to go to be inspired to walk out into the marketplace and political corridors of power and transform them into arenas for righteous action—the dealings of human beings with each other. . . .²⁴

I read the New Testament as the record of a man who consistently cherished "the least" in his society. It humbles and inspires me when I see him valuing individuals and their needs more than even the revered Law of Moses. "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath," he rebuked those who questioned his healing on that holy and much-protected day (Mark 2:27). The rules, traditions and regulations that hedged around the Law of Moses were a barrier which he broke, not casually, but persistently when it would have kept him from healing or saving the children of Abraham.

He was never guilty of putting institutional ends above human values. It is natural and easy for all institutions—political, educational, business, and even religious—to make themselves ends in themselves, to measure their worth by profits, growth, and dominion. For Christ, all things in religion—meetings, rituals, and doctrines—were instruments of blessing the lives of men, women and children. He used them to bring individuals nearer to God, to establish good will among people, and to enhance each person's feeling of self-worth.

To me, this message of Jesus is written in letters of fire in the record about him. Anyone who knows or honors Jesus will see the same power stirring in his heart to put people uppermost, treating them as ends, not as means to one's own ends. As Christians, we will be particularly concerned with those in pain—with the handicapped of mind and body, with the poor, with the lonely, with the elderly, with those who have run afoul of socially acceptable norms, with children, with the enslaved and disenfranchised among nations, with the hungry. A disciple of Jesus will espouse humanitarian causes, contributing both time and means to support those who are doing the master's works. . . .²⁵

At the end of the book is the completion of Lowell Bennion's legacy, his final testimony:

I have long pondered the significance of love, which Paul declares to be not only greater than faith but more certain than knowledge. As I have grown older, I have come to understand more clearly the limits of knowledge. Truly we know only "in part" and "see through a glass, darkly." Our experience with knowledge is always limited, tentative, and incomplete while the experience of Christ's love is drenching, profound, and transforming.

The sacred moments when I have tasted of Christ's love have fully satisfied me and simultaneously given me an abiding hunger for more. And I have found that the best way to satisfy that hunger is to express something of the same love to others.



NOTES

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2. Lowell L. Bennion, "Teaching Religion by Word of Mouth," in *The Best of Lowell L. Bennion*, 150.
3. Chieko Okazaki, "The Leadership Triangle." Talk given 21 March, 1996, at the Wright Leadership Symposium, BYU; copy in my possession.
4. Lowell L. Bennion, *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1959), 163.
5. Bennion, *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 125-26.
6. Bennion, *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 127.
7. Bennion, *Religion and the Pursuit of Truth*, 21-22.
8. Lowell L. Bennion, *Legacies of Jesus* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990), 26-27.
9. Lowell L. Bennion, "Overcoming Prejudice," in *The Best of Lowell L. Bennion*, 249, 253.
10. In Mary Lythgoe Bradford, *Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, Counselor, Humanitarian* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995), 133; for an account of a similarly gentle and student-centered exchange on 24 August with Elder Mark E. Peterson on why Negroes were not then allowed to hold the priesthood, see 131-32.
11. Bradford, *Lowell L. Bennion*, 135.
12. Quoted in Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1985), 400.
13. *Official Report of the One Hundred Thirty-Eighth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 5, 6, 7, 1968* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1968), 97-98.
14. Sheldon Greaves, "Old Testament Sunstone, New Testament Sunstone," *SUNSTONE*, Mar. 1996, 17-18.

15. Bradford, *Lowell L. Bennion*, 60.
16. Bradford, *Lowell L. Bennion*, 227.
17. Lowell L. Bennion, Max Weber's Methodology (Paris: Les Presses Modernes, 1933), 132-33.
18. Lowell L. Bennion, "What Ought I to Do with Life?" in *The Best of Lowell L. Bennion*, 176-77, emphasis added.
19. Lowell L. Bennion, "Joseph Smith: His Creative Role in Religion," in *The Best of Lowell L. Bennion*, 59-60, 62.
20. Lowell L. Bennion, *The Book of Mormon: A Guide to Christian Living* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 1-2.
21. Lowell L. Bennion, *An Introduction to the Gospel* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union Board, 1955), 139-140, emphasis in original.
22. Lowell L. Bennion, "For by Grace Are Ye Saved," in *The Best of Lowell L. Bennion*, 117.
23. Bennion, *Legacies of Jesus*, vii-viii.
24. Lowell L. Bennion, *Unto All Nations: Selected Wisdom from the World's Living Religions* (Salt Lake City: Aspen Books, forthcoming), chapter on "Judaism."
25. Bennion, *Unto All Nations*, chapter on "Christianity."



GRIEF

Do the years sculpt in my heart
the letters, uneven, indistinct, and illegible?
The years go faint and fainter. The faces,
the voices, the warmth from memories go dim.
An edgy struggle to breathe in gleams
like a gem in the dark.

The stunted growth of the guava tree
my father planted the year before he chose
to be quiet on the pyre, in the backyard,
the cracks, easy on our temple's mossy walls,
the qualmy squalor snaking into the quietude
of my grandfather's cobwebbed bedroom,
the roof of our house slanting northward
—all these, and so many nameless things
unsettle me, impel me to implant my faith
in the automation of the day's drooping
into the night's nascent darkness. An uninhibited
clamour, like fear, clanking in the temple of my bones.

—NIRANJAN MOHANTY

An RLDS historian considers the effects of economic prosperity and liberal ideas on the Restoration and projects a track the church might travel in the twenty-first century.

THE RLDS CHURCH AND THE DECADE OF DECISION

By Roger D. Launius

INTRODUCTION

FOR MANY REASONS, THE 1990S ARE SHAPING UP to be a decade of decision for the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and the method in which the church handles this process may well chart the theological direction the institution will go, or even whether it will continue to be a separate movement in the twenty-first century. This decision-making process is required because of a post-1950 theological and cultural reformation in the Reorganized Church. In this period, Reorganization liberals emerged to demythologize church history, theology, and assorted traditions. Over time, this reformation brought about the dismantling of what had been a traditional Reorganized Church ideological consensus. That consensus had been forged in the tension between the desire to remain faithful to the stories, symbols, and events of early Mormonism on the one hand and the yearning for respectability among, and hence openness to, Protestants on the other.¹ This tension was held in creative balance until the recent schism because of the unique heritage of the RLDS as the people in middle, seeking to steer between the Scylla of excessively authoritarian, speculative Nauvoo Mormonism and the Charybdis of rigidly creedal, congregational Protestant sectarianism. As Clare D. Vlahos observed, "The early Reorganization waited, caught somewhere in between, neither gentile nor Mormon."² This broad-based reformation struck at the very core of the Reorganized Church's origins and reasons for existence held since the 1850s. The collapse of the Reorganized Church's philosophical synthesis—the failure to blend convincingly the symbols, stories, and events of the Reorganization's tradition with an influx

of Protestant ideas—has created a theological and historical vacuum, which must now be filled.

The April 1996 ordination of W. Grant McMurray as president of the Reorganized Church, succeeding Wallace B. Smith, may well signal the ultimate rejection of the principles of the Restoration movement as expressed in the life and ministry of Joseph Smith Jr. As such, it is the completion of the reformation underway for nearly forty years. Most important, it divorced the leadership of the RLDS from the family of the founding prophet, and while it could be concluded that the kingdom as Joseph Smith envisioned it went to Utah, until now, the line of kings had remained in the Midwest and headed the Reorganized Church. The legitimacy this fact has given the RLDS for more than a century has now been lost. This outcome, perhaps, was foreshadowed as long ago as a generation when the first complaints about the Reorganized Church's loss of its distinctive identity began to be voiced.

I will briefly trace the collapse of the ideological consensus within the RLDS institution, the ramifications this has held for the modern institution, and the dilemmas for the future. Then I will describe what I think are some key elements that might be incorporated into a new theological and historical consensus, one that might have the potential to carry forward the Reorganized Church as a viable religious institution.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE

After World War II, economic and cultural change in the larger society brought the RLDS membership into the middle class and helped create a better-educated leadership. For the first time, the church began to worry about its position in society.

PERHAPS the central theme of twentieth century American religion has been its encounter with modernity—the changes to the larger society's priorities, assumptions, and values as a response to emerging concepts in science, technology, economics, politics, philosophy, and the overall *Weltanschauung*. American religious historian Martin E.

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Marty wrote that religious institutions changed depending on how they

embraced, rejected, or cautiously accepted the modern world—by aggressively advocating modernity or uneasily accepting it, by self-consciously preserving older ways in the context of modernity or by transforming traditions through a stance of antimodernism, or, finally, by attempting to pass beyond or through the modern to a more basic religious stance unaffected by it.³

While much of American Protestantism began responding in the early part of the twentieth century, the Reorganized Church really began to wrestle seriously with modernity in the 1960s. After several twists, by the end of the 1970s, the Reorganized Church had embraced modernity and was beginning to make a home for itself as a denomination among, and not apart from, the nation's mainline Christian churches. This was true for several reasons.

During the years following World War II, the Reorganized Church's membership, at least in North America, where more than 90 percent of the membership still reside, participated in a rapid rise in economic status and the changes it wrought on society. And because of this economic shift, the post-World War II years brought a gradual transition of the institutional church from a largely rural and working-class constituency to a more white-collar, urban, middle-class membership. Prior to this change, the Reorganized Saints had appealed particularly to the poor and working classes of industrial Western civilization, who, as "have nots," were attracted to its zionic message and its socially egalitarian system.⁴



FREDERICK MADISON SMITH

As RLDS president from 1915–46, Smith began trends to professionalism that undermined the church's naive pietism.

The theological shift of the 1960s and '70s set the stage for the same type of debate over authority, structure, and theology that had been played out in the mainline Protestant denominations in the early decades of the twentieth century, with liberals prevailing in most cases as increasing numbers of key staff members had graduate, usually theological, degrees, and they encouraged others to broaden their vistas in similar fashion.

appointee leaders in a position of substantial identification with larger American society and bringing a concomitant stake in maintaining stability and respectability within the surrounding community.

This development perhaps did not cause but certainly

The shift in church membership from the lower to the middle class during the post-war era brought a similar transition in the ranks of the full-time ministry. Through the 1950s, even in the rare instances when they could afford to do otherwise, the church's appointees were expected to live extremely frugally. To emphasize its thrifty use of contributors' tithing, until 1958, the church published, by name, all appointee expenses and family allowances in the *Conference Daily Bulletin*. Not even the general officers, including the First Presidency, were immune from such publicity.⁵ During the 1960s, however, the church began making significant efforts toward providing more substantial support for its leadership and their families. As contributions permitted (and during the decade they permitted better than ever before), the church gradually improved its appointee family allowances and instituted attractive fringe benefits such as excellent medical care, college tuition reimbursement for dependents, and a generous retirement plan. These actions placed appointee families squarely in the American middle class.⁶

A change in appointment policy was accelerated by this trend and, in turn, probably itself accelerated it. For the first time, employment with the church was economically rewarding enough to attract the best-educated and most capable men in the church. Increasingly, better-educated people began to fill the appointee ranks. They brought a wider perspective to their work than had earlier generations, placing the church's

abetted a greater openness to Protestantism and accommodation to modern society than had ever been present in the church before. The more wealth one has, the less likely one is to promote policies that may threaten it; the more integrated one is within a society, the less motivation one has to radically alter it. As the church and its leaders moved securely into the North American middle class, they quite naturally began to see tension and apartness from society as potentially damaging to their newly acquired status and stability. In short, the Reorganized Church moved from a sect to a denomination as it reconsidered its place in the world. Whereas it once saw its mission and destiny apart from society as a whole and, in many respects, saw society as inimical to its task, the church in the mid-twentieth century began to see the benefits of cooperation and increased accommodation to societal standards and demands. The church as a body began to be more open to the influences of the society around it, and in the process it moved into the mainstream secular world of the United States. That is not to say that this was an inevitability, only that it was the course the Reorganization chose for itself. It also does not say that other factors were not at work to prompt the church in that direction as well.⁷

THEOLOGICAL SHIFTS

The adoption of modern scholarship by members of the RLDS church hierarchy, most of whom were now university educated, brought about a liberal Protestant theological reformation in the 1960s and '70s.

CONCOMITANT with the economic development issue in the church, and closely related to it, was a theological reformation in the Reorganization. Beginning in the 1950s, and truly felt in the 1960s Reorganization, liberals engaged in a reorientation of the traditional RLDS consensus. The theological reformation was initiated long before it began to be apparent in the Reorganization, and in some respects it paralleled developments in many American Protestant churches, with a difference mainly in timing. For instance, Frederick Madison Smith, president of the Reorganization between 1915 and 1946, set in motion policies that eventually helped diminish the church's historic sense of theological uniqueness by encouraging the use of the tools of modern behavioral science and management theory in church work. His emphasis on education, training, and professionalism undermined the naive pietism on which the church had often depended in its earliest years. Under successor Israel A. Smith, president between 1946 and 1958, the church increased reliance on secular education and accepted its implications for professionalism. Israel Smith promoted the Department of Religious Education's plans to broaden the preparation and depth of its full-time staff and Sunday School teachers in the field. He also created the School of the Restoration to provide specialized leadership training for the ministry, but this school offered much more than pastoral training and leadership seminars. Its students were encouraged to study seriously church history and theology in light of outside scholarship.⁸

This theological shift set the stage for the same type of debate over authority, structure, and theology that had been played out in the mainline Protestant denominations in the early decades of the twentieth century, with liberals prevailing in most cases.⁹ The seeds of theological debate were harvested during the presidency of W. Wallace Smith, 1958–1978, the time during which these questions began to emerge in a serious way in the Reorganization. But although Wallace Smith did not begin the theological reformation, clearly his policies allowed it to prevail. One of these actions was his choice of key leaders in the Reorganized Church's quorums. For example, at the October 1958 General Conference, when Smith was ordained prophet, he named a well-read and reflective apostle, Maurice L. Draper, as his second counselor. At the same time, Smith called men of similar characteristics, Clifford A. Cole and Charles D. Neff, to the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and Roy A. Cheville, a University of Chicago-trained theologian, as Presiding Patriarch.¹⁰ At the same time, increasing numbers of key staff members had graduate, usually theological, degrees, and they encouraged others to broaden their vistas in similar fashion.¹¹

Formal theological training of church staff members had a liberalizing effect on the materials developed for Sunday School and on the articles appearing in the *Saints Herald* and other church publications.¹² These trends were apparent at least as early as the fall of 1960, when the Religious Education Department published a series of quarterlies on the Old Testament for high school students. Written by Garland E. Tickemyer, these quarterlies embraced an evolutionary and mythological view of the Old Testament. Tickemyer, who had written a master's thesis on Joseph Smith and process theology at the University of Southern California, and who was then president of the all-church High Priests' Quorum, approached the subject from the standpoint of higher criticism, and these quarterlies excited controversy in the church. Some congregations refused to use them, and certain members of the Quorum of Seventies vocally opposed Tickemyer's interpretation of the Bible.¹³

A change in editorship at the *Saints Herald*, the church's official periodical, also opened a new channel for the expression of intellectual ferment. The new editor, Roger Yarrington, allowed publication of several liberal articles in the *Herald* in the early 1960s. Probably the two most controversial were by James E. Lancaster and Lloyd R. Young. Lancaster, in a historical article called "By the Gift and Power of God," concluded that the Book of Mormon was translated by Joseph Smith through a "seer stone," which Smith looked into as it sat in the bottom of a hat, while the plates were under cover on a nearby table.¹⁴ This was a shock to many Reorganized Latter Day Saints who had been taught without qualification the traditional story of Joseph viewing the golden plates through a spectacle-like Urim and Thummim.¹⁵ Using the tools of modern scholarship, Young's theological article, "Concerning the Virgin Birth," questioned the historical evidence for Mary's virginity at the time of Jesus' birth.¹⁶ Letters of protest streamed into Herald House each time one of these articles was

published. In similar fashion, and with equally provocative reactions, book-length publications from the church's press began to reflect more liberal ideas during the early 1960s as well.¹⁷

In the same period, the church's only institution of higher learning and a traditional place of RLDS intellectual inquiry, Graceland College, hired new faculty members to teach religion, philosophy, and history. Each of these new faculty were young, had been trained in secular educational institutions, and were somewhat liberal in their beliefs. They began to reexamine Latter Day Saint theology and history critically with the tools of their disciplines, and their more liberal emphases quickly showed in their teaching. Criticism of these faculty for undermining the faith of students was often heard in the 1960s.¹⁸

All of this would have come to nothing had not the broadened approach to understanding the Reorganization's theology and history found an audience among the church hierarchy of the 1960s. This was especially manifest in three important developments in the latter part of the decade. The first was a 1967 series of three private seminars with the eighteen members of the church's Joint Council of the First Presidency, Quorum of Twelve Apostles, and Presiding Bishopric, conducted by theologian W. Paul Jones and religious historian Carl Bangs, both of whom were members of Kansas City's Saint Paul School of Theology, a Methodist seminary. These individuals gave a new slant to familiar problems in the Reorganization by defining them in the context of Protestantism.¹⁹ The seminars incorporated symbols and explanations from the larger Christian community rather than emphasizing traditional concerns of the Reorganized Church. One important part of Jones and Bangs's emphasis was the lessening of the standard "true church" concept of the Reorganization, stressing that any church was



W. WALLACE SMITH

The RLDS president from 1958–78 who was a patron of a liberal orthodoxy among the church hierarchy.

A schism among the membership developed during the 1960s and '70s as educated elites began to move the RLDS church in a direction not understood by many of its members. A church survey conducted in the late 1960s confirmed that broad theological training created a serious rift between these theologically schooled people and others without the background.

"true" only to the extent that it reflected the spirit and personality of Jesus Christ.²⁰ Some church members, not surprisingly, were appalled by these seminars, which contradicted the Doctrine and Covenants direction to go forth into the world to "teach" and not "to be taught."²¹ As one delegate told the 1970 World Conference, "These other schools have nothing to teach us," since the Reorganization already possessed the "fullness of the gospel."²²

Second, the 1969 development and presentation of a set of theological "Position Papers" for use in developing new Sunday School curriculum sources also signaled a theological shift among the church's leadership. Most of these papers had been written by Department of Religious Education staff members, but some were the products of members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of Twelve Apostles.²³ They annihilated many of the traditional theological conceptions of the Reorganization and presented an interpretation of the church as a mainline Protestant denomination.

Third, in 1970, the Reorganized Church published its most significant theological work of the reformation era, *Exploring the Faith*. Written by committee over a ten-year period (an interesting development in itself), *Exploring the Faith* placed the Reorganization squarely within the mainstream of American religion. It deemphasized the Reorganization's

unique aspects and stressed those more characteristic of "orthodox" Christian denominations. The foreword to the book pointed out the central concern of the authors: "Historical and traditional points of view needed to be expanded in view of contemporary religious experience and scholarship." It particularly played down the Reorganization's historic "one true church" claim. In so doing, it pointed out how the Restoration fit into a larger Christian mosaic. Without question, this book

was a significant attempt to systematize the theological reformation taking place in the church.²⁴

No doubt the exposure of young men of influence in the church's hierarchy to seminary education had a significant and perhaps unplanned effect. In undertaking advanced training, these church officials experienced a whole new world of religious inquiry, and, like the frog who jumped from a well into the sea, they realized, after a lifetime of experience limited to the Reorganization, that a broader vision was possible and probably necessary for the advancement of the church. A schism among the membership developed at that point, as educated elites began to move the church in a direction not understood by some of its appointees or by many of its members. For instance, a church survey of appointees conducted in the late 1960s confirmed that broad theological training created a serious rift between these theologically schooled people and others without the background. The study concluded that there was "a very clear difference between appointees in general and those persons in the church who are seminarians or who hold a seminary degree. Generally the Bachelor of Divinity and seminarians are more liberal in theological orientation and overall perspective. They tend to be more critic[al] of the institutional church, see a greater need for education, particularly of appointees, and are more ecumenically oriented."²⁵

This dichotomy became quickly visible to the church's appointee force. Many of the field ministers, especially members of the Quorum of Seventy, began to rebel against what they perceived as a deemphasis of Restoration distinctives—the very things that made the Reorganization what it was—and the resultant drift toward ecumenism. Al M. Pelletier, one of the most dynamic Seventies in the church during this period, was an old-school Reorganization member. Most of his education and training had been either independent or carried out under one of the church's other appointee ministers. He had no use for the shift from exclusivity within the institutional church that he began to see in the 1960s. In 1967, he complained, in an open letter to the Joint Council, about "several items in publications and church school materials which are unscriptural." He continued:

As far as the liberals, it is most unfortunate that we are divided into schools of opposition today. The church I joined years ago was comprised of Latter Day Saints. I still try to be one. I believe and teach and preach what is in our *Church History*, *The Inspired Version*, *The Book of Mormon*, and the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Every time I teach these things I'm speaking out against any liberal who denies the authenticity of some of these things. I cannot help this but can only follow the admonition given in scripture, to teach the fullness of the gospel as taught within the scriptures which are to be a "law unto the church." These teachings accompanied by my personal testimony will continue to consume my time and energy. I believe in this church and tell it to the world. I do not preach any doubts. I am sorry that some both preach and write about their doubts.²⁶

Significantly, Pelletier left the church in the early 1970s, in part

over the theological reformation taking place.²⁷

It would be inappropriate to suggest that the theological reformation of the 1960s was executed entirely by well-educated "young turks" who wanted to remake the Reorganization into a Protestant denomination, although I would suggest that such individuals were largely responsible for it. In part, however, it was fueled by the church's expanding missionary work in non-Christian cultures. Church leaders who were sent into those areas in the post-World War II years determined that traditional Reorganization missionary techniques were ineffective. The usual missionary approach, they argued, was to demonstrate how the Restoration brought about by Joseph Smith Jr. was correct and true to God's dictates, and then to convince investigators that the Reorganized Church was the "true" successor to Smith's prophetic legacy. It was a defensive approach, built on the destruction of other religious claims, especially those of the Utah Latter-day Saints. Apostle Clifford A. Cole and other appointees asserted, however, that these techniques were next to meaningless in societies where people were not already converted to Christianity.²⁸ Cole explained that a refocusing of ideals was necessary to meet these new conditions. He told a meeting of High Priests in 1971 that

we are shifting from an emphasis on distinctives—that is, on the ways we are different from other [Christian] churches—to a concern for teaching the whole gospel of Jesus Christ and winning persons to committing themselves to Him. Prior to the last two decades our missionary emphasis was highlighted by . . . [an approach toward explaining that we were not Mormons and on materials] on such subjects as apostasy, stories of Joseph Smith and the founding experiences of the Restoration movement, and life after death. Since that time . . . [the emphasis has shifted] indicating a concern for ministry to people and a desire to bring them not only to the church but to Jesus Christ.²⁹

Because of increased financial resources brought on by the economic well-being of the North American membership, and because of the general movement of large numbers of Americans beyond national boundaries in the post-World War II period, the Reorganized Church opened mission work, during the 1960s, in twelve new, non-English speaking countries, more than doubling the number of those nations in which the church was operating. Previously, the church had not opened work in a non-English speaking nation since 1875, when it had sent missionaries to Scandinavia. This new effort took place following the creation, in 1958, of a Missions Abroad Committee to foster international activities. To build small enclaves of Saints, this committee used contacts with American Reorganization members serving overseas with the military, other government agencies, or businesses. Virtually all of the foreign missions of the Reorganized Church were founded as a result of individual members' contact with people of the area.³⁰

Without question, the Reorganization's structure and belief system was altered as a result of its contact with non-Western civilization but probably not to the extent that many have as-

sented. First, it was never a foregone conclusion that the Reorganization would be fundamentally altered because it moved into foreign missions. Other churches have made that same move before with their bedrock religious distinctives intact. The most obvious example from the modern era would be the Utah Latter-day Saints, who, while having their own difficulties on the international scene, have retained their distinctive identity in spite of interaction with other cultures. Second, many of the early converts to the Reorganized Church in these new areas were already Christian and entered membership in the Reorganization because of the traditional "true church" arguments made by the movement's missionaries. This has been repeated in numerous accounts of baptisms overseas, as the candidates were disgruntled over answers provided in their various Christian churches and began searching for alternate positions. Indeed, many of the people joining the church in such places as Latin America, Africa, and Haiti during the 1960s and 1970s were former Latter-day Saints who had become disenchanted with Mormonism; it was in some instances a replay of the Reorganization's traditional source of converts. In this environment, there was little impetus for basic theological change. Third, if the church changed fundamentally because of the conversion of non-Western members, as many members of the leading quorums have suggested, the numbers of converts have been so insignificant—only 2,720 by 1970—that it is rather like the tail wagging the dog. It raises a question about the validity of democracy and the principle of "common consent" in the church for such a small number to restructure the church so thoroughly. It seems, instead, that the church was already in the process of theological change as it entered the foreign mission field in a substantive way, and this missionary endeavor



THE RLDS TEMPLE IN INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI.
Its mission to promote peace could eventually change the church's identity.

The 1984 revelation by Wallace B. Smith had something for everybody. The liberal element got women's ordination; the church hierarchy could force its lay ministers to meet certain educational, orthodoxy, and activity standards; and the more traditional membership received permission to build a temple. But, ironically, it widened the schism.

provided added impetus and a rationale for the changes already at work.³¹

THE PIVOTAL YEAR

A watershed 1984 revelation blew the liberal/conservative fissure into a wide-open schism. While the document provided for the long-prophesied building of a temple, it also drove thousands from the church by allowing for the ordination of women to the priesthood.

IN 1984, the Reorganized Church accepted, in formal conference action, the revelation now incorporated into the Book of Doctrine and Covenants as section 156. This document represents the watershed in the Latter Day Saints' wrestling with the questions of modernity, something of the culmination of the reformation period, and the beginning of an attempt to build a new ideological consensus for the movement. It presented the church with what will be the first test in what I call a decade of decision in the 1990s.³² Section 156 provided the license for the shotgun wedding of two forces that define the closing years of the Reorganization's reformation: what can only be called theological confusion and brilliant (though I would argue Machiavellian and authoritarian) politics. In retrospect, the document was a marvelously political statement on a par with any omnibus bill drafted by congressional rivals—it had something for everybody. The liberal element of the church got women's ordi-

nation, something that had been a sore point for years. Certainly this was an incredibly important decision, one which will be felt by the church ever after.³³ The church hierarchy, which wanted a more efficient means of controlling its priesthood members, obtained the sanction to begin a priesthood review process and to force its lay ministers, in order to continue in good standing, to meet certain educational, orthodoxy, and activity standards.³⁴ Finally, the more traditional

membership, which felt closer ties to historic manifestations of Mormonism, received permission to build a temple in the "Center Place." This had been a goal which extended back almost to the beginnings of the movement and which had been viewed as inevitable before the inauguration of the Millennium.

This document has provided an especially challenging set of concerns for the church in the present era. For instance, it authorized ordination of women into a priesthood containing patriarchs, which previous revelations plainly said descends from father to son.³⁵ Without even considering that and other problems relating to priesthood, which could have been done at the time, ordinations of women continue, and the Reorganization has been doing business as usual. This issue will have to be dealt with in the future, since the church missed an excellent opportunity to reconsider the fundamental nature of priesthood, its offices, and their interaction within the movement. Section 156 also authorizes standards and a review process for priesthood holders, all of which greatly enhance the concentration of power in the First Presidency and the institutional hierarchy. Strangely, this process was instituted by the very organization that has been telling everyone for the last three decades how badly the church needs to be more global, decentralized, inclusive, and pluralistic.³⁶ This section also sets up an important agenda item for the 1990s—the growth of institutional authority versus the individual prerogative that has been so much a part of the movement's history. Finally, the document mandates the building of a temple, a symbol of the Reorganization's roots in Mormonism, but that very temple was to be built by and for the people who had rid the church of whatever few reasons it ever had to build a temple. This, too, becomes an important area of concern for the decade of decision, as the movement must reshape itself for the next century or fold its tent. Section 156, therefore, is a manifestation of the church's inability thus far to deal with the Mormon/Protestant tensions that have historically been a part of the movement.

While only a symptom of a much larger concern, the 1984 revelation precipitated a fundamental schism in the RLDS church, as something on the order of 15,000 to 30,000 members who could not accommodate to the thrust of the institution recognized it as the last straw and withdrew. Although none of these people expressed the issue in quite this manner, the schism fundamentally arose over the Church's present cultural and theological "loss of identity."³⁷ The reformation has magnified a loss of that trajectory that links present with past and propels the church into the future. The RLDS situation is prompted by the fact that too many people have not understood the experiential nature of its rich tradition. The Reorganization is not just right thinking and doing; it is *feeling* that God is with us just as God was with the prophets and apostles of old. To be RLDS is not just to accept a set of books, a priesthood system, a bureaucracy, a theology, though those have been important symbols for the Saints. To be RLDS is to feel the burning in one's bosom, to personally ask of God and to pray for greater light and wisdom, to hear inspiring

preaching, to sing with heartfelt thanks, "I have found the glorious gospel that was taught in former years," to feel the warmth of the Holy Spirit as the elders anoint and lay on hands for healing, to hope that the love and peace one felt during administration would someday pervade the entire world community as the kingdoms of this world are transformed into the kingdom of God. To be RLDS is to *feel* deep within one's being that one is linked with God's people from every age and to know the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit in one's own life and journey.³⁸

This deep sense of spirit, of spiritual vitality, that has such a strong tradition in the Reorganized Church has dwindled during the theological reformation. While the generation of Reorganization members who brought forth this reformation did so for good and just and Christian reasons, the changes have as yet been unable to replace the former ideological consensus with another that is as satisfying. The Apostle Paul gave up the Law but in its place found Jesus Christ and his grace. The Reorganization jettisoned most of its cultural, historical, and theological baggage but has thus far found little compelling or convincing to put in its place. The 1984 revelation elucidates the incompleteness of the reformation but also the promise that perhaps in the decade of decision the Reorganized Church will be able to realize some new potential that can be expressed in a new *Weltanschauung*.³⁹

A CLASSIC DILEMMA

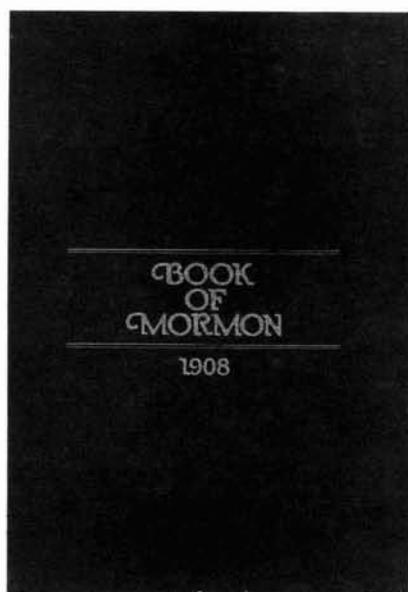
As the RLDS church undergoes the transition from sect to denomination, will it retain its singular Restoration identity or be subsumed into a larger Protestant conglomeration?

IN many respects, what the RLDS church has been experiencing during the past quarter-century is a classic evolution of the institution from sect to denomination. The result has been a gradual and at times not-so-gradual movement toward the middle of the religious spectrum, pulled by those who want to move that direction and even farther, and resisted by those who want to cling to the traditional ideological consensus that had been in place until the 1960s. Conservative RLDS members, themselves honest and forthright in their perceptions, have seen apostasy at every turn in the RLDS reformation. They cry out in anguish at the loss of the status of "a peculiar people" that the Reorganization has experienced in the last thirty years. They mourn for the loss of the very uniqueness that attracted them to the RLDS in the first place. The response of the leaders of the reformation, however, has been one of intolerance and a redoubling of efforts to continue the reformation through a serious demythologization of RLDS tradition, history, and theology.

As the two groups became alienated in the 1970s and early 1980s, they paired off in a series of increasingly desperate conflicts. The conservative forces felt themselves to be at the barricades of the gospel, seeking to turn back the seemingly inexorable tide of change within the church. Some of them saw conspiracies at every turn and felt themselves backed into a corner, where their only response to the onslaught of

Restoration demythologization was an increasingly uncompromising position that upheld the parameters of the traditional ideological consensus. The more strident the conservative resistance, the more determined the liberals became in achieving their reformation.⁴⁰ The demythologization of church history, theology, and assorted traditions reached crescendo proportions in the early 1980s, and the final great battle was over women's ordination. In every instance, the conservative elements lost the battle and in the process withdrew from the organization. In these events, distinctive restoration aspects were minimized. This has been the central dilemma of the RLDS church in the decade of decision, as it seeks to deal with its past and its future as the people in the middle, neither fully Protestant nor Mormon.

With what has gone before, the Reorganized Church must wrestle with two central questions about its identity in the 1990s. The first is the question of whether religious uniqueness, being "a peculiar people," is really important in the modern world, or whether it needlessly alienates the church from the larger U.S. society. Second, the RLDS church must consider how it differs from other Protestant denominations after the demythologization of the Restoration. The answers to these questions will shape the course of the RLDS church in either forging a new uniqueness as a Restoration church or its incorporation into a mellow Protestant conglomeration of churches without a distinctive identity. Although others have their own ideas on the subject, my answer to the first question is that there are plenty of Protestant churches available, and we have no need of another one. What is the point of maintaining a separate religious institution if it has nothing unique to offer the world? If the RLDS church is to be Methodist in orientation, I would prefer to be a Methodist; they are better at it than the RLDS could ever be. My answer to the second question is that even after the demythologization of the Restoration, I believe that there are distinctive points that matter and have value for our modern world.



While some have suggested that the RLDS church should formally repudiate the Book of Mormon, I think a reemphasis of the Book of Mormon could provide a valuable touchstone between our Mormon heritage and our future theology and mission.

(SOME) FUNDAMENTALS OF FAITH

The RLDS church might forge a new perspective for itself by reemphasizing revelation as more personal (and less institutional), and recasting the creation of Zion as the individual's responsibility to right injustice.

AFTER having analyzed where I think the RLDS church presently is in its institutional and social and theological life, and criticizing that position, I offer some fundamental ingredients in shaping a new religious outlook in the movement. It is one that has the potential to bring together the past and the future into a meaningful present. In this discussion, I will focus on Restoration aspects and not the RLDS church's deep commitment to Christianity. As a result, I will not focus on those areas held in common with other Christian denominations.

There are three distinctive Restoration concepts that deserve emphasis in the RLDS church and should be reinterpreted for the post-reformation era. These are essentially the same ones that Joseph Smith III stressed during his late-nineteenth-century presidency of the Reorganization. The first is a belief

in the Book of Mormon as scripture that provides a second witness of the message of the Jesus Christ. The second is an acceptance of the role of prophetic ministry in the present, both on personal and corporate levels. Finally, the concept of Zion holds especially significant possibilities in the present. I want to discuss these three Restoration "distinctives" briefly and suggest their importance for the RLDS in the decade of decision.

The historicity of the Book of Mormon has been under attack from without since nearly the beginning of the church and from within Mormonism for most of this century.⁴¹ There has been considerable concern about such statements, and the forces of traditional truth-claims about the book are now engaged in a struggle for how Latter-day Saints should interpret the scripture. This same issue has been played out within the RLDS church for the last quarter-century, with similar sides lining up in a sometimes vicious fight over the merits of the

scripture as a historical document.

For example, when developing the new Sunday School curriculum for the Reorganization in the latter part of the 1960s, Wayne Ham wrote a challenging paper that viewed the Book of Mormon as a work of fiction written by Joseph Smith as an expression of religious speculation.⁴² While some of those who question the book's historical origins have suggested that the RLDS church should formally repudiate the Book of Mormon in conference action, and have tried to prohibit its use in worship, many people, wisely, I think, have suggested that this would be throwing the baby out with the bathwater. The Book of Mormon, while I do not believe it an authentic history of any group of ancient peoples in America, has a powerful message for the present-day RLDS church and the world. If there is one central theme in the book, it is the continual covenanting of God and humanity in a cyclical pattern: covenant / righteousness / turning from the gospel / falling away / covenanting anew. This pattern, coupled with the strong Christology of the Book of Mormon, makes a powerful statement of our worth in a world where human worth is everywhere questioned. I would agree with the conclusion of non-Mormon William P. Collins that, "When I examine the Book of Mormon for truth rather than facticity, my reading reveals powerful, eternal, and relevant truths which are capable of changing and guiding men's lives."⁴³

A reemphasis of the Book of Mormon among the RLDS (and it has been largely either soft-pedaled or ignored for the last twenty years) could provide a valuable touchstone between our Mormon heritage and our future theology and mission. This reemphasis need not be made on the earlier "truth" claims of the book as a literal translation of a record that contains the historical record of religious colony in ancient America. The claims of scripture can, and should, be made on the eternal message of the Book of Mormon, which many can testify of as being divinely inspired, notwithstanding the questions of its historicity and coming forth. I envision a revival among the RLDS using many of the ideas of the Book of Mormon, in the process helping to chart a future trajectory that is honest from historical and theological perspectives, viable from an institutional perspective, and honorable to our tradition.

My second "distinctive" has to do with the continuing nature of God's revelation in the modern era. The RLDS church has accepted this dictum almost as a postulate since its formation. Throughout the church's history, there has been a corporate commitment to revelation, with the president of the church delivering revelations nearly every two years at the world conference. Those revelations, called "documents" in official parlance, too often deal in platitudes and personnel changes and contain too little of what might be called eternal substance. Without question, the RLDS church has taken this approach toward revelation because of the circumstances of its evolution since the 1850s. Joseph Smith Jr. moved logically enough from a perception that there is no reason why God would have spoken in ancient times and not now. From there, he learned, and RLDS prophets have relearned, that they can always get their way within the institution if they invoke it as the

will of God—and may or may not if they don't.

I would much prefer to see the RLDS church reorient its historical perspective on revelation to allow it to be proclaimed more like the prophetic ministry of the ancient scriptures, with one called of God coming forward to lead the people to new heights of spirituality. In this setting, prophetic ministry might not come from the president of the church; indeed, perhaps it should not, since the president is the chief executive officer of the organization and is foremost concerned with the welfare of the institution. This would weaken the presidential office, of course, but it would also greatly broaden the spectrum of revelation beyond the narrow confines presently understood. It would also open the door for an overturning of the routinization process and force the RLDS out of its hidebound institutional cocoon. Prophetic ministry would then be more accessible to the membership, and while there would certainly be risks involved, there could also be great benefits.

Finally, the zionic quest is one of the most compelling ideas in the Restoration. Although the early Mormons interpreted Zion as theocratic empire, its most important attribute was that it shifted religious interest from the afterlife to the present. Long before the social gospel became an accepted part of Christianity, the Latter Day Saints were committed to helping to create a better and ultimately perfect society in which all lived together in harmony. Within the RLDS tradition, the concept of Zion has evolved to be sure, but its central message remains. It affirms that, in contrast to all the other adaptive and accommodationist institutions—religious and otherwise—that exist, the concept of Zion recognizes that those of us with the vision of a better world have a mission to bring it about. As RLDS, we cannot accept the injustices of humanity one to another and must strive to overcome them for the good of all. This Restoration "distinctive" calls us to be forces for the betterment of our communities, our nations, and, ultimately, the world. As theologian W. Paul Jones appropriately concluded, "Zion is the insistence that the kingdom of God is countercultural without being other-worldly. No message needs more to be heard in our time."⁴⁴

The RLDS can call upon this powerful distinctive ideal as a motivating force for the reformation of society, and all anyone has to do is read the newspaper, watch the news, or walk the streets of any large U.S. city to realize that society demands reformation. One of the most important aspects of the new RLDS temple in Independence is its dedication to the pursuit of peace.⁴⁵ It is a singularly exciting proposal and begins to get to the heart of the concept of Zion. But it is as yet an undigested idea that needs to be mixed with the larger ideal of Zion as a humane entity. At present, it remains an especially troubling aspect of the potential uses of the temple and of the RLDS church, as it functions only at the level of cliché.⁴⁶ The zionic endeavor can be resurrected and reinterpreted from the Restoration tradition into a powerful component of the RLDS mission in the next century.

CONCLUSION

To move into the future, the RLDS church must reconcile with its past.

AS I stated at the outset, the 1990s are a decade of decision for the Reorganized Church. Its leaders must decide finally, after a generation of theological reformation and misunderstanding and resultant disruption, what its role in the world of the future is to be and to build a consensus for that role among both the membership and the larger society. At the same time, a complete divorce from the past is impossible and, I believe, undesirable. A new construct of past and present is necessary, one which will enable the Reorganization to define itself and its mission. This redefinition of the Reorganization's role can meaningfully accent traditional distinctives such as the Book of Mormon, the idea of continuing revelation, and the zionic quest. What could emerge is a stronger, more dynamic Restoration church. I hope that the movement will recapture something of the experiential nature of the Restoration. I pray that it will find a trajectory, not necessarily the one formerly used, that links our present with our past and propels us into the future. ☐

NOTES

1. See Alma R. Blair, "The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints: Moderate Mormonism," in F. Mark McKiernan, Alma R. Blair, and Paul M. Edwards, eds., *The Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History* (Lawrence, Kans.: Coronado Press, 1973), 207–230; Clare D. Vlahos, "Moderation As a Theological Principle in the Thought of Joseph Smith III," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 1 (1981): 3–11; and William Dean Russell, "Defenders of the Faith: Varieties of RLDS Dissent," *SUNSTONE* 14:3 (June 1990), 14–19.

2. Clare D. Vlahos, "Images of Orthodoxy," in Maurice L. Draper and Clare D. Vlahos, eds., *Restoration Studies I* (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1980), 184. On the Reorganized Church's reformation, see Larry W. Conrad and Paul Shupe, "An RLDS Reformation? Construing the Task of RLDS Theology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (summer 1985): 92–103.

3. Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion: Volume 1, The Irony of It All, 1893–1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 119–120.

4. This circumstance is pointed out in Albert L. Loving, *When I Put Out to See: The Autobiography of Albert Loving* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1974), the recollections of a long-time appointee minister; and in F. Henry Edwards, *The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1973), 6:614.

This situation began to change in the 1960s. For instance, a study in the late 1960s revealed that 56.65 percent of all church families sampled had a gross income of \$8,000 or more—43.63 percent had incomes over \$10,000—when the comparable median family income for the United States in 1970 was only \$8,734. (Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, *Report of the Commission on Education*, April 1970, 64, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Library-Archives, Independence; *Information Please Almanac* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980], 42.) This trend placed the United States membership firmly in the middle class. I am indebted to W. B. "Pat" Spillman for bringing this information to my attention. See also, W. B. Spillman, "Dissent and the Future of the Church," in Roger D. Launius and W. B. Spillman, eds., *Let Contentions Cease: The Dynamics of Dissent in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Independence, MO: Graceland/Park Press, 1991), 276.

5. I recall missionaries in the American Southeast visiting our area in the early 1960s, my father taking them out to buy a new suit or paying to have their automobile repaired. I especially remember him slipping them a \$20 bill with the instruction that this was extra and should not be reported as contributions to the church.

6. To demonstrate the rise in the appointee standard of living, between 1956 and 1964, full-time church personnel salaries and other stipends rose 43 percent

per appointee and averaged \$11,195 per appointee. "Appointee Compensation," 1968, Walter N. Johnson Papers, P67, f6, Reorganized Church Library-Archives. See also Spillman, "Dissent and the Future of the Church," 276–77.

7. This information is taken from W. B. Spillman, "Dissent and the Future of the Church," in Launius and Spillman, eds., *Let Contentions Cease*, 277–285.

8. On the careers of these men, see Larry E. Hunt, *F. W. Smith: Saint As Reformer* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1982); Paul M. Edwards, *The Chief: An Administrative Biography of Frederick M. Smith* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1988); and Norma Derry Hiles, *Gentle Monarch: An Administrative Biography of Israel A. Smith* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1991).

9. On this issue, see Norman F. Furniss, *The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1918–1931* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954); Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800–1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); Willard J. Gatewood Jr., ed., *Controversy in the Twenties: Fundamentalism, Modernism, and Evolution* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1969); Marty, *Modern American Religion, Volume 1*; and George R. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

10. *Book of Doctrine and Covenants* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1970 ed.), section 145. This revelation was given in April 1958. On the personalities of these men, except Cheville, see their Oral History Memoirs in the Reorganized Church Library-Archives. On the historical development and responsibilities of the Presiding Patriarch, see Reed M. Holmes, *The Patriarchs* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1978). I am indebted to William D. Russell for much of this information.

11. Richard B. Lancaster and Clifford Buck graduated in 1965 from Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Missouri, the first Reorganization graduates of the Methodist-sponsored seminary. Both men were church appointees assigned to the Department of Religious Education at the Auditorium, Independence.

12. This issue, and the fundamentalist backlash from it, is explored in an outstanding article. See William J. Knapp, "Professionalizing Religious Education in the Church: The New Curriculum Controversy," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 2 (1982): 47–59. See also Donald D. Landon, "A Question of Means or Ends: The Debate over Religious Education," *SUNSTONE* 10:8 (1986): 21–23, which provides a defense of efforts to modernize the church's curriculum by a key participant in the process.

13. Garland E. Tickemyer, *The Old Testament Speaks to Our Day* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1960–1961), four quarterlies for high school students. On Tickemyer's theological ideas, see his "A Study of Some Representative Concepts of a Finite God in Contemporary American Philosophy with Application to the God Concepts of the Utah Mormons," M.A. thesis, University of Southern California, 1954. These ideas have been boiled down and perhaps added to in Garland E. Tickemyer, "Joseph Smith and Process Theology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (autumn 1984): 75–85.

14. James E. Lancaster, "By the Gift and Power of God," *Saints Herald* 109 (15 November 1962): 798–802, 806, 817; reprinted with minor revisions in the *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 3 (1983): 51–61.

15. An example of the traditional Reorganization understanding is that of Clair E. Weldon, "Two Transparent Stones: The Story of the Urim and Thummim," *Saints Herald* 109 (1 September 1962): 616–620, 623.

16. Lloyd R. Young, "Concerning the Virgin Birth: Comments on the Doctrine," *Saints Herald* 111 (1 February 1964): 77–78, 94.

17. See, as examples, F. Henry Edwards, *For Such a Time* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1963); Roy A. Cheville, *Spirituality in the Space Age* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1962); William R. Clinefelter, *The Covenant and the Kingdom* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1964).

18. These younger faculty included Lloyd R. Young, Paul M. Edwards, Robert Speaks, Leland Negaard, Robert Bruce Flanders, and Alma R. Blair. Speaks and Negaard had graduate degrees from two of the leading Protestant theological seminaries in the United States, the University of Chicago and Union Theological Seminary in New York. Robert Flanders, a Ph.D. in history from the University of Wisconsin, especially, excited the ire of the more traditional Saints by suggesting that, among other things, Joseph Smith Jr. had instituted the Mormon practice of polygamy. See Robert Bruce Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965). Seventy A. M. Pelletier wrote an open letter to the Joint Council in 1967, saying that "The only book I have ever openly criticized is Flander's *Nauvoo: The Kingdom on the Mississippi*. I have heard of some of our leaders praising it and a couple even going so far as to say, 'This book will do more to break the Smith Dynasty than anything ever written.' I take objection to such statements" (A. M. Pelletier to All Members of the Joint Council, 29 May 1967,

Walter N. Johnson Papers, 1905–1980, 67, f17, Reorganized Church Library-Archives). See also, William D. Russell, "The Fundamentalist Schism, 1958–Present," in Launius and Spillman, eds., *Let Contention Cease*, 130–31.

19. Donald D. Landon, *A History of Donald D. Landon while under General Conference Appointment, 1951–1970: An Oral History Memoir* (Independence: Department of History, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1970), 94.

20. Knapp, "Professionalizing Religious Education," 49.

21. RLDS Doctrine and Covenants 43:4; LDS D&C 43:15.

22. William D. Russell, "Reorganized Mormons Beset by Controversy," *Christian Century*, 17 June 1970, 770.

23. Many members of the Department of Religious Education were liberal, especially since the Reformation in the 1960s. Most had also been educated in Protestant seminaries. Verne Sparks was a graduate of Union Theological Seminary in New York; Geoffrey F. Spencer and Wayne Ham were graduates of Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City. They had already begun to comment on the theology of the church and press for a more non-Mormon interpretation. See Verne Sparks, *The Theological Enterprise* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1969). Ham did much the same by taking seriously the claims of other religions in *Man's Living Religions* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1966).

24. Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, *Exploring the Faith* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1970). This book's individual chapters had been published in the *Saints Herald* in the 1960s as a means of informing the church membership about the ideas it contained.

25. *Report of the Commission on Education*, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, April 1970, 116. See also Knapp, "Professionalizing Religious Education."

26. Pelletier to Joint Council, 29 May 1967.

27. On the reformation, see Roger Yarrington, "Changes in the Church," *Saints Herald* 137 (September 1990): 10.

28. Charles D. Neff, "The Church and Culture," *Saints Herald* 119 (December 1972): 13–14, 51–52. See also Clifford A. Cole, "The World Church: Our Mission in the 1980s," *Commission*, September 1979, 42; "The Joseph Smith Saints," *Life*, 2 May 1960, 63–66; Charles D. Neff, "The Problem of Becoming a World Church," *Saints Herald* 121 (September 1974): 554–57.

29. Clifford A. Cole, "Theological Perspectives of World Mission," *Saints Herald* 118 (July 1971): 11.

30. This expansion has been best described in Maurice L. Draper, *Isles and Continents* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1982).

31. Accounts of these missionary conversions, demonstrating that many were from Christian non-Westerners, can be found in Draper, *Isles and Continents*.

32. Book of Doctrine and Covenants (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1986 ed.), section 156.

33. An inkling of the importance of this decision can be found in Paul M. Edwards, "RLDS Priesthood: Structure and Process," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (autumn 1984): 6–11; L. Madelon Brunson, "Strangers in a Strange Land: A Personal Response to the 1984 Document," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (autumn 1984): 11–17; Jill Mulvay Derr, "An Endowment of Power: The LDS Tradition," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (autumn 1984): 17–21; Velma Ruch, "To Magnify Our Calling: A Personal Response to Section 156," in Maurice L. Draper and Debra Combs, eds., *Restoration Studies III* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1986), 97–107.

34. *Guidelines for Priesthood* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1985).

35. RLDS Doctrine and Covenants, sections 104 and 130.

36. On the subject of the church's direction, see Clifford A. Cole, "The World Church: Our Mission in the 1980s," 39–44; and Clifford A. Cole, *The Mighty Hand of God* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1984).

37. This analysis is based on a critique of Reorganization theology written by Larry W. Conrad, whom I thank for his insights into this area. See Larry W. Conrad, "Dissent among Dissenters: Theological Dimensions of Dissent in the Reorganization," in Roger D. Launius and W. B. "Pat" Spillman, eds., *Let Contention Cease: The Dynamics of Dissent in the Reorganized Church* (Independence: Graceland/Park Press, 1991), 199–239.

38. See letter from Larry W. Conrad to Roger D. Launius, 15 January 1990, copy in possession of author.

39. Howard J. Booth, "Recent Shifts in Restoration Thought," *Restoration Studies I*, 162–75; Larry W. Conrad and Paul Shupe, "An RLDS Reformation? Construing the Task of RLDS Theology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (summer 1985): 92–103.

40. See Roger D. Launius, "At the Barricades of the Gospel: The Conspiracy Theme in RLDS History," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 13 (1993):

3–17.

41. There is evidence that, in the early part of this century, B. H. Roberts, perhaps the greatest LDS intellectual, questioned the book's historicity as an actual document portraying the record of people calling themselves Nephites, but this was not widely circulated until the 1980s. (See B. H. Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, ed. Brigham D. Madsen, [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985]; Truman G. Madsen, "B. H. Roberts and the Book of Mormon," *Brigham Young University Studies* 19 [summer 1979]: 427–45; "New B. H. Roberts Book Lacks Insight of His Testimony," *Deseret News*, 15 December 1985; John W. Welch, "B. H. Roberts, Seeker after Truth," *Ensign* 16 (March 1986): 56–62; and Brigham D. Madsen, "B. H. Roberts's Studies of the Book of Mormon," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 [fall 1993]: 76–86.)

More recently, a book edited by Brent Lee Metcalfe seriously questioned the historicity of the Book of Mormon. One essayist bluntly summarized the central issue tackled in this book: "Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should confess in faith that the Book of Mormon is the word of God but also abandon claims that it is a historical record of the ancient peoples of the Americas." (Anthony A. Hutchinson, "The Word of God Is Enough: The Book of Mormon As Nineteenth-Century Scripture," in Brent Lee Metcalfe, ed., *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology* [Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993], 1.)

42. Wayne Ham, "Problems in Interpreting the Book of Mormon As History," *Courage: A Journal of History, Thought, and Action* 1 (September 1970): 15–22.

43. William P. Collins, "Thoughts on the Mormon Scriptures: An Outsider's View of the Inspiration of Joseph Smith," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15 (Autumn 1982): 53.

44. W. Paul Jones, "Demythologizing and Symbolizing the RLDS Tradition," *Restoration Studies V* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1993): 111.

45. RLDS Doctrine and Covenants 156:5.

46. The emphasis on this aspect of the work of the church has reached significant proportions since 1984. In 1986, for instance, the church sponsored an interdenominational Peace Symposium at the Kirtland Temple to try to come to grips with some of these issues. See Bruce Jones, ed., *Becoming Makers of Peace: The Peace Symposium at Kirtland, Ohio, June 20–21, 1986* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1987).



WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES, AN IMAGE

It comes from childhood winters,
from Wyoming aluminum frost,
my hunched shoulders
hauling out cinders
to empty in snow.
It comes from black boots and gloves,
the tin bucket lifted
with dark embryos of meaning inside,
the muffled hiss at upturning,
white edges disappearing around darkness.
It comes in frigid hours,
beyond intention, beyond control,
a blackness settling in,
the hot hard dark
against soft white,
what life has in store for us,
what dark knowledge we need
huddled up again.

—ANITA TANNER

1993 Brookie & D. K. Brown Fiction Contest Sunstone Winner

BEAUTIFUL PLACES

By Brady Udall

ME AND GREEN ARE HEADING THROUGH UTAH, mountains all around us, swinging with the Stones and milking our ninety-dollar Monte Carlo for everything she's worth, when there's a grinding chatter and we coast to a stop knowing that the old boat has pumped her last piston. According to the road sign we just passed, we're on the outskirts of a place called Logan. Me and Green look at each other and without saying anything, come to an agreement. We got a lot more than ninety dollars' worth out of this car, so we push it into a ditch at the side of the road and start walking.

We've come all the way from Alaska, where we worked on a fishing boat for the summer. In the winter months, when all we had was money and lots of time to spend it, we lived high on the hog; we had salmon and moose steak daily, we drank expensive beer and gambled a lot. It would have been paradise except for the unfortunate lack of women.

When the money ran out, one of our poker buddies gave us a tip about construction jobs in Arizona. The prospect of spending another summer knee-deep in fish guts had sobered us up considerably. Not to mention the women problem. If we were sure of anything, it was that Arizona had its fair share of women. So we bought the car and headed south. We passed through Canada in the spring. I have never seen such true beauty. Some days, the sky was so blue it brought me close to tears. Imagine it: the old car humming beneath your feet, the wind like a woman's fingers in your hair, bearing the smell of pine and fresh water and mint.

Sometimes, playing the Stones felt like desecration.

About halfway through Idaho I could tell there was something wrong with Green. Green is short and skinny and is missing his right hand. He has long brown hair and a sparse, stringy affair he calls a beard. He sat there for over an hour reading the nutrition information on the back of his Coors.

BRADY UDALL, author of the forthcoming book of short stories *Letting Loose the Hounds* (W. W. Norton, 1997), lives in St. Johns, Arizona.

Green doesn't say much to start out with, but he hadn't said a thing the whole day. I asked him if he planned on drinking that beer and he looked up at me, wide-eyed and startled, the kind of look my crazy Grandma Lou used to have when we'd catch her on the front lawn in the middle of the night, square dancing solo in nothing but her saddle shoes.

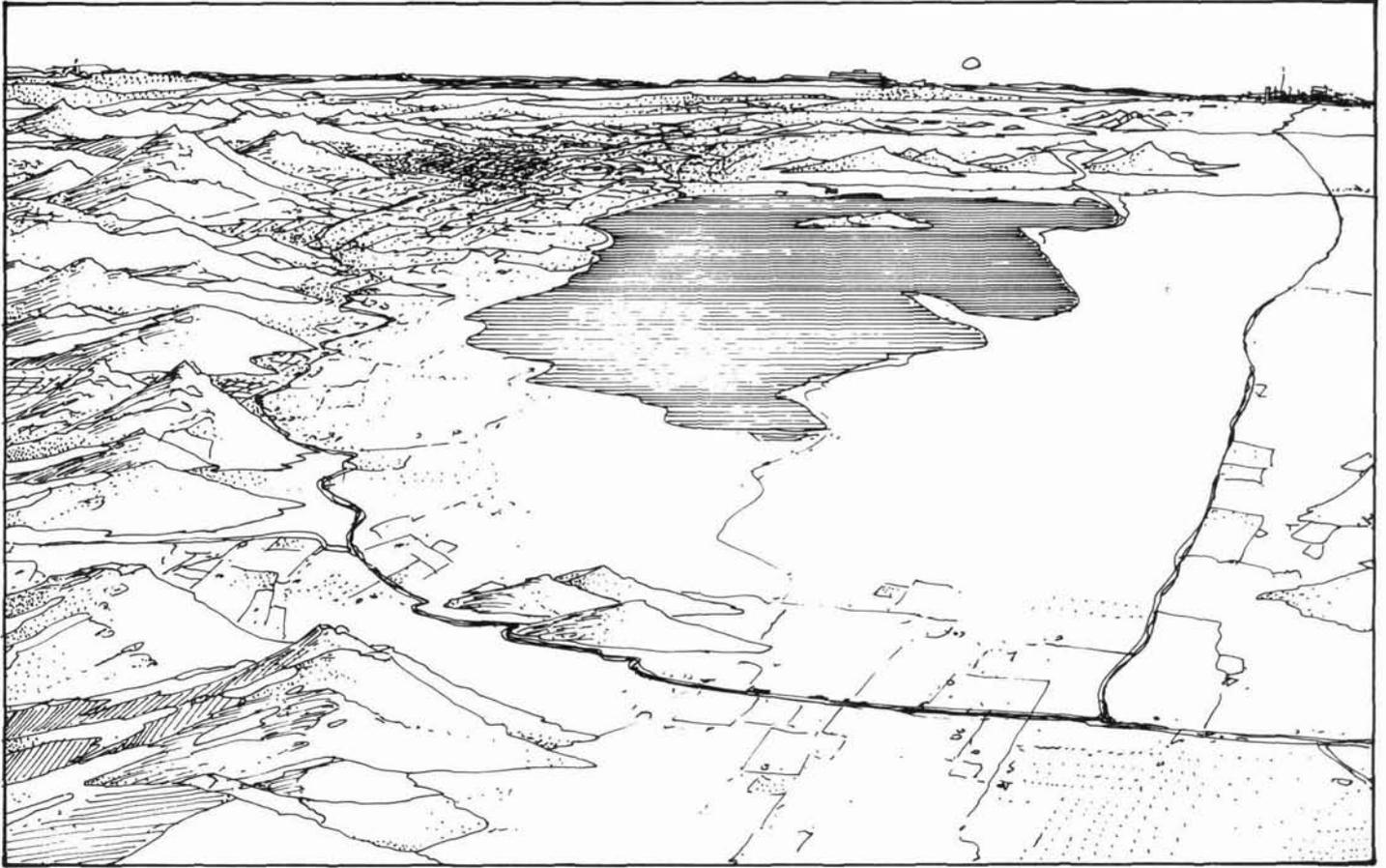
He thought about it for a while and then told me flat out that he didn't want to go through Utah. I said, What, and go through Nevada? Out of the question, I told him. Utah is a place of beauty. It is pure. Nevada has Las Vegas in it.

Green mumbled something to the effect that he didn't believe in beauty. That set me back some. Green is one of those dark, serious types, but once in a while he'll smile and it will make your whole day. Even though I am thoroughly uneducated and only twenty-nine, I know a thing or two about beauty, and I, for one, believe in it. I have seen trees full of eagles in Oregon and Sioux children riding bicycles over snowy roads in the Black Hills. I have traveled all over and have seen a good deal of the loveliest things on earth. I told Green about the things I have seen. I asked him if these things don't count as beauty.

Green went back to reading his beer and said, Couldn't tell you.

It was too late to take a detour around Utah, and as we entered the state, I felt justified. We were in a little valley with a river to one side of us and purple mountain majesty all around. There was still snow on the peaks and in the shadowy places, and I let go of the steering wheel and held out my arms wide as if to say, Look what we might have missed!

Green paid me no attention, and this was when our car gave out on us. I don't know if Green had some kind of premonition about something like this happening and that is why he didn't want to go through Utah. I wouldn't doubt it, though. Green is a lot smarter than most people would give him credit for. You see a guy with long hair and beard and missing his right hand, and you think he's a criminal or an idiot. It's just the way people are. They take one look at a guy and think they



He told me flat out that he didn't want to go through Utah. I said, What, and go through Nevada? Out of the question, I told him. Utah is a place of beauty. It is pure. Nevada has Las Vegas in it.

know everything.

We walk toward the center of town, and the place seems fairly deserted. There's nobody on the streets, and a car passes every once in a while. I wonder if we have taken a real back road. When I travel I don't use a map. I don't know how to fold the damn things, much less read them. This gets me into trouble once in a while, but I adjust. Sometimes I'll end up in a town that doesn't even have a gas station or maybe find myself on a road that leads nowhere, just stops dead at a wheat field or gradually gets narrower and full of weeds until there isn't a road any more. I will take surprises like this over maps any day.

We're walking along and I ask Green what his theory might be as to why there's nobody around. The road is wide and new, and right now we're passing a shopping center. I don't figure he'll give me an answer; Green is mad at me for coming into Utah. When Green is mad he generally doesn't say anything at all. We walk along for quite a stretch and Green says, "It's Sunday." I don't know if this is an answer to my question or just a comment on things, but I don't push it. I'm just glad Green is speaking.

After we've walked a mile or so we hear singing, singing so

beautiful it could break your heart or make you sterile. We have no choice but to walk to it. Green doesn't seem to be so keen about going to the singing but he follows me anyway. The music is coming from a big gray church on a hill. The church's tall doors are wide open, and it's like angels singing in heaven. I stand there and let it float around me, my eyes closed, until it stops. At times like this I wonder why I'm not a religious man.

Me and Green are down to pocket change, and I, for one, am hungry. We spent our last twenty-dollar bill for gas in Idaho Falls. There are stairs that lead up to the doors, and I go stand at the bottom of them. I figure if you ever need a hand, a church can't be a bad place to start. Green lets me know that, no offense against God, he'd rather not go into that church. I tell him if anyone is going into the church, it will be me. I climb the stairs and go inside the doors to some kind of entrance room with people sitting on padded benches. They all stare at me, and I act like I'm admiring architecture. There are a couple of women holding crying babies and a few other young folks all done up in ties and dresses. In the main room, which I can't see, someone is talking about the final days. One of these babies is screeching like the world is coming to an end this very second.

I notice a kid with a crew cut who doesn't seem to be enjoying himself. He's fidgeting, and he has the look of someone who has swallowed something entirely unpleasant. I catch his eye and motion for him to come out. He's about nineteen or twenty and big-boned. He looks around and steps outside but keeps his distance. I hold out my hand. He shakes it and retreats a few feet.

I tell him my name and explain our situation: coming from Alaska, our breaking down, no money or food. I ask the kid if he knows where we could find a bit of work so we can make enough money to buy a bus ticket to Arizona or at least get some lunch.

The kid looks at me, perplexed. I feel bad for getting him out of church and taking advantage of the Christian charity that has most likely been so recently drilled into him.

Maybe you know someone who needs their lawn mowed, I say.

The kid looks back into the church and then around at the houses on the street. He says, I don't think you can find much work, it being Sunday.

He looks down at Green, who has his hands in his pockets, trying to hide the one that's not there. Green is watching water run down the gutter.

We don't want handouts, I say, which is the truth.

You could mow my lawn if I had one, the kid says. Maybe you want to wash my car? I have a car.

We wash cars, I say. We're experts.

Good deal, he says.

Just trying to break the ice a little, I point to the kid's head and say, That's quite a hairdo you've got. When I was in the Army they made us cut our hair like that. What's your excuse?

The kid stares at me. I was expecting at least a smile, but I'm not getting one. After a minute I say, Why don't we go get that car washed?

We go down the stairs and get Green and the kid, whose name we find out is Buck, acquainted. I don't know why, but Buck is the right name for him. He's got ears like frisbees and nice teeth. He wears a tie and cowboy boots. I've never seen anybody do that before.

We get in his car, and he takes us to his apartment. Buck has a garter belt hanging from his rear view mirror, and if the tapes on the floor are any clue, he listens to an unhealthy amount of heavy metal. I wonder what a guy like this would be doing in church.

Where you guys from? Buck says.

I tell him I'm originally from Pittsburgh and even though I haven't been back in a number of years, I am still a dyed-in-the-wool *Steelers* fan and follow the *Pirates* when I can.

What about you? Buck says to Green.

Green says, I am from nowhere, really. All over, I guess.

I myself don't know where Green is from. I don't even know how he lost his hand. Green has said to me that he doesn't talk about things that have happened in the past because they're over with and why talk about them? Back in Alaska I could get him really drunk, and once in a while he would talk about the old days. I never got him to say anything about how he lost his

hand, but once he told me about the wife he used to have, and the two kids, and how they went to a zoo and a big tiger peed all over them from about twenty feet away. We laughed about that until we peed all over ourselves. After we got cleaned up, Green kept on telling me about his wife and kids. It was like once he started he couldn't stop. He told me about the trips they took and how he taught his two boys to play chess before they turned five. They were geniuses, he said. Einsteins.

I don't think Green remembers telling me all that. At least he's never mentioned it. Someday I plan to ask him to tell me where his family is, what happened to them. I think this would explain some things. Someday, when we've been together long enough for Green to trust me, he will tell me everything. I don't doubt it a bit.

So we wash and wax Buck's car with some stuff he gives us. The car is an old Cougar, painted gold with mags and a spoiler—the works. We labor over that car with a sense of pleasure. It has been so long since I have washed a car that it feels more like entertainment than a chore.

Green seems to have loosened up, and that helps. He even whistles while he buffs the hood with a rag he's twisted around the stump of his wrist. I spray Armor All on the tires and wipe the chrome so clean I can see the pores on my face in it. I try to keep my mind on my work, but girls in long dresses walk by, and I am instantly distracted. When a breeze blows their skirts above their calves I feel something flutter down the length of my spine. Green doesn't even notice them.

When we're done, the car is a bright and shiny wonder, a revelation.

I say to Green, This is beauty, right before your very face, and we are responsible for it.

Green doesn't say anything, but he smiles, and even though we're stuck in some place without a car or money and have to wash some kid's car just so we can eat, we are truly happy about it.

Buck comes out with a sack of food in his arms. He's got some faded Wranglers on, and he now looks a natural in boots. He's got a dog with him, a blue- and black-spotted cow dog with two different colors of eyes: green and yellow. The dog's narrow face and eyes make it look intelligent somehow. It looks smarter than the majority of my friends.

Buck says, You guys are professionals.

I just make a humble shrug and say, Shucks. Green rubs the dog's ears.

Buck says, I'd invite you guys in for lunch, but I've got too many roommates in there taking up space. I know a nice place we can go to eat without a lot of noise.

Buck takes us to a nice shady spot next to the river, says this is where he likes to take his girlfriends when they need privacy. It's getting to be late in the day, and there seem to be blackbirds everywhere, squawking and flapping in the trees. Robert (the dog's name, as Buck has informed us) scrambles out of the car and makes a beeline for the river. He jumps in with a huge splash and paddles around, yapping like crazy.

Dog's a fish, Buck says, shaking his head.

We sit down under a cottonwood and eat ham sandwiches

and large portions of store-bought macaroni salad. We watch the dog and laugh. He's on the other side of the river, sopping wet and jumping high in the air to snap at buzzing june bugs.

We're finishing off the last of a box of Ding Dongs when Buck says to Green, What happened to your hand?

I watch Green pick at the grass, and I hold my breath. Nobody, including me, has ever asked him that question point-blank. Still tearing up grass, he says in a low voice, Got smashed in some machinery where I worked down in St. George. They had to cut it off.

Buck says, So you're from down south.

Green just nods. I don't know what to say, so I keep my mouth shut. Green looks up at Buck.

You a Mormon? he says. You were in that church.

Buck nods, says, Try to be. You?

I was for awhile, Green says. My wife wanted me to be a member, so they baptized me. I was the scout leader for a couple of years.

Green has a funny look on his face, a look I've never seen before. His eyebrows are pushed up and together. His eyes are bright. He looks desperate. I continue to keep my mouth shut.

I was a scout, Buck says. Almost an Eagle, but I took cigarettes to a campout once, and they never let me back.

Green sighs and says, They'll do that.

Buck puts the last Ding Dong in his mouth. It looks like a hockey puck. Robert comes back to us and lies down next to Buck, munching on a June bug and smelling like a wet dog. The sun is right on us now, just above the mountains and coming in through the leaves. The top of Buck's crew cut shines, and Green's face is hidden in the shadow of his hair.

I still know a few hymns, Green says. I always liked the hymns.

He whistles part of a nice song I have heard him whistle before.

I just don't know the words, he says.

I can't sing, Buck says. Never could.

Buck says to me, You a Mormon, too?

Nope, I say. Though I wish I was one at the moment, for some reason. To tell the truth, I don't exactly know what a Mormon is. Somebody says Mormon, and I think of old men in beards and black hats. This Buck is a Mormon. Green says he used to be. I would never have guessed Green was a one-time church-goer. All of this is definitely interesting.

I listen to them while they swap a few Boy Scout stories and talk about Buck's problem with everybody wanting him to be a missionary. I never heard Green talk so much, and I'm fairly certain he's not drunk. He even gives Buck some advice about women.

I listen for as long as I can, but there is something so tight in my chest it hurts, and I can't listen anymore. I get up and throw off my clothes and jump with Robert into the river. The water is cold and deep; it comes from old glaciers close to the sky. The current is slow and pushes me slowly forward and down. Robert and me chase each other back and forth. I look over from time to time where Green and Buck are talking and laughing. There they are discussing religious matters, while

I'm in the river with a dog.

After a while, Green and Buck strip down to their underwear and dive in after us. Green's skin is so white it is almost blue. Buck comes up, water rolling off him, sputtering like a kid. He takes Green in a bear hug and dunks him under. I whoop like a drunk Italian and jump on both of them. Robert gets ahold of my arm with his teeth and tries to pull me away. The water is so cold we all have to yell. Even Robert howls.

The sun is on the water in pieces, and blackbirds and June bugs zoom around our heads. Once we're all in the river, gulping water and splashing around, I just don't care that Green opened up to this kid he's known less than a day after staying closed with me for so long. Green is free and easy, the happiest I've ever seen him, and I can't help but be happy too. I get him in a headlock, and we wrestle like alligators.

The current pushes at our legs, dragging us slowly along to where the sun is going down. We stop struggling and let it take us; we let everything go in that river. I close my eyes, and I'm so numb it's like I'm floating on air toward someplace full of light and quiet. I get out only when the pain between my legs reminds me what all this cold might do to the general health of my gonads.

I struggle up on the bank and see that the current has taken me farther than it has the others. Green is already under the tree trying to get his clothes on and not having much luck. When you're one-handed and shivering to beat the band, putting on your clothes can be a pretty awkward process. I run over and help him get his legs in his pants.

Once we get his shirt buttoned up, Green says, We should be on our way. It's almost dark.

The peaceful look he had in the river is gone. Now he is back to his pinched, worried self. His hair is sopping wet, and he looks like he's just had the water squeezed out of him.

We need to get going if we're ever going to make those construction jobs, he says. We can hitchhike if we have to.

Buck comes up from the river, tiptoeing among the weeds and sharp rocks with Robert right behind him. The cold water has turned Buck bright pink. He is rubbing himself warm and saying, Oh mama, oh mama.

I stand there, a light breeze raising up goose bumps all over me and say, This would be my only wish right now: a big fluffy towel, a hot bubble bath and massage afterwards, preferably at the hands of a female.

You guys are welcome to my apartment, Buck says. I can supply at least some of that. And I have a sleeping bag and some blankets. We'll get some tickets, and I'll take you to the bus station in the morning.

I look at Green, who is putting our garbage into a paper sack. I don't understand it, but I can tell that his only wish at the moment is to get out of here as quick as possible. He looks like he's ready to bolt any second.

I think for a minute and say, Thanks a million, but we've got to keep moving. These construction jobs won't wait forever.

Putting on his clothes, Buck says, Then let me take you to the bus station now. I'll get the tickets. You did a hell of a job on my car.

You took us out here and gave us lunch, Green says, his face twisted and unreadable. You've been too nice to us already. If you can just drop us off someplace, we can get a ride.

Buck rubs his hand over his damp head and looks confused. I feel pretty much the same way. Not being the pushy type, Buck just shrugs a little and takes us to the other end of town where the main street turns into the highway that will take us to Salt Lake. He gives us forty dollars and tells us it's the money for our car.

He says, Tomorrow I'll tow it over to the junk yard. Lyle Dooley is a friend of my father. He'll give me at least that much for it.

For some reason I want to give Buck a hug, but I wouldn't really know how to go about it, so instead I deliver the most

sincere handshake possible. Green gives him a nervous handshake, thanking him for everything, and turns away. We both give Robert a scratch between the ears before Buck drives back into Logan.

We get a ride with an old couple as far as Salt Lake, and just before dawn, we get on with a trucker headed for Phoenix. Once we're in the cab, the road beneath us, moving away, and the musty old guy next to us telling bad jokes one after the other, Green finally settles down a little. The wrinkles in his forehead smooth away, and he puts his head against the window and closes his eyes. The light is just coming up, turning the snow on the mountains purple and orange. The sky is opening sharp and clear. I can't be sure, but I guess a place like this is just a little too beautiful for Green to stand. 



BLUE CHINA

You have come half-way in love
through the dangerous sea throat
of dull surprises, shadow-vacancies;
alone, perfumed and powdered
to await on the pier your tall photo-husband.

The message you bring in low sounds
tender, plaintive, simple. Your hymns
praise age-old habit: well water, rock on bone;
the gentle scrape of Time against saint shins.
Red poppies blossom at home and ill uncles
eat them—here you see people ticketed
for spitting, drinking beer in the park,
courting under statues of generals.

He does not wander
down-valley gold or glittering,
goading mail-draped elephants
and silken servants;
he stands stiff, tall, white-proud.
He smells of burned woods, dry lakes and
he is lovelier than the picture—slim, blond, rich—
you are alone on the shore,
not worthy of attention,
 your face a gray church tower,
 your hands pink with dog-roses.

—SEAN BRENDAN-BROWN

What is all the fuss about academic freedom at BYU?
An on-campus observer gives a no-holds-barred reaction.

“CLIPPED AND CONTROLLED” A CONTEMPORARY LOOK AT BYU

By Anonymous

Over the last few years, BYU has had well-documented conflicts over academic freedom—Evenson’s violent fiction, the Knowlton, Farr, and Houston firings. Many less-publicized stories of the policing of a theological correctness circulate around campus—faithful, tenure-track candidates being rejected for a past period of Church inactivity or for using Marxist, feminist, or postmodern methodologies; faculty being “called in” for statements made in public; other respected faculty being encouraged to leave the university because they don’t fit in with its direction. So it should come as no surprise that faculty and staff morale is low—even the university’s self-study and the Northwest Accreditation Association have recently commented on it.

People unfamiliar with these current conditions often ask if things really are all that different—after all, hasn’t BYU always had academic freedom problems? Well, while there have always been incidents of faculty censorship, the systematic nature of the current campaign is different and does seem designed to change the overall direction of the university—to one of super-orthodoxy without any tolerance for discussion of differing religious viewpoints. In the essay that follows, titled after the grounds crew mission statement charge to keep the campus “clipped and controlled,” one faculty member shares her/his perspective of how BYU is now doing the same to the faculty.

INTRODUCTION

“When I leave BYU, I wish to do so on my own terms.”

THREE TIMES IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, FACULTY at Brigham Young University have found unannounced changes in their contracts:

- 1992 contracts required for the first time that “Faculty who are members of BYU’s sponsoring Church also accept the spiritual and temporal expectations of whole-hearted Church membership.”
- 1993 contracts tightened the requirement: “LDS faculty also accept as a condition of employment the standards of conduct consistent with qualifying for temple privileges.”

- On 8 February 1996, soon after taking office, BYU President Merrill Bateman announced that:

The commissioner [of Church Education] will annually write a letter to the ecclesiastical leader of each Church member employed at BYU and all other Church Educational System entities, asking whether the person is currently eligible for a recommend. As in the past, a reasonable but limited time may be allowed when needed to restore eligibility.

SUNSTONE recently reported on the response to the most recent change (“Annual Worthiness Review Now Required for All BYU Faculty, SUNSTONE, June 1996). Along with these successive changes in contracts, there have been other new documents codifying university procedures, including the “Statement on Academic Freedom at BYU April 1, 1993” (the date struck some as ominous), one section of which lays out things faculty are not free to do while employed at BYU:

REASONABLE LIMITATIONS: It follows that the exercise of individual and institutional academic freedom must be a matter of reasonable limitations. In general, at BYU a limitation is reasonable when the faculty behavior or expression SERIOUSLY AND ADVERSELY affects the University mission or the Church. . . . Examples would include expression with students or in public that:

- contradicts or opposes, rather than analyzes or discusses, fundamental Church doctrine or policy;
- deliberately attacks or derides the Church or its general leaders; or
- violates the Honor Code because the expression is dishonest, illegal, unchaste, profane, or unduly disrespectful of others.

. . . The ultimate responsibility to determine harm to the University mission or the Church, however, remains vested in the University’s governing bodies—including the University president and central administration and, finally, the Board of Trustees.

These changes in documents governing faculty belief and be-

havior at BYU are facts. Their positive and/or negative effect on the university is a matter of interpretation. What follows is a sketchy, anecdotal chronicle and commentary, a counterweight to the one-sided accounts BYU's office of public relations presents to the public. This by no means pretends to be an exhaustive chronicle of every incident, but it does provide a sense of the on-going culture wars at BYU. It is drawn from many sources, each of which has its own context, both broader and more specific than the one I provide. I am especially indebted to the work done by Bryan Waterman and Brian Kagel on BYU ("The Lord's University: Freedom and Authority at Brigham Young University, 1985-1995," book manuscript), to the many documents available on the web site of the BYU chapter of the American Association of University Professors (<http://acs1.BYU.edu/~rushforths/aaup.html>), to thoughtful analyses of the directions BYU is taking by Omar Kadar ("Free Expression: The LDS Church and Brigham Young University," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 26:3 [fall 1993]), Scott Abbott ("One Lord, One Faith, Two Universities: Tensions Between Religion' and Thought' at BYU," *SUNSTONE*, Sept. 1992), Paul Richards ("Academic Freedom at BYU: An Administrator's Perspective," remarks delivered 16 September 1993 at a B. H. Roberts Society meeting in Salt Lake City), and others in the pages of *SUNSTONE*, *Dialogue*, *Student Review*, and elsewhere, and to interviews with many members of the BYU faculty and administration. I, too, am an employee of BYU. I write this critique out of a sense of loyalty and while feeling a profound loss. As late as four or five years ago, BYU was still moving steadily to fulfill its unique promise as a Mormon university. That momentum has been squandered. Because BYU's administration has been active in punishing the messengers who point out stages of the university's demise, I write anonymously, feeling both cowardly and wise as I do so (cowardly, because others at equal risk have spoken out publicly; wise, because when I leave BYU I wish to do so on my own terms).

A BIAS AGAINST WOMEN'S STUDIES

It's okay to teach about feminism but not to advocate it.

A UNIVERSITY is complex, and it is difficult to know where to begin this story. Perhaps the following document on the treatment of women at BYU, prepared by a committee of the BYU chapter of the AAUP during the winter semester of 1996 and available on its web site, presents the range of problems as well as anything else.

March 1996

LIMITATIONS ON THE ACADEMIC FREEDOM OF WOMEN AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

Brigham Young University has a history of suppressing scholarship and artistic expressions representing the experience of women. The following list provides examples of some of the ways in which university officials have acted over the past several years to silence women faculty and staff and suppress their scholarship.

In 1992 the administration refused to hire candidate Barbara Bishop for a faculty appointment in the English Department, although she was the choice of the section, [department] chair, and college dean for the position and had the full support of her local ecclesiastical leaders. At the time she even headed the Primary in her ward. The reason the administration gave for not approving her hire was that 17 faculty members in the English Department (of a faculty of 75) did not vote in favor of hiring her. Bishop's scholarship dealt with the works of African American writer Zora Neal Hurston and other American women writers.

In 1992, the LDS Church celebrated the sesquicentennial of the Relief Society. In conjunction with that celebration, Professor Marie Cornwall, then the head of the BYU Women's Research Institute, organized a scholarly conference on the Relief Society. Because speakers at that conference criticized as well as praised the Relief Society, Professor Cornwall was called in and censured by University Provost Bruce Hafen for planning this conference and carrying it out.

In 1992, the organizing committee of the BYU Women's Conference chose as the keynote speaker for the 1993 conference Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, faithful Mormon woman, recent Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard*, and winner of a MacArthur Grant. Brigham Young University's board of trustees did not approve Ulrich to be a speaker for the women's conference. Although both she and her ecclesiastical leaders tried to find out why she was not approved, she was never given a reason. Nonetheless, the Church Museum of Art and History continued to display a copy of Ulrich's Pulitzer Prize in its display on the Relief Society.

In 1993, the board of trustees fired the chair of the BYU women's conference, Carol Lee Hawkins, from her position, even though during the six years she directed the conference, attendance almost doubled and the conference received an approval rating from participants who completed the exit questionnaire of over 90 percent. To explain the firing, the Board suggested only that a change of assignment was a good thing from time to time, as if this position were a Church assignment rather than a paid university administrative position and Hawkins's employment. Just after Carol Lee Hawkins was fired, a group of women's studies faculty from across the university met with University Provost Bruce Hafen and asked him about that action. He answered that Hawkins had not been fired, that she had indicated that she wanted a change in assignment, and that she was just moving to another position in the university. Hafen did nothing to help Hawkins secure another position.

In the summer of 1993 Provost Bruce Hafen tried

to keep faithful Mormon woman and historian Claudia Bushman from speaking in a week-long faculty seminar sponsored by the Dean of Honors and General Education, although her husband Professor Richard Bushman was approved to speak. When Hafen learned that the Bushmans had both already been invited to participate, he required that Honors Dean Harold Miller only advertise Richard Bushman.

In 1993 the university terminated Professor Cecilia Konchar Farr after her third-year review. Konchar Farr is a feminist activist who worked to educate people about violence against women, who helped establish the feminist activist student club VOICE on campus, and who took a public pro-Choice position, although she also said in her speech that she did not favor abortion and fully supported the LDS First Presidency's position on abortion. She also had the full support of her bishop and stake president as a faithful Mormon, worthy to participate in all Church ordinances. At first the university tried to represent Konchar Farr as an inadequate scholar and teacher, switched to unsatisfactory citizenship after an ad-hoc academic freedom committee published a comparison of her publications with those of others who had recently been promoted, and finally, after the appeal hearing, reached an agreement by which both sides were to say only that there were "irreconcilable differences" between them.

In 1994 candidate Marian Bishop Mumford was selected by the English Department, with the full approval of the department chair and the dean of the College of Humanities, for hire to the faculty of the BYU English Department. Her Ph.D. dissertation was an examination of women's journals, including the journal of Anne Frank, to demonstrate that women construct themselves most authentically in their journals, because they consider themselves to be the sole audience. A part of that study was to examine the ways in which Anne Frank wrote about her body as a way to give herself identity at least in language, in a culture that literally erased her from existence. Acting under the instructions of Provost Bruce Hafen, Chair Neal Lambert told Bishop Mumford that she would be hired only if she agreed to discontinue her current scholarship. The candidate declined to come to

Brigham Young University under those circumstances.

In 1994 and 1995 Joni Clarke was selected from a large pool of applicants as one of the two best candidates for an American literature faculty position in the English Department. She had the full support of her bishop and stake president and also associate academic vice president Alan Wilkins, who called her and interviewed her for over an hour to determine her worthiness to teach at BYU. Her research deals with Native American texts, particularly those by women. Provost Bruce Hafen did not approve her to be considered for hire.

In 1995 Dorice Elliot was also selected from a large pool of applicants as one of the two best candidates for a British literature faculty position in the English Department. Her research deals with 19th century British literature by women. She is greatly admired by her ecclesiastical leaders because of her work as the Relief Society president in her congregation. Provost Bruce Hafen did not approve her to be considered for hire.

The administration does not give reasons for its actions, but we may perhaps look at this as part of the pattern of exclusion or silencing of those who want to study women's experience from women's perspective.

In 1995 Professors Karen E. Gerdes and Martha N. Beck were forbidden from publishing the results of their study of the experiences of Mormon women survivors

of childhood sexual abuse who asked for help from their Mormon ecclesiastical leaders. In the majority of cases, the advice these victims received was damaging rather than helpful. Both professors have since left the university; the study appeared in the Spring 1996 issue of *Affilia, Journal of Women and Social Work* (Vol. 11, No. 1).

In April 1996 Katherine Kennedy was chosen for an English Department faculty appointment in Romanticism, the unanimous choice of the later British literature section and with almost unanimous support from the department. Kennedy was supported for hire by the dean and even the general authority who interviewed her, as well as by her local ecclesiastical leaders. But the administration rejected her. Kennedy's research examines images of mother-

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hood, including breast-feeding, in British Romantic poetry by women. Regarding the decision not to hire Kennedy, University Academic Vice President Alan Wilkins explained to the Department Advisory Council that the English Department could assume there was something about Kennedy's feminism that the administration did not approve of.

There is only one university lecture named after a woman, the Alice Louise Reynolds lecture. Money was raised to endow this lecture by Helen Stark, a strong feminist and well-known member of the Mormon community. She herself contributed approximately \$15,000 to the endowment fund. Stark died two years ago at the age of 89. In 1995 the committee selected Elouise Bell, a prominent, woman full [BYU] professor to deliver that lecture. The administration not only rejected Bell as the speaker; it informed the committee that Roger R. Keller, a male associate professor from the Department of Religion, would be the speaker. In 1996 the Alice Louise Reynolds lecture was not held.

For several years women candidates for faculty employment at Brigham Young University have been asked this question by the academic vice president: "If a general authority asked you not to publish your research, what would you do?" It has been suggested to the candidates that they must agree not to publish in such a case. This condition of employment undermines the position of new women faculty members at Brigham Young University. To be hired, they apparently must agree to let male ecclesiastical leaders who are not trained in their disciplines have final authority over the publication of their scholarship. They are offered no review process to determine the fairness or accuracy of the authority's request. Again, women are instructed that they must suppress their own perspectives on their own experience or research if a male authority so directs them.

These accounts of women at BYU can be multiplied and amplified. In interviews with general authorities and BYU administrators, single women are being asked repeatedly and pointedly whether they are lesbians. Elder Boyd Packer, speaking to the All-Church Coordinating Council on 18 May 1993, made the position of women scholars at BYU doubly tenuous when he claimed that "There are three areas where members of the Church, influenced by social and political unrest, are being caught up and led away. . . . The dangers I speak of come from the gay-lesbian movement, the feminist movement (both of which are relatively new), and the ever-present challenge from the so-called scholars or intellectuals." Provost Bruce Hafen paternally declared the kind of feminism approved of by BYU as "equity feminism." President Merrill Bateman told a gathering of BYU women faculty that "perhaps we have gone too far in encouraging women with children to work outside the home." He explained to the women that it's okay to teach about feminism, but not to advocate feminism; and to help

them understand, he made an analogy to evolution, which he said is also okay to teach about at BYU but not to advocate.

ACTIONS AND REACTIONS

Protest letters, academic creeds, and resignations.

THIS general pattern of silencing and controlling women is part of a larger picture in which both women and men are finding it increasingly difficult to do the things they thought they were hired to do. The dismissal of Cecilia Konchar Farr coincided with that of David Knowlton, assistant professor of anthropology, also up for his third-year review, and, like Konchar Farr, an outspoken and popular teacher who wrote about Mormon topics for *SUNSTONE*. In response to both incidents, thirty-three members of the BYU faculty published a letter in the *Salt Lake Tribune* in which they pointed out that

When we find ourselves threatened by the voices and ideas of others, we must ask ourselves why we are threatened and scrutinize our own behaviors and motives. It is always appropriate to question and challenge opposing ideas. It is not appropriate to denigrate, attack or attempt to silence a person who holds alternative ideas. Such behavior threatens the very nature of our university, which requires diversity without rancor among scholars dedicated to faithful intellectual pursuit. (5 July 1993.)

A few months earlier, shortly after the First Presidency's 1991 statement encouraging members of the Church not to take part in symposia that sponsor discussion of Church doctrines, members of the BYU sociology department drafted a letter to President Rex Lee that detailed ways the prohibition would keep them from pursuing scholarly interests important to themselves and the Church:

We wish to express concern over the possibility that disciplinary action, whether through ecclesiastical or university channels, might be taken against BYU faculty members for scholarly discussion of Mormonism. . . .

Some social scientists who gave presentations at the last Sunstone Symposium have been called in by their stake presidents and questioned about their participation. One presently faces an interview with a general authority. . . . Such actions must be viewed as a constraint on academic freedom, especially for LDS Church members whose employment depends on church standing. (See "BYU Memo Highlights Academic Freedom Issue," *SUNSTONE*, Feb. 1992.)

The sociologists' concern about ecclesiastical intervention in university matters was heightened by rumors of a "hit list" of faculty whom a member or members of BYU's board of trustees wanted removed. Provost Bruce Hafen denied repeatedly that there was such a list ("Academic Hit List Rumors Untrue, Provost Assures," *Daily Universe*, 22 July 1992). Insiders later said he was splitting hairs, that he had been told on the phone to fire certain people but that he hadn't been given a *written*

list.

Omar Kadar, formerly at BYU, and Scott Abbott, a current faculty member, read papers at the 1992 Sunstone Symposium about BYU. Kadar was pessimistic about the possibilities of a Church university and suggested the Church divest itself of BYU. Abbott was more optimistic, although he detailed serious problems with the general intellectual climate generated by Church and university leaders. For his trouble, Abbott's stake president took his temple recommend and refused to issue another for nearly three years.

In a case illustrating board and administration intervention into what are normally department and college affairs, George Schoemaker, after two, one-year appointments in the English department, was recommended for a tenure-track position by the department but was turned down by Provost Hafen and Church Commissioner of Education Henry B. Eyring because of a letter one of Schoemaker's students wrote to a general authority about a book used in his class, Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*, and because they disapproved of his avowed feminism, his speaking at Sunstone, and his involvement with the Ad-Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom that defended Konchar Farr and Knowlton. From this time on, as partially documented in the AAUP's report on women at BYU cited above, the English department has been in virtual receivership, with Hafen or an academic vice president or a member of the board of trustees making all the hiring decisions.

One of the least publicized changes at BYU during this time was the dismantling of Honors and General Education as the intellectual center of the university. Under Dean Harold Miller and several stellar associate deans, Honors and GE sponsored eclectic and well-attended concert and lecture series, funded innovative classes (most notably a growing set of classes that had students work for two semesters on some combination of the culture, history, language, geology, botany, etc. of a city or country, and then, funded by Honors and GE, travel to the place—Bolivia and Vienna were two early sites—to conduct additional research and/or to do a service project), and each summer hosted one or two guest lecturers for week-long faculty seminars on philosophy and history, people like Terr Eagleton, Richard Rorty, Martha Nussbaum, Alan Bloom, and Richard and Claudia Bushman. In 1993, a new dean, Paul Cox, was appointed, and Honors and GE underwent several debilitating changes. Funding was dropped for the summer capstone experiences of the two-semester classes. Service learning was declared undesirable at BYU. The concert and lecture series were discontinued in favor of Sunday firesides. The

faculty seminars went by the board, replaced several summers later only by nuts-and-bolts seminars on teaching. To complete the retrenchment, volunteers for *Student Review*, an independent student newspaper not controlled by the administration, were no longer allowed to meet in the Maeser Building (home of Honors and GE), copies of *Student Review* were removed from the Honors reading room, and the Honors Student Council was disbanded. Miller left the university to take a job as provost of Waterford School in Salt Lake City.

Several of these cases drew the attention of the academic community at large. Critical articles appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and LDS faculty at other universities recorded their displeasure. Tom Hales, for example, then a University of Chicago assistant professor of mathematics being courted by the BYU math department and son of a member of the BYU board of trustees, wrote to President Rex Lee about academic freedom at BYU:

There is widespread recognition that the free search for truth and its free exposition are essential to the academic enterprise. My professional code of ethics calls for me to oppose any policy that endangers those freedoms. Professors should be accorded greater freedoms and protections than ordinary citizens. In return they accept a higher standard of conduct. To cast a teacher as an official spokesperson or representative of the Church of Jesus Christ is to betray a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the academic profession.

The issues that I have raised here are not hypothetical. It has been amply documented . . . that there have been certain abuses of procedure in recent months. (3 May 1993.)

Largely because of his concerns about academic freedom, Hales decided not to come to BYU, part of a growing group of disillusioned Mormon scholars who are desperately needed at BYU to replace the large percentage of the faculty that retires this decade. And within BYU, morale was declining precipitously.

At the close of his 1993 Distinguished Faculty Lecture ("Mathematical Parables," copy from the math department), for instance, J. W. Cannon, a BYU mathematician, turned to the situation at BYU:

Unfortunately, at BYU we occasionally find a large streak of fear towards those who are different, toward those who disagree with us, fear that they will corrupt us, fear that BYU will lose its uniqueness. We fear that

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—TOM HALES

secular truth will destroy moral truth. . . .

Here is my personal academic creed:

I will act with courage and not from fear—fear of what others may expect or think, fear of my own inadequacies.

I will speak freely, openly, publicly. I will remember what we have all experienced, namely, that our knowledge of truth, even revealed truth, proceeds by approximation according to our ability and experience and that difficult issues can be understood and resolved only in an atmosphere where the evidence—physical, spiritual, or intellectual—can be freely and openly discussed.

I will learn from those who do not agree with me. In particular, I will not impute bad motives to those who do not agree with me. I will instead examine their evidence, their arguments, and their conclusions and weigh each thoughtfully and carefully. . . .

I will not presume that because I control someone's wage that I have bought their loyalty. I will remember that loyalty can be earned but not bought, and that a wage buys only a share in people's time and in their dedication to what is good and right. . . .

Discouraged faculty began to leave BYU in response to the changing climate, including:

- Martha Bradley, history
- Tomi-Ann Roberts, psychology (like Konchar Farr, a faculty sponsor of VOICE)
- William Davis, German (after defending Konchar Farr, Roberts, and VOICE in the media)
- Harold Miller, psychology and dean of Honors and General Education
- William Evenson, physics and dean of Math and Science, since returned to BYU
- Bonnie Mitchell, sociology
- Karen Gerdes, social work
- Martha Nibley Beck, sociology
- Stan Albrecht, sociology and former academic vice president

NEW CASES

Dismissals and intimidations.

IN retrospect, 1992 and 1993 were watershed years for BYU. Marked ideologically by Elder Packer's three-pronged attack on feminists, homosexuals, and intellectuals and his personal demands of BYU administrators and department chairs that they take specific action to enforce that ideology, these administrators saw not only the loss of important members of the faculty and decisions by others not to join the faculty but also that the demands involved immense amounts of time and energy and morale as supporters of the controversial measures were called on to defend the university's actions and critics sacrificed time and risked reputations in a loyal fight for a university worthy of the name. As university regulations and procedures, most specifically the routinely gentle, third-year,

tenure-track review, were used to mask and legitimate orders by members of the board of trustees, the already tenuous process of faculty review in hiring was called into question and became an exercise in futility for many departments. The new academic-freedom document was immediately proven a sham.

In 1994 and 1995, the general trend toward more administrative control over departments and individuals continued, sparking the reestablishment of a BYU chapter of the AAUP in late 1994. Perhaps the most notable attenuation of academic freedom during this time occurred in the case of Brian Evenson. The following account is largely taken from a report written by Evenson's father, William E. Evenson, professor of physics and former academic vice president and college dean, for an AAUP evaluation:

Brian Evenson joined the Brigham Young University English Department faculty in January, 1994 as assistant professor. In August, 1994, Evenson's book of short stories, *Altmann's Tongue*, was published by Alfred A. Knopf.

On October 4, 1994, an anonymous student wrote a letter of complaint to an LDS Church leader or leaders about the violent images in the book and their incompatibility (in her view) with the teachings of the LDS Church.

On November 15, 1994, the English Department Chair, C. Jay Fox, and the Creative Writing Section Head, Douglas H. Thayer, met with Evenson and asked him to respond to the anonymous letter by the end of the week. It later became known that this discussion was initiated as the result of a meeting with the LDS Church Commissioner of Education and LDS Church General Authority, Elder Henry B. Eyring.

[as evident in this portion of a memo from Fox to Academic Vice President Todd A. Britsch, January 16, 1995:

Accompanying this memo is Brian Evenson's summary of the meeting I held with him and Doug Thayer (the creative writing section head) on November 15, 1994, which you requested. I met with Brian just a few days following the meeting with Elder Eyring on Nov. 9. . . . The bottom line is that he knows that this book is unacceptable coming from a BYU faculty member and that further publications like it will bring repercussions. . . .]

In January, 1995, Evenson was called in by his LDS Church stake president at the behest of the LDS area president and asked about the book.

Representatives of BYU's AAUP Chapter, including several literary scholars, met with Rex Lee to discuss what they thought were misrepresentations of Evenson's book. They pointed out, for example, that the title story "Altmann's Tongue," about justifications of violence, referred to the name Klaus Barbie, the Nazi "Butcher of Lyon," hid under in South America. Members of the group say that Lee was surprised and seemed to understand; but he was quoted several weeks later in the *Daily*

Universe to the effect that Evenson's prose was violent and evil and unacceptable at BYU.

On March 6, 1995, Evenson, accompanied by his father, met with BYU President Rex E. Lee, Provost Bruce C. Hafen, Jones, and Fox. Hafen and the others in that meeting denied that the anonymous letter was the source of the problem; it was a broader issue of appropriateness. They also denied that there had been any concerns raised by Church leaders, asserting that all the concerns came from within the university. In that meeting, Hafen put Evenson "on notice" that his work was not appropriate for a Church university, even though he would not indicate in what way the work violated university policies.

When Evenson . . . found that nothing he could say would affect the uninformed judgment of his work that would control his opportunities at BYU, he chose to leave and took a position at Oklahoma State University in August, 1995.

AS Evenson's case was approaching its end, Larry Young, an assistant professor of sociology who was being evaluated for tenure and promotion, was called in by Associate Academic Vice President Alan Wilkins and questioned about a "pattern of behavior" that concerned the administration. In the initial meeting, Wilkins identified three specific issues: Young had spoken at Sunstone symposiums, he was said to have worn an earring, and his scholarship in the sociology of religion made it impossible to determine "where his heart was at" with respect to the LDS church. As an illustration of the final area of concern, Wilkins noted Young's chapter in the recently published book *Contemporary Mormonism: Social Science Perspectives* (University of Illinois). For example, Wilkins noted that while Young's reference to the hegemonic nature of Mormon authority might be factually correct, it placed the Church in a negative light.

Wilkins also charged Young with sloppy scholarship with respect to quantitative analysis in the chapter—suggesting that Young sought to misconstrue facts concerning international Church activity rates in an effort to raise controversy. Young noted that his work on the Roman Catholic clergy decline had given him prior experience with being charged with having a hidden agenda on politically sensitive religious issues but that the methodological rigor of his work had always held up under such attacks. Young strongly challenged Wilkins' assessment, asking for specific limitations of the analysis that had not been acknowledged in the text of the chapter, and for in-

accuracies in the findings presented or alternative strategies to more effectively address the issue discussed. The matter was dropped.

Not at issue was the quality of Young's scholarship. Indeed, BYU had actively recruited Young prior to his entering the job market from his Ph.D. program and he had turned down job offers from other universities during his early years at BYU. In addition, his work on contemporary Catholicism and social scientific theories of religion have been published by the leading journals in his discipline and by academic presses ranging from the University of Wisconsin and the University of Illinois to Routledge and Oxford Universities. When Young made it clear that he would not accept a year or two delay in the promotion and tenure decision, he was promoted to associate professor within a matter of a few days of the initial meeting with Wilkins, but without continuing status (tenure).

Also not at issue in Young's case was the support of his ecclesiastical leaders, who had been questioned by Wilkins during the week following the initial meeting with Young. Young's bishop voiced strong support and appreciation for Young's contributions to his ward and neighborhood.

Throughout the four-month investigation that ensued, Young was told that his job at BYU was hanging in the balance and the university community was uncertain as to whether it should make a long-term commitment to him. At the same time, the administration was not saying that Young had done anything wrong and would not cite any offenses. Nevertheless, Young was asked to write a memo justifying anything he had ever written for *SUNSTONE* or *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*.

During the next several weeks, Young met repeatedly with Wilkins in an effort to obtain a decision concerning tenure. At the same time, Young told representatives from the AAUP, of which he was a member, that he felt that, given university's animosity toward the BYU chapter, he would be more effective in mounting a defense of his "heart" by working independently of the AAUP. In addition, Young asked several reporters from local newspapers and television stations who approached him concerning the investigation to ignore the story while it was still unresolved.

Young's primary defense came from senior members of his department, the dean of his college (Clayne Pope) and individuals from the Research Information Division and Church Education System of the LDS church. (Young had provided volunteer consultation to individuals in the Research Information Division concerning ongoing research projects and had taught graduate seminars and served on graduate committees of several Church Education System employees who had come to

PRESIDENT

Bateman told a gathering of BYU women faculty that "perhaps we have gone too far in encouraging women with children to work outside the home."

BYU to earn their Ph.D.s in sociology.) In addition, while Young said that he felt extremely compromised when asked to exhibit his spirituality and testimony in order to secure employment, he gave the administration a copy of a sacrament meeting talk he had given on the previous Easter Sunday in an effort to give them a sense of his spirituality that was not tainted by the investigation. Finally, he said that during every meeting with the administrators he sought to communicate his love for Christ and his students.

When he asked the administration for clarification concerning how the investigation process related to university procedures and policy, he was told that the conversations being held with him and others, as well as the information collection process, stood outside of university policy—in large measure because nothing Young had done could be identified as violating the university's academic freedom document or other policies, and no complaints from students or faculty had ever been lodged against Young. Nevertheless, Young was repeatedly told that the university was unwilling to grant him tenure and that they might very well dismiss him.

At one point, Wilkins suggested to Young that one area of concern was Young's growing national stature in the sociology of religion. Young had recently been elected to the council of the sociology of religion section of the American Sociological Association, and he was frequently asked to comment on contemporary religious issues by local and national media. Wilkins indicated that one of the administration's concerns was that Young's academic stature gave him the legitimacy to discuss matters of religion in a secular fashion that could be misconstrued by the general public or manipulated and sensationalized by the press. In addition, Wilkins indicated that the administration was nervous about what the tone of Young's writings would be after he had obtained tenure.

Finally, in early August, separate interviews were scheduled with Academic Vice President Todd Britsch, Provost Bruce Hafen, and Commissioner and now Apostle Henry B. Eyring. Young reported that his session with Vice President Britsch went well. He said he shared his feelings of both sadness and grief over the process and his perceptions of the costs being inflicted on the university as a whole. At times, both Britsch and Young were in tears. During the hour with Provost Hafen, Young reported that he was asked seven different times if "knowing what you now know, do you feel like you still belong at BYU?" In addition, Young reported that he was asked a number of questions by Provost Hafen that he felt were inappropriate for anyone but an ecclesiastical leader to ask, especially given university procedures for contacting Church leaders. Nevertheless, Young felt compelled to treat Hafen as an ecclesiastical leader and provide answers since his job was hanging in the balance and the investigation clearly was focusing on Young's religious values and beliefs. Finally, Young reported that his interview with Elder Eyring was enjoyable and spirit-filled. For example, Young was reported to have said, "When I told him that I loved Christ and I loved my students, I believe that Elder Eyring felt the genuineness and sincerity of my words." The morning following Young's appoint-

ment with Elder Eyring, he was finally awarded tenure.

During this time, at least three senior professors were asked by Rex Lee or Merrill Bateman to resign from the BYU faculty, including Samuel Rushforth (Botany) and two others. They were all told that the university was taking a new direction and that they would no longer be happy at BYU. None of the three has, as yet, resigned.

IN June 1996, assistant professor of English Gail Turley Houston was denied promotion and tenure. This time, in contrast to the Konchar Farr and Knowlton cases three years earlier, the administration did not try to make a case against her scholarship but faulted her for politicizing the classroom and speaking against established Church doctrines:

The genesis of our grave concerns and ultimate recommendations to deny continuing faculty status and rank advancement was the number and severity of occasions when your actions and words on and off campus, even following your third-year review, were perceived as harmful to tenets held by the Church and the university. We feel that not only have these activities failed to strengthen the moral vigor of the university, they have enervated its very fiber.

The BYU chapter of the AAUP mounted a defense of Houston, most notably with the documents pertaining to the case they made public on their web site. In their annotated version of the letter denying tenure, they state:

As we see it, it is BYU's mission to encourage better and deeper thinking about matters crucial to us all, including how our culture supports and inhibits women as they construct their lives. The debates and discussions necessary for progress are impossible in an environment in which every sentence spoken by a faculty member is evaluated for doctrinal purity, in which fear becomes the major motivation, in which timidity becomes a virtue, in which risk and discovery are impossible. "Trust," President Hinckley said, "comes from the top down." And without trust, this university will not fulfill its mission.

Although Houston has accepted a position at the University of New Mexico, she is appealing her case. Unfortunately, under BYU regulations, the same administrators who denied tenure in the first place also hear the appeal.

IN fairness to now former Provost Bruce Hafen, who in so many accounts is the villain, it is important to recognize that in most of these cases he was simply following instructions (overt or implied). Associates of his report that a number of actions attributed to him were extremely painful for him, but his first loyalty was always to the Brethren over him. Reportedly, it is his belief that one can argue and defend a position, but that once the Brethren signal a different course, the only acceptable choice is to carry it out. Hafen was sustained as a seventy at the April 1996 general conference and left the university this summer to serve in an area presidency.

Considering the change in university presidents and Hafen's

departure, the persistence and escalation of religious scrutiny of current and prospective faculty makes it very clear that this campaign is directed from outside the university from individuals the faculty have no access to.

FIRST THINGS LAST
*Can one be a loyal general authority
and a good university president?*

I SHALL end this chronicle, a tragic story for those, like myself, who have spent their lives and careers in the service of our Church's university, with a selective account of Merrill Bateman's first seven months as president of the university.

In an early interview, President Bateman declared that at BYU there would be no room for "advocates for the adversary." In subsequent months, he has continued this kind of divisive, suspicious thinking, routinely asking his vice presidents, for example, when discussion turns to a member of the faculty: "Is s/he one of us?" Clearly, Bateman came to BYU with marching orders.

An instructive incident occurred during the week the university hosted a large group of prospective donors to the "Lighting the Way" capital campaign in early April 1996. On a Monday, the women's group VOICE hung its annual "Clothesline" in the garden court of the Wilkinson Center, part of a national art therapy campaign where victims of abuse express their private feelings in public. The display had rows of T-shirts bearing descriptions of violence done to women, statements of personal hurt, a few of which implicated bishops and stake presidents. According to the 4 August *Salt Lake Tribune*, one T-shirt said, "SUICIDE can seem better than living (?) through a temple marriage!" The project was approved at various levels by the appropriate administrators, who asked that several of the shirts not be included, and VOICE members complied. On Friday morning, the last day of the week-long exhibit, reportedly after a flood of protesting letters, calls, and faxes from the conservative Eagle Forum and the conservative student "Dittohead Club," Bateman burst into the courtyard and initially instructed faculty advisors Tim Heaton and Brandie Siegfried to have the exhibit taken down immediately. When Siegfried invited him to walk through the exhibit, he refused. Instead, he focused on two offending T-shirts, including the one quoted above. Siegfried asked him to try to understand their purpose. She pointed out the educational panels that explained the shirts and the reasons for the explicit language. She noted the group's stated support for the Church, even if they felt abused

by a leader exercising unrighteous dominion. Bateman, who had never met Siegfried before, told her that he could see through the scheme and that he knew what her real agenda was. Some of the women students began to cry. Alton Wade, Student Life vice president, drew Bateman aside. Finally, an agreement was reached to leave up the Clothesline for the few remaining hours, after removing all shirts referring to bishops and stake presidents. Several students and faculty members who were present or who heard about the incident second-hand wrote letters of protest to Bateman, accusing him of revisiting the same patriarchal violence on the women from which they were trying to heal. Siegfried will be up for her third-year review in 1996-97.

One of Bateman's recurring themes as he has spoken about BYU has been moral relativism. Although he has said such silly things as that moral relativism will bring us to the brink of chaos as it introduces "approximate spelling" and does away with college entrance exams (speech to the Provo/Orem Chamber of Commerce, reported in the *Daily Herald*, 8 June 1996), he has other issues as well, best illustrated perhaps in the address he gave at his inauguration, "Inaugural Response." One of the ironies of the speech is that during the very days his administration was deciding to fire Gail Houston for politicizing her classes as a feminist, Bateman gave a politically charged speech, one section of which is the following simple-minded and self-serving account of the complex web of twentieth-century thought:

The second concern is the moral relativism spreading throughout higher education both in America and abroad. Although higher education was secularized during the past century, there was still faith in reason and knowledge through the 1960s and into the 1970s. Absolute religious truths had been largely rejected by the world long before the 1970s, but scientific absolutes were still in vogue. During the past two decades, however, a

number of well-known educators have begun to denigrate truth, knowledge, and objectivity. The driving theory is a radical relativism and skepticism that rejects any idea of truth or knowledge. There is no God. There are no absolute truths—only that which is politically useful. Those associated with this movement refuse even to aspire to truth on the basis that it is unattainable and undesirable—the latter because the search for truth is assumed to be authoritarian and repressive by nature. The movement is a by-product of

“I WILL
learn from those
who disagree with
me. I will not
impute bad motives
to those who do not
agree with me.
I will remember
that loyalty can be
earned but not
bought.”

—J. W. CANNON

the politicization process that began after World War II. The premise is no truth, no facts, no objectivity—only will and power. The slogan is that “everything is political” (Gertrude Himmelfarb, “A Call to Counterrevolution,” *First Things*, no. 59 [January 1996]:18). The result is characterized by Dostoyevsky’s Ivan Karamazov, who in effect said, “If God does not exist, everything is permitted.”

If university scholars reject the notion of “truth,” there is no basis for intellectual and moral integrity. Secularism becomes a creed that is no longer neutral but hostile to religion. The university becomes a politicized institution that is at the mercy and whims of various interest groups. Tolerance is encouraged unless one’s ideas are different. The word diversity is becoming a code word for uniformity. Universities are encouraged to be diverse from within but not from without.

Some may bristle at my calling this account “simple-minded” (the late Alan Bloom, for example, whose book *The Closing of the American Mind* blames all our societal ills on Nietzsche’s influence on our universities, or anti-intellectual right-wing Irving Kristol, or ex-college professor Newt Gingrich), but when an ex-CEO of Mars Candy Company becomes a university president and mouths reactionary slogans of the religious right, having never read the thought he so blithely and second-handedly dismisses, it is not simply simple minded, but destructive to our university.

A sadder irony, however, is that this section of Bateman’s speech quoted above is, to put it bluntly, plagiarized. It is not a word-for-word lifting of text, but it is a sequential summary of another person’s ideas and writing without attribution. While heaping scorn on the moral relativists who bring us approximate spelling and university politics, Bateman, in his inaugural address, disregarded one of the most fundamental tenets of academic life: proper attribution, something for which faculty at most universities are summarily dismissed. Although he carefully cited Eugene Bramhall, John Taylor, Ernest L. Wilkinson, Franklin S. Harris, J. Reuben Clark, and “the editor of a Catholic publication,” no reader of the printed version of the talk or member of the audience who heard it delivered could possibly know that Gertrude Himmelfarb was the author of the entire section on moral relativism. The printed version attributes the words “everything is political” to Himmelfarb, but Bateman failed to note that the rest of the discussion is her intellectual property as well. (For a detailed look, compare the parallels reproduced on this page between Himmelfarb’s address, given at the inauguration of Baylor University’s new president in September 1995, and Bateman’s.)

BYU’s “Academic Honesty Policy” states that:

Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that is in violation of the Honor Code and may subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action. . . . Inadvertent plagiarism, while not in violation of the Honor Code, is nevertheless a form of intellectual carelessness which is unacceptable in the academic

<p>Gertrude Himmelfarb: The Christian University: A Call to Counterrevolution</p>	<p>Merrill Bateman: “Inaugural Response”</p>
<p>Himmelfarb spends the first page of her four-page essay establishing that <i>the secularization of the university</i> that took place in this century was a product of culture and not science. (16)</p>	<p><i>Although higher education was secularized during the past century</i></p>
<p><i>A quarter of a century ago, the sociologist Robert Nisbet wrote a book with the memorable title, The Degradation of the Academic Dogma. To readers fresh from the dramatic events of the sixties—the student uprisings at Berkeley and other universities—Nisbet reminded them of the “dogma,” as he called it, that had sustained the university for centuries: the “faith” (again, this was his word) in reason and knowledge, in the rational, dispassionate search for truth, and in the dissemination of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. (18)</i></p>	<p><i>there was still faith in reason and knowledge through the 1960s and into the 1970s.</i></p> <p><i>Absolute religious truths had been largely rejected by the world long before the 1970s, but scientific absolutes were still in vogue.</i></p>
<p><i>Today many eminent professors in some of our most esteemed universities disparage the ideas of truth, knowledge, and objectivity as naive or disingenuous at best, as fraudulent and despotic at worst. (18)</i></p>	<p><i>During the past two decades, however, a number of well-known educators have begun to denigrate truth, knowledge, and objectivity.</i></p>
<p><i>The animating spirit of postmodernism is a radical relativism and skepticism that rejects any idea of truth, knowledge, or objectivity. (18)</i></p>	<p><i>The driving theory is a radical relativism and skepticism that rejects any idea of truth or knowledge.</i></p> <p><i>There is no God. There are no absolute truths—only that which is politically useful.</i></p>
<p><i>More important, it [postmodernism] refuses even to aspire to such ideas, on the ground that they are not only unattainable but undesirable—that they are, by their very nature, authoritarian and repressive. (18)</i></p>	<p><i>Those associated with this movement refuse even to aspire to truth on the basis that it is unattainable and undesirable—the latter because the search for truth is assumed to be authoritarian and repressive by nature.</i></p>
<p><i>After World War II, with the vast increase in the student population and the infusion of large sums of government money, the university acquired new functions, among them the solving of society’s problems. . . . Thus the socially conscious university inevitably became a highly politicized one. (17)</i></p>	<p><i>The movement is a by-product of the politicization process that began after World War II.</i></p>

Gertrude Himmelfarb:	Merrill Bateman:
<i>If there is no truth, no facts, no objectivity, there is only will and power. (18)</i>	<i>The premise is no truth, no facts, no objectivity—only will and power.</i>
<i>"Everything is political," the popular slogan has it. (18)</i>	<i>The slogan is that "everything is political" (Gertrude Himmelfarb, "A Call to Counterrevolution," <i>First Things</i>, no. 59 [January 1996]:18).</i>
<i>"Nothing is true; everything is permitted"—that was Nietzsche's definition of freedom. (19)</i>	<i>The result is characterized by Dostoyevsky's Ivan Karamazov, who in effect said, "If God does not exist, everything is permitted" (see Fyodor Dostoyevsky, <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>, Part 1, Book 2, Chapter 6).</i>
<i>"Intellectual honor," "moral life"—these expressions do not come trippingly to the tongue today. Yet these words and the ideas they signify—truth, knowledge, and objectivity—are the only guarantees of the intellectual and moral integrity of the university. (19)</i>	<i>If university scholars reject the notion of "truth," there is no basis for intellectual and moral integrity.</i>
<i>It is now not merely a secular institution but a secularist one, propagating secularism as a creed, a creed that is not neutral as among religions but is hostile to all religions, indeed to religion itself. (19)</i>	<i>Secularism becomes a creed that is no longer neutral but hostile to religion.</i>
<i>It is also a highly politicized institution; no longer subject to any religious authority, the university is at the mercy of the whims and wills of interest groups and ideologies. (19)</i>	<i>The university becomes a politicized institution that is at the mercy and whims of various interest groups.</i> <i>Tolerance is encouraged unless one's ideas are different. The word diversity is becoming a code word for uniformity. Universities are encouraged to be diverse from within but not from without.</i>
Bateman continues his speech with an awkward logical transition, drawing on two ideas from the article following Himmelfarb's in the January 1996 issue of <i>First Things</i> :	
<i>The faculty determines the character of the university. Ex Corde Ecclesiae says a majority of the faculty must be Catholic, but that hardly seems sufficient. (Richard John Neuhaus, "The Christian University: Eleven Theses," page 21)</i>	<i>A question arises. If the large majority of faculty at a religious university are of the same faith, is there enough internal diversity by the world's standards?</i>
<i>If the life of the mind is not understood as an integral part of Christian discipleship and mission, the term "Christian university" is indeed, as some claim, an oxymoron. (Neuhaus, 21)</i>	<i>For some educators, a religious university is a contradiction in terms.</i>

community. Plagiarism of any kind is completely contrary to the established practices of higher education where all members of the University are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others that is included in one's own work.

It is possible to become outraged at this apparent flagrant violation of university policy. Undoubtedly, the public-relations apparatus of the university will explain it as an unfortunate oversight or as the mistake of an editor or as a computer glitch or as the result of mixed up notes (excuses that students invariably try when accused of plagiarism). The messenger, sadly SUNSTONE, will certainly be reviled. And in the process, students may learn a debilitating cynicism.

I don't want to blow this lapse of judgment out of proportion; nevertheless, it does seem emblematic of what is happening at the university. I am willing to accept that President Bateman's ethical breach was without malice, perhaps even innocent. Surely, such appropriation is done daily in his business world where executives, or their staff, routinely slap together talks for chamber-of-commerce type gatherings. But it is easier to excuse such innocent behavior in a college freshman than a university president. At any university, especially one which so consciously strives to meet the high standards of the Academy while maintaining its unique religious mission, it is surprising that its president is, at best, naive about a fundamental ethical tenet of both the academic and the religious communities. Such actions make me and many other faculty worried over the administration's ability to understand our concerns about the continuing vitality of intellectual life at BYU.

The following words, which ring so false as they were applied to Gail Houston, seem made for this case of plagiarism by our university president: "We feel that not only have these activities failed to strengthen the moral vigor of the university, they have enervated its very fiber." First things have been put last.

THE FUTURE

Some say that without vigilant care, BYU will follow other former religious universities on the path to secularism. But over-zealousness can also lead to the same result.

WE now have a university administration, led by a general authority, that is very competent in implementing the will of the board of trustees, but clumsy when it comes to the dynamics of a university where differing views must be hosted and tolerated and where academic standards are modeled and policed.

One of the most disturbing things about these recent events is that they are cumulative. A few years ago, BYU had reached a stature that allowed it to play on a relatively level field with the better universities in this country. One of the best measures of this was that we were no longer competing with second-rate state universities for the faculty we really wanted to hire, but with Chicago, Michigan, Yale, and Columbia. And, in many instances, when we went head-to-head with these institutions,

we won. I fear that that status is diminishing. A few years ago, some faculty could express dismay over restrictions on participating in "certain forums," but now there is a general pattern of intimidation for anything that does not reflect the full party line. If a faculty member can be "called in" because his name appears in the local newspaper in the context of defending a valued colleague who is being dismissed without apparent cause, or for commenting on a "creationist" speech given at a local Protestant church, or if one's work becomes an issue because of postmodern or feminist methodologies or content, then it is difficult to still qualify for the title "university." And if this intimidation is done primarily in the name of religion, then our religion becomes narrow and petty, suspicious and fearful, focusing on means instead of ends.

BYU wants to be a "religious university," a "Mormon university," but in over-stressing a narrow view of the religious and Mormon half, we may lose the university half. I can think of no better way to end my litany of despair than to turn to a *First Things* article that appeared with the spate of articles on the secularization of American universities so often cited by BYU administrators and members of the board of trustees—James Burtchael's "The Decline and Fall of the Christian College" (April 1991). Burtchael gives several reasons for Vanderbilt

University's gradual transformation from a Methodist-supported institution into the secular university it is today (cited also in Scott Abbott's article on BYU), words that feel prescient in light of the situation at BYU today:

There was a period of great intellectual turbulence, when fresh findings and methods and disciplines raised fearful philosophical challenges to theology. Spokesmen for the church's concerns, by a compound of incapacity and animosity, exacerbated the apparent hostility between the church and rigorous scholarship. . . .

The . . . angry General Conference . . . had narrowed its view of what it meant to be Methodist to things like a religious test for all faculty and disciplinary control over students. Absent any larger vision of Christian education, this program was unrelievedly negative, and assured the educational reformers that the church had no stomach for ambitious scholarship.

And finally, as a result, an effective bond to the Methodist Church instinctively evoked references to bigotry, exclusion, narrowness, sectarianism, and selfishness. ☐



THE LAST TIME

The last time is faint now
like carnival sounds, black and white TV,
perfume at a prom.
The details are everything,
since how they go together and where I come in
are gone.

On the screen a man with braided hair dances.
With the sound down he is so much puppet,
frantic mime waiting for godot.

I remember expecting this—
lacing all those Kool-aid days
for this one drink, looking at the end
from the beginning, leaving before I got here.
All the same, here I am
listening to the last cars
driving home from the Boulevard, the lights in town
just brighter than the stars, but fading.

The neon in the window seems to crackle with the breeze
as if someone walked there softly.
But even in this light, I know better than to look,
hoping to see ghosts.

—C. WADE BENTLEY

L I G H T E R M I N D S

TEN THOUSAND SERIOUS INSIGHTS

MORMON ERUDITION MADE EASY

By J. Frederic Voros Jr.

It is a little known fact that Mormon so-called scholars do not actually know more than you do, they only sound like it. This is usually because they attended some gentile institution of "higher learning" and you didn't. However, as with preaching the gospel, no formal training is necessary to sound erudite. With the help of this chart, you can impress listeners at the Sunstone symposium, B. H. Roberts Society, or other gathering of LDS pseudo-intellectuals, never mind why you would be there in the first place.

Simply choose any entry from column A, then any entry from column B, then column C, and finally column D. For best results, speak with an authoritative tone. Convey with inflection and body language (arched eyebrows are good) that anyone who questions you is pathetically ignorant. You will soon find others agreeing with you and coaxing further insights from you. Humor them! As this chart is capable of 10,000 permutations, your fund of insights will exhaust even the most ardent listener. Have fun!

Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D
1. With all due respect to the historical contributions of Brother Nibley,	1. a proper understanding of the Church's cabalistic provenance	1. tends to further sacralize	1. the Prophet's quintessentially mythopoeic vision.
2. Critical post-modernist insights suggest that	2. the essential irreducibility of the human spirit	2. may be seen as an ironic reflection of	2. Mormonism's radical henotheism.
3. Viewed from within the larger eschatological framework,	3. Latter-day Saints' predilection for literalizing history	3. suggests urgent reconsideration of	3. voyeuristic themes in LDS confessional practice.
4. Thoughtful scholars finally recognize that	4. Joseph Smith's incipient eco-spirituality	4. necessarily informs	4. an otherwise inexplicable militarism implicit in LDS hymnody.
5. Documents dating from the late Nauvoo Period imply that	5. the disturbing resurgence of Mormon Neo-Orthodoxy	5. exists in delicate equipoise with	5. the Woman-ness of the Divine Feminine.
6. In view of the profound implications of the Mormon notion of continuing revelation,	6. the LDS communitarian impulse	6. lies at the heart of	6. Mormonism's radical soteriology.
7. Neo-Pelagian perspectives indicate that	7. Church apologists' unwitting assimilation of the Hegelian dialectic	7. is usually thought to entail	7. the functional infallibility of Mormon hierarchs.
8. It is no overstatement to suggest that	8. Joseph Smith's finitistic theology	8. can, indeed must, be cast in ironic counterpoint to	8. the Mormon affinity for nominalistic metaphysics.
9. Chiastically speaking,	9. the temple's veiled gnostic idiom	9. provocatively adumbrates	9. patriarchal styles of priesthood governance.
10. At the risk of restating the obvious, it may be said that	10. the LDS tradition of the senescent prophet-leader	10. cannot rightly be understood without reference to	10. Mormonism's radical cosmogony.

REVIEWS

CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP AND THE
BOOK OF MORMON

NEW APPROACHES TO THE BOOK OF MORMON

edited by Brent Lee Metcalfe

Signature Books, 1993

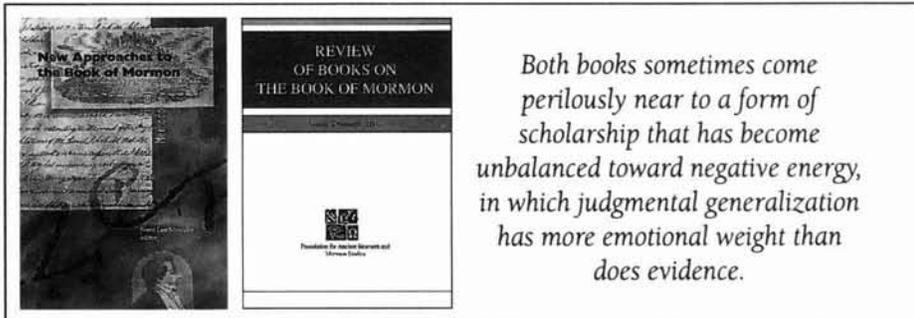
446 pages, \$26.95

REVIEW OF BOOKS ON THE BOOK OF MORMON, 6.1

edited by Daniel C. Peterson

Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1994

556 pages, \$12.95

Reviewed by Todd Compton

Both books sometimes come perilously near to a form of scholarship that has become unbalanced toward negative energy, in which judgmental generalization has more emotional weight than does evidence.

SCHOLARSHIP, as I understand it, is dedicated to the proposition of looking at evidence and making an interpretation. As the scholar is not a solipsist, but is writing for both fellow scholars and interested laypeople, the evidence and subsequent interpretation must be presented carefully in order to convince the audience

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that the interpretation is correct. This process is much like a court of law: you have an interpretation, you present the evidence, and you make a final summation, arguing for your interpretation and, perhaps, against the interpretations you have rejected. Later, other scholars make new interpretations, rejecting, modifying, or expanding your findings.

Whatever a scholar's interpretation, he or she must use evidence. Scholarship is not a game of free-form theorizing. A legal system that ignored evidence would obviously be a ludicrous farce. So a scholar's effectiveness depends on gathering and presenting evidence persuasively. Scholars learn not to

trust any authority completely; they look at the evidence, then agree or disagree.

Scholarship, in putting forth a new interpretation, often rejects the old interpretations to some extent. But scholars can become fixated on the rejection of previous interpretations, deriving joy not from offering new insights, but from demolishing despised opponents. At this point, scholarship can turn into a game of labeling, ad hominem attack, and one-upmanship; interest in the evidence can be lost. Sometimes a line of opposition is drawn and both sides feed on the negative energy engendered.

It is easy to see how ad hominem attack can quickly become entirely divorced from evidence. Roman law in Cicero's time has been characterized as ad hominem attack without significant evidence. According to classicist N. W. Merrill, "Attacking the morality and behavior of one's opponent became the standard method of winning a case. This concept is totally alien to modern legal procedure."¹ Lawyers attacked the defendant or accuser, and the most skillful orator won; evidence often was not even produced. It is sobering to realize how many readers of political or religious writing respond on the same level today. Evidence is irrelevant; they respond to the rhetoric of the accuser or defender.

The ad hominem attack, on a religious level, can be extremely potent; charged religious labels can create strong, emotional responses. Yet in both history and religion, when we emphasize ad hominem and leave the realm of evidence, we leave the realm of scholarship.

Certainly, a person may feel a religious motivation to denounce opponents. And a person who believes in the Bible or Book of Mormon may easily find examples of prophets denouncing the wicked—Christ denouncing the Pharisees is the most important example. Can denouncing the wicked, in the Biblical tradition, be combined with evidential scholarship? The danger here is that the denunciation would outweigh the presentation of evidence in emotional impact.

Furthermore, thoughtful Christian scholars will follow Christ in not making denunciation the central focus of their work. Christ's denunciations of the Pharisees occupy a small part of his total teachings; the main part of his teachings are positive and creative. Often he dealt with the Pharisees gently, on a one-to-one basis, and certainly he felt compassion for them, as he did toward any sinner. (See Luke 15 and 10:37.) When he criticized them, it was for going

The environmentalists cannot merely say that the Book of Mormon is still scripture; they must let the reader feel their reverence and affection for the book. No essay in New Approaches deals with the Book of Mormon as authentic scripture in a warm, admiring, convincing way.

through the motions of religion without sincerely loving their fellow beings or God, not for heretical belief.

NEW APPROACHES TO THE
BOOK OF MORMON

The authors hammer home the point that the Book of Mormon is not historical; what the book is religiously is not emphasized as much.

AFTER this lengthy introduction, we turn to *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon* and *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* volume 6.1. These two books represent a battle line drawn in religious scholarship between those who believe that the Book of Mormon is a translation of an ancient text (referred to here as "historicists") and those who believe that the Book of Mormon reflects a nineteenth-century environment (referred to as "environmentalists"). Both books sometimes come perilously near to a form of scholarship that has become unbalanced toward negative energy and in which judgmental generalization has more emotional weight than does evidence.² The main problem facing the environmentalists of *New Approaches* is to convince the Mormon reader that their purpose and intent is basically positive, not negative, that they are scholars of breadth and creativity, not scholars with a narrow and destructive agenda. I once heard Anthony Hutchinson explain, in a late-night Sunstone gathering, that his work on scripture was essentially positive, but he felt that he had to perform a "destructive" sequence (clearing away misconceptions about the Book of Mormon) before he could move on to the constructive phase. However, sometimes it seems as if the environmentalists' emphasis is overwhelmingly on the negative, destructive phase of operations, with occasional bows to the possibilities of the next, positive step. The authors in *New Approaches* hammer home the point that the Book of Mormon is *not* historical (in an ancient context); what the Book of Mormon is religiously—whether "modern" scripture, the record of the thinking of an important religious leader, or fraudulent text—is not emphasized as much. A few of the authors mention the Book of Mormon's religious value, but this aspect is not enlarged

upon. Sometimes the authors appear entirely neutral to the Book of Mormon as a religious text; sometimes they look at it with marked coolness. Some do examine important themes in the Book of Mormon (e.g., Dan Vogel, Melodie Moench Charles) from an environmental perspective, but this examination sometimes seems subordinate to the anti-historicist edge.

Certainly, the environmental school of Book of Mormon research is entirely justified. There are serious problems (textual, archaeological, theological) in the historicist interpretations that should be looked at carefully. And research on what the Book of Mormon meant in its immediate nineteenth-century American environment should be valuable to both the historicist and environmentalist, since the historicist believes that the Book of Mormon was intended to speak to people of the nineteenth and following centuries. Nevertheless, the environmentalists should address the constructive side of their task as much as, or even more than, the preparatory destructive side. They cannot merely say that the Book of Mormon is still scripture, if they still accept it as such; they must let the reader feel their reverence and affection for the book.

Instead of emphasizing the positive, the tone of this book is often polemical. Ad hominem unfortunately appears occasionally—"apologist" and "apologetic" frequently categorize terms that cannot be interpreted in context as anything but contemptuous.³ In this book, no essay deals with the "environmental" Book of Mormon as authentic scripture in a warm, admiring, convincing way (although David Wright's article comes closest).

Hutchinson's lead essay is perhaps meant to be a positive article on the Book of Mormon's religious value; unfortunately, it misses its mark. It seems to be going in the direction of arguing for the Book of Mormon's scriptural value, but in mid-essay Hutchinson launches into a summary of reasons for rejecting the book's historicity. The emphasis, again, is on what the Book of Mormon is not, not on what it is. Hutchinson criticizes Hugh Nibley for his "comparative methodology"—yet all scholarship, including the environmentalists', uses compar-

ative methodology. Hutchinson uses anecdotal material (extremely unconvincing as evidence) to show that it would be easy to come up with a Book of Mormon.⁴ Actually, the Book of Mormon is an extraordinary book that converted many intelligent (if devout) early Mormons almost instantly, and it is far beyond the average writer's scope of accomplishment on many levels.

Often Hutchinson and other environmentalists attack the less-convincing historicist equations (John Sorenson's animal equivalents, for example) while ignoring stronger parallels, such as John Welch's chiasmus work. Hutchinson's rejection of the Book of Mormon as limited lineage history is not compelling. Thucydides' story of a war between two small Greek cities, for example, is great history, but its scope is very limited.

In his treatment of Blake Ostler, whose *Dialogue* article argued for ancient and modern elements in the Book of Mormon,⁴ Hutchinson asks that the Book of Mormon be absolutely ancient or absolutely modern. Anything modern in the text, he writes, will compromise its historicity. But every translation of an ancient text is a mixture of ancient and modern. One thinks of the comment on Alexander Pope's translation of Homer: "Very pretty—but not Homer." Hutchinson refers to the Book of Mormon's theology as "naive";⁵ this does not speak well for his stated acceptance of the Book of Mormon as valuable scripture.

To end the article, Hutchinson takes a further step toward negativity as he states that "all of these religious effects of supporting Book of Mormon antiquity tend against basic Christian values of humility, walking by faith and not by sight, and brotherly kindness. In addition, they all detract from the essential message of the gospel." He writes that viewing the Book of Mormon as ancient is "idolatrous."⁶ Surely this is extreme. To say that those who believe in the historicity of the Book of Mormon are by definition more arrogant, faithless, unbrotherly, unkind, and idolatrous than environmentalists is an unwarranted leap. Certainly, some individual historicists can be arrogant and unkind, but they are not such by definition. I am considerably more liberal than people I attend church with, am more conversant with

philology, religious history, Mormon history. I attend Sunstone and read *Dialogue*, and so have, to some extent, a liberal streak in me. Nevertheless, I often feel myself to be less spiritually gifted than many Relief Society presidents, elders quorum presidents, bishops, and positionless members whom I meet every Sunday at church. They believe in the historicity of the Book of Mormon; yet they are profoundly Christian, in the sense of going out of their way to help their fellow human beings. Are these people, to paraphrase Hutchinson's last paragraph, spiritually illiterate?

Hutchinson concludes, "Briefly put we should stop talking about the Book of Mormon's antiquity and begin reading its stories, considering how early Mormons would have understood them and relating their context to our own."⁷ I wish he had written an article for this book along these lines—interpreting the stories in the Book of Mormon he finds profound or spiritually valuable, using "environmentalist" background when appropriate. His article, though, fails to make a good case for the environmental Book of Mormon as scripture.

The next two articles, by Dan Vogel and Mark Thomas, are well-researched pieces that give new insights into Book of Mormon themes and in some ways are good examples of the value of environmentalist research. Historicists, who themselves use parallels, would be unfair to reject valid nineteenth-century parallels to the Book of Mormon. Vogel's work is generally exhaustively researched, though some of its interpretations are debatable. Here he makes a convincing case for the anti-Universalist theme in both the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith's environment.

Thomas's tracing of the phrase "bless and sanctify" through the nineteenth century and backwards through time is a valuable contribution. Two points of disagreement: Thomas rejects Anderson's work on the sacraments because of its attempt to "derive a literary

form [early Christian liturgy] from random theological discussions" (Pauline comments on baptism).⁸ But much evidence on early liturgy is found in theological discussion; there are few extant "pure" liturgical texts in the earliest Christianity. For instance, Thomas quotes Cyril of Jerusalem,⁹ who gave newly baptized Christians lectures that were not liturgical texts per se, but that still help us reconstruct fourth-century Christian baptism and communion. Second, Thomas writes, "Mormon liturgy is clearly not a restoration of ancient words in any literal sense."¹⁰ But he quotes a fourth- or fifth-century Christian liturgical text reflecting the phrase "bless and sanctify."¹¹ Thomas might mean that he does not see Mormon liturgy as a supernatural restoration, but as a continuation of ancient tradition. But perhaps every revelation has a traditional component, along with a contemporary contextualization.

Melodie Moench Charles's "Book of Mormon Christology" is intriguing in its pursuit of the Book of Mormon's "modalistic" Christology (the theory that the Father and the Son are one being, rather than physically separate). Her analysis certainly solves some difficulties, notably the Book of Mormon's occasional close identification of the Father and the Son, especially in Abinadi's speech in Mosiah 3. Joseph Smith's 1832 First Vision account fits into this context, it must be admitted, and modalism illuminates some Book of Mormon textual changes. However, Charles's interpretation raises other problems: if Joseph Smith as author was committed to a thoroughgoing modalism, why does he put such an emphasis on Jesus praying to the Father in Third Nephi? Certainly, modalists explained away such behavior in the New Testament, as Charles notes, but why would Smith put something *into* the Book of Mormon that he would have to explain away? In 3 Nephi 15, for example, Jesus talks of ascending to his Father (spatially getting closer to him), and speaks of the Father giving him commandments.

Charles argues that the Book of Mormon's developed Christology is not found in the Old Testament. But the Old Testament is a small library, weeded out by rabbinical Judaism. This part of her article would be improved by a treatment of the intertestamental pseudepigrapha's views on the Messiah. It is sometimes uncertain whether the writers of these documents are Christian or Jewish because the pre-Christian Jewish documents seem to have Christian elements.¹² Also, Goodenough has emphasized that there were mystical currents in early Judaism, more Messianic and eschatological, that later rabbinic Judaism suppressed.¹³ Certainly, we do not have the developed Christology of the Book of Mormon in these documents, but we do have a more complex picture of Jewish Messianic religion than the Old Testament gives us.

One other detail: Charles asserts that the idea that Jesus Christ was Jehovah has "no evidence in the Old or New Testament" to support it. But the hymn embedded in Colossians 1:15–20, and Jesus' statement, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58), suggest that some early Christians linked Christ closely with the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

Stan Larson and David Wright contribute solid, useful studies of Joseph Smith's use of the King James Bible in his translation (or, to them, authorial) process. Such studies virtually prove that Joseph used the King James extensively in his translation process. I once looked up all the words and phrases of Nephi's psalm (2 Ne. 4) in a biblical concordance and was startled at how much of the language was biblical, but how the whole added up to something that felt distinctly new. (In the same way, Virgil translated half-lines of Homer into precisely equivalent Latin, and put them in contexts that were non-Homeric. The result was both very Homeric and profoundly non-Homeric.) Larson emphasizes that Joseph copied mistakes in the King James text, based as it is on

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There is a tendency for the Review writers to label the New Approaches writers as anti-Christ, Nehors, Korihors, Sherems, and second-rate scholars. The important question is whether such ad hominem labeling is consistent with good scholarship and Christian ethics.

the woefully inadequate Erasmus and Textus Receptus editions of the Greek Bible. His study requires us to conclude that Joseph's revisions of the Bible and his King James language in the Book of Mormon, were generally not meant to be textual restorations (though there are a few passages where his revisions have ancient textual support). However, this is not an insurmountable problem for historicists. Joseph used the best biblical language and text at his disposal; his mission was not to restore the Bible to its Ur-text.

Larson unfortunately describes Joseph's use of the King James Bible as "plagiarism." Plagiarism involves an author taking language from an obscure source, passing it off as his or her own, and hoping not to get caught. But Joseph Smith's source (the Bible) was hardly obscure; using, say, the unpublished Spaulding manuscript would have been plagiarism. But scripture based on the language of earlier scripture has a long tradition in religious history. Phrases from Daniel show up in Revelation, for instance (cf. Rev. 13 with Dan. 7; also John 19:28; Matt. 27:46); Wright makes precisely this point in his essay.¹⁴

Both Larson and Wright show that Joseph's language was dependent on the King James. But an important further question is: What did Joseph—as translator or author—add to the King James style?¹⁵

David Wright's impressive article shows Joseph's use of Hebrews in Alma 11–14 and Ether 12. Wright's findings will be a basic resource for any serious study of style in Alma and Ether. He goes beyond stylistic use of Hebrews to show how the Alma chapters used and followed ideas in Hebrews point by point. I am not sure how historicists will deal with this—perhaps put it in the unsolved problems file. (Any field of study has an unsolved problems file; the proportion of solved to unsolved problems is the issue.) The idea that Joseph merely used language from Hebrews to translate a similar text from the gold plates seems unlikely, as we have more than stylistic resemblances. The similarities between Hebrews and Ether add to the problem, for the pure historicist.

Wright emphasizes that he looks on Joseph Smith as a prophet, and the Book of Mormon as a sacred text. His view of Joseph

as a solver of Bible problems is intriguing, and consistent with the Joseph Smith revision of the Bible. But Wright's article fails to qualify as a holistically positive treatment of the environmental Book of Mormon: the main emphasis is on Joseph's dependence on the King James, not on his individual inspiration. And when Wright gives examples of Joseph's solving problems in the biblical text, one is not clear just how (or even whether) he thinks Joseph is making theologically valuable solutions.

The pieces by John Kunich (about Book of Mormon population) and Deanne G. Matheny (on Mesoamerican/Book of Mormon archaeology) are outside my areas of specialization, but it is certain that the Book of Mormon faces real archaeological difficulties. Once again, we have material for our unsolved problems file. I feel somewhat cautious about Matheny's absolutism. In my experience, the Book of Mormon as an ancient text is convincing in some areas, unconvincing in others, and neutral in still others. Matheny's article gives the impression that the Book of Mormon loses all battles drastically, resoundingly, and with no possibility of appeal. But in many areas surely there is room for discussion.

One should also be wary of scholarly orthodoxies, though obviously sometimes they are right. For instance, when Mesoamerican archaeologists find metals in early levels on a dig, thus putting the metal in the "wrong" time period,¹⁶ one wonders if they ascribe the metals to southeastern Central America only to preserve orthodoxy rather than because the objects hint in that direction intrinsically. On the issue of cultural diffusion to America, John Sorenson has clearly shown that scholarly consensus can be wrong.¹⁷

Edward Ashment's treatment of Egyptian and Hebrew in the Book of Mormon is the most abrasive article in this book. The scholarly energy here sometimes seems negative, and Ashment uses ad hominem, labeling his opponents as apologists. (In contrast, David Wright refers to historicists as "traditionalist-rationalists," a more neutral term.) At the very least, Ashment should explain what he means by apologist—he seems to use the term to denote dishonesty.

Two writers whom Ashment would prob-

ably include in his own "camp"—D. Michael Quinn and David Wright—have referred to themselves as apologists.¹⁸ Quinn speaks of honest apologetics, which is a useful distinction. Good apologists should also be skillful, disciplined, industrious, humane, and have breadth of vision.¹⁹

Brent Metcalfe's article is a worthwhile treatment of the idea that in the present Book of Mormon, Mosiah was written first and the books preceding it (1 Ne.–W of M) were written last. His arguments do not strike me as conclusive, but if more conclusive proof comes in, his article will be useful supporting evidence.

**REVIEW OF BOOKS ON THE
BOOK OF MORMON**

While ad hominem is an understandable human response, is such labeling consistent with good scholarship and Christian ethics?

I WROTE the above before reading *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, 6.1, the 566-page response to *New Approaches* from historicists at F.A.R.M.S. The tone of *Review* 6.1 is generally unfriendly, bordering on extremely unfriendly. Just as Hutchinson, Ashment, and Metcalfe labeled historicists as unchristian and apologists (in a bad sense), and thus second-rate scholars and just as Larson labeled Joseph Smith as a plagiarist, so the historicists here have labeled the environmentalists as atheists, amateurs, anti-Christ, and second-rate scholars. The ad hominem in *Review* is understandable as a response to *New Approaches'* ad hominem, but I should mention that *New Approaches* may be responding to earlier ad hominem, such as Stephen Robinson's labeling of Signature Books as "Korihor's press."²⁰ While ad hominem is understandable as a human response to earlier excesses, the important question is not who began labeling, but whether such labeling is consistent with good scholarship and Christian ethics.

Davis Bitton opens with a sober, brief response to *New Approaches*, including a good critique of Larson's use of the word "plagiarism."

John Gee's seventy-page response to *New Approaches* makes several convincing arguments. His discussion of Hebrew manu-

scripts of Matthew, potentially important to the Larson-Welch discussion of 3 Nephi, is weakened when he does not give us the date of the Hebrew manuscripts in question. And in any event, wouldn't these be secondary sources, copies from the Greek? Gee's tone can be as abrasive as Ashment's; which lessens its effectiveness. The review ends by equating *New Approaches* authors with Book of Mormon anti-Christ; I express below why I think this equation is extreme and imprecise. (And John Welch of F.A.R.M.S. agrees.²¹)

Welch, with his background in classics, reviews Larson and Wright; as always, he is thorough and worth reading. He asserts that, while Larson sincerely tries to pick examples that are as certain as possible, all textual variants still reflect uncertainty. Thus, Larson feels "go into hell" in Matthew 5:30 (cf. 3 Ne. 12:30) is as certain a textual reading as possible, using his multiple standards of evaluation, while Welch adduces a fine New Testament scholar, Matthew Black, who still believes "cast into hell" is the original text.²² I

find Wright's case for the relevant chapters of the Book of Mormon being dependent on Hebrews more convincing than Welch does, however.

James Smith, with an extensive background in demographics, gives an impressive and convincing response to Kunich.

Sorenson, in response to Matheny, reaffirms his case for the possibility of Book of Mormon cultural elements in pre-Columbian America, especially in his limited geographic model. Possibility is not proof, but Sorenson is not trying to prove, and he admits problems yet unresolved in his model.²³ One would like to read an extensive response by Matheny. I wonder what she makes of a detail such as the comparative linguistic reconstruction of Mesoamerican words for metal during Book of Mormon times.

Richard Lloyd Anderson criticizes Thomas for misunderstanding his earlier arguments (he was not looking for verbal identities, but parallels in idea); furthermore, he was not denying parallels to the prayers in

American Protestantism. He also criticizes Thomas for lack of methodological control in presenting nineteenth-century (and earlier) parallels to the sacrament prayers by saying, "Here is a blanket invitation to shop for bits and pieces." This is exactly the same kind of argument that is often applied to Nibley, ironically enough. As always, Anderson is a convincing scholar. However, Thomas still makes a contribution, in his analysis of the "bless and sanctify" phrase, that Anderson does not seem to recognize.

Martin Tanner finds absolutely nothing of worth in his review of Vogel. But Vogel's article presents some valid environmentalist parallels to the Book of Mormon text. While we may reject his conclusions, we cannot dismiss his evidence out of hand. A reliable methodology for assessing historical and thematic parallels is desperately needed in Book of Mormon studies and elsewhere. In an assessment of parallels, one must count up the similarities and differences and judge whether there is enough similarity to show a

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One of the important challenges in coming years will be the development of disciplinary methods for problematic scholars that will not compromise the model of our church as an authentic family. At the same time, it could encourage qualified "traditionalist" scholars to come to grips with the raw material of the offending author.

connection. But there will always be dissimilarities, and one cannot simply point to dissimilarities and disallow the parallel. Yet environmentalists and historicists tend to denounce the dissimilarities in each others' parallels while emphasizing the similarities in their own. But by using the same methodology, both factions should admit the validity of some "opposing" parallels. One might suggest that the balance of valid parallels points in one way or another, but to suggest that the evidence and reasoning on the other side is entirely bankrupt underrates the complexity of the situation.

Louis Midgely contributes a long response to Anthony Hutchinson, in the middle of which he includes an ad hominem evaluation of Brent Metcalfe—citing his level of formal academic training, his former association with Mark Hofmann, and his motivations for being a Mormon. Midgely gives us similar background for Vogel, emphasizing Vogel's connections with the anti-Mormon Wesley Walters in his early career.²⁵

The references to Metcalfe's early associations with Hofmann and Vogel's with Wesley Walters are dangerous for two reasons. First, we really cannot blame Metcalfe for being fooled by Hofmann, as forgery experts and virtually all of the best-qualified, Mormon historians were also fooled. Second, the references to Vogel and Walters (and Metcalfe and Hofmann) lean toward McCarthyism.

Sen. Joseph McCarthy would find someone who had flirted with fashionable Communism while in college, who perhaps had attended a few meetings. Then, decades later, he would bring forth the documentary evidence for the early flirtation and triumphantly destroy that person's career. It did not matter to McCarthy that he had no evidence that his suspect had ever met with Communists during the past twenty years or no proof that the victim currently espoused Communist ideas. McCarthy and his extremist followers created an atmosphere of paranoia and tragically destroyed the careers of many who certainly were not guilty of Communism at the time they were accused.

If Midgely thinks that Metcalfe and Vogel are currently anti-Mormon, why not show it from their work? Anti-Mormon writing is generally badly written, badly reasoned,

badly documented, and lacks breadth or sympathy or balance. If Metcalfe and Vogel are simply anti-Mormon, it should be possible to demonstrate it on those grounds.

William Hamblin contributes a long response to a *Dialogue* article by Metcalfe.²⁶ There are certainly weaknesses in Metcalfe's article—specifically, his dichotomy of apologist and critical scholars. Metcalfe's treatment of chiasmus (including non-ancient examples) is valuable, but not entirely convincing. The Book of Mormon chiasmus is much more complex, and Metcalfe's modern examples do not always fit the chiasmic structure tightly; Welch's best examples, on the other hand, fit naturally. While chiasmus does not prove the Book of Mormon's antiquity, it is a phenomenon that deserves serious consideration.

Hamblin convincingly makes many of these same points. He rightly rejects Metcalfe's idea that the central sign of critical scholarship is a rejection of scriptural historicism and supernaturalism. Careful, thorough scholarship (reading texts in as original a form as possible, learning ancient languages, studying the cultural milieu of a text, and learning to evaluate archaeological and textual evidence carefully and fairly) is the standard by which judgments of historicity or ahistoricity may be made.

Hamblin is exactly right when he suggests that the Book of Mormon should be studied from both ancient and nineteenth-century perspectives. Only then can successes and failures be analyzed and historicism and environmentalism be assessed.²⁷ He makes the valid point that Hutchinson's acceptance of the literal death and resurrection of Christ puts him in Metcalfe's "apologist" camp. Hamblin is also good on Mesoamerican swords, a specialty of his. He is less convincing when treating the early Mormon view of the location of Hill Cumorah. William W. Phelps and Oliver Cowdery, who located Cumorah in North America, were closely associated with Joseph Smith, and obviously often reflected Joseph Smith's thinking.

Finally, Hamblin returns Metcalfe's ad hominem with interest. In response to Metcalfe's derogatory references to "apologists," Hamblin includes a section on creden-

tials of historicists, which may be justified, in order to discredit the derogatory labeling. But his emphasis on the lack of credentials of certain environmentalists leans toward elitism.²⁸ His emphasis on Metcalfe's belief, or lack of it, is also problematic, because a person's belief can be such a subtle thing (as I argue below). Finally, the conclusion of Hamblin's article is unnecessarily personal; if Metcalfe's (or other non-Ph.D.s') scholarship includes missteps, it is better simply to point them out, with constructive suggestions for improvement, than to make this kind of denunciatory judgment.

Daniel Peterson, influenced by *Degenerate Moderns*, a book by conservative Catholic E. Michael Jones, argues that ad hominem can sometimes be justified in religious apologetic. It is certainly true that an author's life is interesting, valuable, and significant on a holistic level; however, to use ad hominem in religious apologetic can be dangerous, can easily lead to serious abuses, and is probably nearly impossible to do fairly and adequately.

Jones places emphasis on the sexual transgressions of prominent authors. But how are we to pass judgment on the sexual lives of our contemporary fellow scholars? There are insurmountable difficulties in documentation, aside from other considerations. Furthermore, what if the scholar has transgressed sexually, but has repented? How are we to judge such repentance? And what about a case such as Oskar Schindler's? Though a confirmed adulterer, he also developed the moral courage to help a number of Jews escape concentration camps, and he did this at considerable danger to himself. In treating the sexual/ethical lives of our fellow scholars, how are we to evaluate such moral complexity?

I remember a thoughtful sacrament meeting address by a stake president who spoke on moral transgression. He said that he did not believe that there was a family in the ward that had not been touched by sexual wrongdoing in some way. If the best of Mormon families sometimes have moments of trial in the area of sexual transgressions, can we point the finger at opposing scholars in the highly public arena of religious apologetics, using sexual transgression as a basis for argument?

Finally, the kind of ad hominem attack that Jones evidently advocates and practices often degenerates to reductionism. For instance, in a passage that Peterson quotes (though he expresses reservations on the chapter it is taken from), Jones seems to ascribe the beginning of the Reformation, Luther's rebellion against the Catholic Church, to "spiritual laxity" and "sensuality" on the part of Luther. This has to be a major oversimplification, as reductionist as Brodie's treatment of Joseph Smith's polygamy as based on sexual motivations only, without significant religious motivations. For Jones to ascribe the Protestant Reformation to Luther's "sensuality" is equally reductionist. Aside from its ruling out political, economic, and theological considerations, it is very partisan. Jones (whom I have not read) apparently does not look at the enormous problems in the Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation, which surely must be part of the Reformation equation.

A repeated charge in *Review* is that various *New Approaches* writers are atheist. Yet some conservative, faithful Mormon intellectuals have gone through atheistic periods in their lives. And others struggle in choosing between atheism and belief throughout their lives. A part of faith is not to have a perfect knowledge, as Alma says. (Alma 32:21.) Can we label such strugglers as flat-out atheists? If a scholar has expressed atheist views in the past, and later expresses more theist ideas, does that mean that he or she is necessarily dishonest in those later expressions? Or does it mean that he has made a shift? This is another reason to be skeptical of Louis Midgely's (and others') industrious documentation of scholars' past atheism. He does not capture the complexity and mutability of human spiritual searchings. I recently had a student who openly described himself as an atheist, but said that his atheist friends disapproved of him because his atheism had a mystical streak in it. Can we not say that such a person has at least a seed of faith, to paraphrase Alma 32:28? We should not denounce people who are struggling with faith. Alma describes it as a long, growing process.

And what about conscious atheists who live according to many Christian principles? Christ's parable of the good Samaritan uses a heretic as its example of Christian love. To Christ, knowing how to love authentically meant more than being entirely correct in one's beliefs, though that was also important to him. Ad hominem might easily ignore these important paradoxes so central to Christ's teachings.

There is a tendency for the *Review* writers

to label the *New Approaches* writers as anti-Christ, Nehors, Korihors, and Sherems. These labels are inexact and extreme, in my view, like most ad hominem. One element of Korihor is paralleled in some Signature writers—naturalistic assumptions. But when Robinson uses the word Korihor, a swirling configuration of associations comes with it: Korihor was also (1) amoral ("whatsoever a man did was no crime" [Alma 30:17]); (2) atheist (God "never was nor ever will be" [48]); (3) dishonest ("thou art possessed with a lying spirit" [42; cf. 46, 53]). Nehor rounds out the anti-Christ paradigm: he was (4) exploitative, that is, supported financially by his listeners, and evidently rich (Alma 1:5); he (5) wore gaudy, expensive clothes (1:6); and (6) was physically violent (1:9).

While there are some Signature authors with whom I strongly disagree, and who seem to be driven by negative energy rather than by a sympathetic, broad interest in Mormonism, there are none who come close to meeting all of those anti-Christ criteria. Furthermore, Signature Books publishes far more than environmentalists like Hutchinson and Ashment and Metcalfe—e.g., articles by Richard Bushman, Leonard Arrington, James Allen, William Hartley, Lowell Bennion, and Ronald Walker. In speaking of Korihor's press, Robinson labels such writers also, obviously unjustly. Even further, Signature has published the diaries of Joseph Smith, William Clayton, and Wilford Woodruff. I am currently reading Woodruff's diaries and regard them as authentic modern-day scripture. It is paradoxical that Signature Books—seen by some as the worst of the "alternate voices"—published this modern day scripture while conservative presses are publishing little serious primary or secondary Mormon history.

Finally, it is impossible to review these two books without considering the fact that one of the *New Approaches* authors, David Wright, has recently been excommunicated from the Church, in part because of an article in this book. Excommunication of a scholar for his or her writing shares many of the dangers of ad hominem: it labels the scholar (the charge is usually "apostasy," making the scholar an "apostate") but does not come to grips with the scholar's evidence and reasoning. If a scholar's writing is objectionable enough to result in excommunication on the charge of apostasy, we would expect it to be false and consciously deceptive. But if the Church cannot find falseness and conscious deception in the offending works, it is excommunicating for truth, which would involve it in a disastrous moral quandary.

In addition, excommunication is liable to the ad hominem dangers of extremism and imprecision. For instance, in the Book of Mormon's paradigm for apostasy (Korihor/Nehor), the apostate is amoral, atheistic, dishonest, exploitative, physically violent, and given to flaunting his wealth through expensive clothing. All who know David Wright, however, would agree that he does not fit any of those categories; even many historicists agree that he is kind, likeable, and honest. He may be weak in faith, by the historicists' definition, or even intellectually wrong, but the fact that he remained active in the Church up until his excommunication shows that he at least had a seed of faith, which Alma taught should not be despised. Wright's excommunication is one of the great tragedies of modern Mormon history—not to mention the earlier excommunications of feminists, historians, and intellectuals, all of whom had their share of human flaws, but all of whom were members of the Church family.

The issue of excommunication has required us to reexamine how we view our Church. In such a large organization, there are many possible models—corporate, military, governmental—all of which have something to offer. But the most central model for the Church is probably the family, with its warmth and eternal resonances. We call each other "brother" and "sister," and in my experience the Church generally lives up to that family model, which is one of its great strengths. However, good families generally do not remove a person from the family, however much he or she has erred. If a family member commits a serious crime, has drug problems, and is put in prison, the good family still visits him. He is still a member of the family. If she turns away from the family's philosophies or traditions, she remains a valued member of the family. Some argue that excising a member from the family will help discipline him and bring him back to the family. But if we told a family member that he or she was no longer welcome at Thanksgiving or Christmas get-togethers, in fact was no longer a brother or sister, would that be effective in reintegrating him or her into the family with its values, or would it drive him or her further away? Obviously the latter.

If the Church hopes to fully measure up to the model of the good family, it will likewise rarely or never tell a member that he or she is not a member of the family. (Even the word "disfellowship" suggests expulsion from family, and "disfellowship" often meant "excommunicate" in the early Church.) This

does not mean that the Church will not use discipline. One of the important challenges in coming years will be the development of disciplinary methods for problematic scholars and intellectuals that will not compromise the model of our church as an authentic family. Perhaps the Church could formally disallow offending scholars from Church leadership or Church teaching. At the same time, it could encourage qualified "traditionalist" scholars to come to grips with the raw material of the offending author's evidence and argumentation and teach constructively what they feel is right. Such a response would preserve the model of our church as family and avoid the extremist dangers of ad hominem and excommunication. If Mormonism develops away from the inclusive model of a good family, it will have lost something central and precious in its heritage.²⁹

NOTES

1. N. W. Merrill, "Cicero and Early Roman Invektive" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Cincinnati, 1975), 30; cf. R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1939), 149-52.
2. I should acknowledge that my background is historicist, but that I have always been interested in environmentalist interpretations, and I have friends on both sides of the controversy. In my experience, there is valid evidence supporting both the historicist and environmentalist schools of research.
3. See *New Approaches*, 1, 337, 342, 428.
4. *New Approaches*, 9.
5. *New Approaches*, 12.
6. *New Approaches*, 15.
7. *New Approaches*, 17.
8. *New Approaches*, 62.
9. *New Approaches*, 64.
10. *New Approaches*, 77.
11. *New Approaches*, 64.
12. Cf. Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973), 41-42, citing Rowley, Brinkman, and Zeitlin.
13. E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York: Bollingen, 1953), 1.18-19.
14. *New Approaches*, 213, 216.
15. Plautus "wrote" all his plays by translating Greek plays (written by Greek authors) into Latin, yet he is still seen as an original playwright, not a plagiarist. One critic paradoxically asked: what is Plautine in Plautus? See Ed. Fraenkel, *Plautinisches im Plautus* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1922).
16. See *New Approaches*, 291.
17. See John Sorenson and Martin Raish, *Pre-Columbian Contact with the Americas across the Oceans: An Annotated Bibliography*, 2 vols. (Provo, UT: Research Press, 1990).
18. David Wright, "Historical Criticism," *SUNSTONE* (Sept. 1992), 28; and D. Michael Quinn, in George D. Smith, ed., *Faithful History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 107.
19. See Todd Compton, "Socrates on the Wasatch Front: Honest and Skillful Apologetics," address given at 1993 Sunstone Symposium West (tape #SW93-051).
20. *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 3 (1991), 312.
21. *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6.1, 150.
22. *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6.1, 159.
23. *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6.1, 319.
24. *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6.1, 211, 212, 214.
25. *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6.1, 207.
26. Brent Lee Metcalfe, "Apologetic and Critical Assumptions about Book of Mormon History," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (fall 1993): 153-84.
27. *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6.1, 504.
28. See Hugh Nibley, "The Day of the Amateur," *New Era* 1 (Jan. 1971): 42-44; cf. Leonard Arrington, "In Praise of Amateurs," *Journal of Mormon History* 17 (1991): 35-42.
29. This article was written in summer, 1994; Brent Metcalfe was excommunicated subsequently. My comments here apply equally to Brent.

RECENTLY RELEASED

Compiled by Will Quist

This section features recent titles of interest to Mormons; descriptions are often taken from promotional materials. Submissions are welcome.

BIOGRAPHY

The Children's Friends: Primary Presidents and Their Lives of Service. Janet Peterson and LaRene Gaunt. Deseret Book, 1996, hb, 210 p., \$14.95

In the tradition of the authors' books on the presidents of the Relief Society and Young Women organizations, nine general presidents of the Primary are covered. (Regretably, Aurelia Spencer Rogers, the Primary's founder, is not.)

Mountain Meadows Witness: The Life and Times of Bishop Philip Klingensmith. Anna Jean Backus. Arthur H. Clark Co., 1995, hb, 302 p., \$32.50.

From birth to Nauvoo life to western pioneering, "then on to the Mountain Meadows Massacre and the torment of its aftermath," Klingensmith's life is "cinematically drawn from letters, trial testimony, journals, and diaries."

Winter Quarters: The 1846-1848 Life Writings of Mary Haskin Parker Richards. Ed. Maurine Carr Ward. Utah State University Press, 1996, hb, 336 p., \$29.95.

The Mormon flight from Nauvoo, trek across Iowa, and life in transitional Missouri River villages, as well as women's crucial part in that society, are "vividly portrayed in these moving and detailed journals and letters."

HISTORY

California Saints: A 150-Year Legacy in the Golden State. Richard O. Cowan and William E. Homer. Religious Studies Center, BYU, 1996, hb, 452 p., \$15.95.

Today the Saints in California make up that state's second-largest "faith group." Their story is traced to the present from their 1840s beginnings as passengers on the *Brooklyn*, members of the Mormon Battalion, and gold-finders.

LIFESTYLE

The College Guide for Latter-day Saints: A Guide to U.S. and Canadian Colleges with Substantial Mormon Enrollments in LDS Church-Sponsored Religion Classes. Damon Murphy and Joseph Tombs. 1996, Legacy Communications, large sb, 195 p., \$13.95.

Each of over 180 institutions is briefly described along with information about admissions, tuition, and other costs; LDS faculty and enrollment; area attractions; local Church information; and the LDS institute address, faculty, facilities, and activities.

Spirits in the Leaves. Jerry Johnston. Signature Books, 1996, pb, 69 p., \$9.95.

This experienced essayist "mixes comedy, suspense, and pathos in equal measure. But in subtle, more powerful ways, he unravels life's spiritual dimension."

POETRY

Picture Window: A Carol Lynn Pearson Collection, From the Beginning to the Present. Gold Leaf Press, 1996, hb, 201 p., \$16.95.

A popular writer's "best-known and best-loved works have been compiled under one cover: alphabetized, categorized, and cross-indexed so you can find the one you want in seconds . . . nearly two hundred favorites."

SCRIPTURE

Quest for the Gold Plates: Thomas Stuart Ferguson's Archaeological Search for the Book of Mormon. Stan Larson. Freethinker Press in association with Smith Research Associates, 1996, hb, 305 p., \$24.95.

Ferguson's life is traced from his early Book of Mormon studies and promotion of architecture, through his growing doubts and then his disillusionment about both the Book of Mormon and book of Abraham, and into his final years as a closet unbeliever.

THEOLOGY

The Teachings of George Albert Smith. Ed. Robert and Susan McIntosh. Bookcraft, 1996, hb, 204 p., \$14.95

Taps Smith's *Sharing the Gospel with Others* as well as periodicals and manuscripts to reflect "the depth of his testimony and the breadth of his experience" as apostle and president.

The Teachings of Harold B. Lee. Ed. Clyde J. Williams. Bookcraft, 1996, hb, 678 p., \$24.95.

Of the first fourteen Church Presidents, only Lee lacked an "official" compilation of teachings. Williams "gleaned from nearly five hundred published and unpublished sources" to do for Lee what he previously did for Lorenzo Snow.

Expressions of Faith: Testimonies of Latter-day Saint Scholars. Ed. Susan Easton Black. Deseret Book, 1996, hb, 250 p., \$15.95.

Twenty-four accomplished testators from such fields as English, government, history, law, math, philosophy, psychology, and religion.

O N T H E R E C O R D

THE NEGLECTED STORY OF MORMONISM TODAY:
WHAT MIKE WALLACE MISSED

By Jan Shipps

A shorter version of this essay and the accompanying sidebar on the RLDS church originally appeared in the *Christian Century*. Jan Shipps is the author of *Mormonism: A New Religious Tradition*; her most recent publication is *The Journals of William E. McLellin* (University of Illinois Press). Copyright 1996, The Christian Century Foundation. Reprinted by permission from the August 14–21 issue of the *Christian Century*.

AN INTERVIEW WITH Gordon B. Hinckley, President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was the nucleus of a warm and sympathetic *60 Minutes* Easter feature dealing

with the form of Mormonism that is headquartered in Salt Lake City. Correspondent Mike Wallace opened the segment with the news that members of the LDS church, now the seventh-largest church in the nation, are entering the mainstream. Then he pointed to the many demands the church headed by President Hinckley makes upon its members and, without saying anything about the level of response, declared that being a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a lifestyle as well as religious choice. By placing the spotlight on President Hinckley (whose skill in dealing with the media is awesome), the program also made

the point that the Church is currently being led by a vigorous, competent, and attractive administrator.

Other *60 Minutes* segments aired in the past several years have reflected negatively on the LDS church. With its implication that being Mormon is increasingly acceptable, indeed admirable, in the eyes of the U.S. public, the popular CBS television show reversed itself, broadcasting a very positive assessment of the Saints. Properly so. Much about the program's depiction of Mormon culture, its wholesomeness and normality, was right on the money.

Yet by using so much of the

segment to illustrate that Latter-day Saints are, as President Hinckley said, "not weird," *60 Minutes* missed at least two significant matters that are critically important to the story of Mormonism today. As is suggested by a recent change in the Church logo, one of these is the attention the Church is currently directing to the Christian dimension of its complex theology, a dimension that in times past was often engulfed by other much more idiosyncratic LDS doctrines and practices. The other matter of consequence is not simply the massive growth and geographical dispersion of Church membership in the past half century, but the extraordinary changes these

EXCERPTS FROM THE 60 MINUTES INTERVIEW
WITH PRESIDENT HINCKLEY

STEVE BENSON: The cultural mind-set in the Church is when the prophet has spoken, the debate is over.

MIKE WALLACE: And the prophet is?

BENSON: Gordon B. Hinckley would be the prophet. When he has pronounced the Church's position on any issue, it is incumbent upon the members of the church to pray, pay and obey.

GORDON B. HINCKLEY: Well, that's a clever statement from Steve, whom I know. Now, look, our people have tremendous liberty. They're free to live their lives as they please.

WALLACE: Are they? Really?

HINCKLEY: Oh, absolutely. Surely. They have to make choices. It's the old eternal battle: the forces of evil against the forces of good.

WALLACE: Blacks could not become priests in the—in the Mormon church, right?

HINCKLEY: That's correct.

WALLACE: Why?

HINCKLEY: Because the leaders of the Church at that time interpreted that doctrine that way.

WALLACE: Church policy had it that blacks had the mark of Cain. Brigham Young said, 'Cain slew his brother and the Lord put a mark upon him, which is the flat nose and black skin.'

HINCKLEY: It's behind us. Look, that's behind us. Don't worry about those little flicks of history.

WALLACE: Skeptics will suggest, 'Well, look, if we're going to expand we can't keep the blacks out.'

HINCKLEY: Pure speculation. (Footage of black man at podium; woman in a pew holding a child)

WALLACE: (Voiceover) Now that blacks can be priests, the current issue is whether Mormon women will ever be priests.

HINCKLEY: Men hold the priesthood in this church.

WALLACE: Why?

HINCKLEY: Because God was—stated that it should be so. That was the revelation of

the church. That was the way it was set forth.

(Footage of church service; children in the church)

WALLACE: (Voiceover) Fact is most Mormon women don't want to be priests. They accept that men control the Church and dominate Mormon society. And this has triggered complaints about how the church handles child sexual abuse. Child abuse among Mormons is surely no greater than among non-Mormons, but a study has found that many Mormon women who went to their clergymen for help believe the clergy were just not sympathetic.

A sociologist tells us that the root of the problem is the fact that men, in effect, in your church have authority over women so that your clergymen tend to sympathize with the men, the abusers, instead of the abused.

HINCKLEY: That's one person's opinion. I—I don't think there's any substance to it. Now there'll be a blip here, a blip there, a mistake here, a mistake there. But, by and large, the welfare of women and children is as seriously considered as is the welfare of the men in this church, if not more so.

(Close-up of "Responding to Abuse: Helps for Ecclesiastical Leaders")

developments have engendered.

For many years, this organization identified itself with a four-line typographical emblem in which the key words ("Church," "Jesus Christ," "Latter-day Saints") were all printed in the same size type. Just in time for last year's Christmas season, that logo was replaced by one only three lines long. In small print, the first line reads "The Church of;" the second, in print almost three times as large, says "Jesus Christ," and the third, again in small print, reads "of Latter-day Saints." Accompanying the changed logo, a news release made it clear that, at least from the official standpoint, the "Mormon Church" is an out-moded nickname. The official choice is that descriptions of the institution should clearly indicate that it is the "church of Jesus Christ." If further differentiation is needed, the preferred modifier is "Latter-day Saint." All this reflects a linguistic change that has been occurring in recent years. Rather than speaking of themselves simply as Mormons, Latter-day Saints increasingly refer to themselves as Christians.

Where once it was a noun, "Mormon" is becoming an adjective, as in "Mormon Christianity."

While often accompanied by emphasis on the importance of studying the Book of Mormon and participating in temple ceremonies (religious exercises unique to Latter-day Saints), current Latter-day Saint emphasis on the Church as the Church of Christ is modifying Mormonism. Rather than simply speaking of "the Gospel" and leaving the rest implied, Saints now nearly always make it absolutely clear that they are referring to the gospel of *Jesus Christ*. They also constantly remind people that the Book of Mormon is "Another Testament of Jesus Christ," an official subtitle given to the work in 1982. In addition, where a preponderance of the historical and theological articles in the *Ensign* and the *LDS Church News* once dealt with such distinctives as the Prophet Joseph Smith, the First Vision, modern revelation, and various incidents in LDS history, it is increasingly likely that the focus will be on the stories of Jesus and early Christianity. Such changes are

making the Church and its people less distinctive than the movement was even twenty or thirty years ago. It is decisively less "peculiar" than it was in the nineteenth century.

When *60 Minutes* host Mike Wallace mentioned polygamy, President Hinckley dismissed that practice as a thing of the past. But change in the way Mormonism is lived goes far beyond the fact that plural marriage is practiced only by members of schismatic groups who are in no way connected to the LDS church. As the Church places greater and greater stress on the "Jesus Christ" part of its name and on the crucial significance of the Atonement to individual salvation, the long-established sense of peoplehood, of being a "peculiar people," seems to be losing some of its grip on the Saints. Fifty years ago being born Mormon was analogous to being born Jewish. But no more.

At the same time, the signs and tokens of the Church's truly distinctive theology—tiered heavens, proxy baptisms, the infinite persistence of personality embodied in the doctrine of mar-

riage for time and eternity, and endless progression toward godhood—are increasingly bundled into the concept of a temple-going people. And because LDS temples are sacred places, what occurs therein is also sacred. Consequently, it is private. As a result, Mormonism's unique rituals and the novel elements of belief they represent and symbolize are removed from public view. On the other hand, Sunday School, weekly sacrament meeting, and many other LDS venues are public. Other than more or less constant allusions to the Book of Mormon and frequent mention of LDS history, what happens in those settings does not differ significantly from what is said and done in the Protestant church around the corner. As a result, observers often get the impression that Mormonism is moving toward the religious as well as cultural mainstream. Latter-day Saint prominence in interfaith assistance in times of natural disasters and in dealing with hunger, homelessness, and other forms of human need undergirds this picture. All this is not only changing

WALLACE: (Voiceover) President Hinckley says the Church has been teaching its clergy how to handle abuse more effectively.

HINCKLEY: We're working very hard at it. There are cases. They're everywhere. They're all over this world. It is a disease. It's an illness. It's a sickness. It's a reprehensible and evil thing. We recognize it as such.

WALLACE: (Voiceover) Whatever their jobs, just being a Mormon is expensive. Mormons are expected to give 10 percent of their salary to the Church. Most of them, including Steve Young, say that's no sacrifice.

YOUNG: I don't really look at it as my money. You know, in my terms, it's the Lord's money, and I'd be, in—in effect, stealing from Him if I didn't do that.

(Footage of church members; chapels under construction)

WALLACE: The Church reportedly takes in several billion dollars a year and has never had a major financial scandal. Most of the money, they say, is spent building 375 chapels a year all around the world.

HINCKLEY: We're reaching out across the world. We're not a weird people.

WALLACE: A weird people?

HINCKLEY: Yes.

WALLACE: Mormons know that some outsiders think they are weird. Why? Well, for one thing, devout Mormons wear sacred undergarments for protection from harm, cotton undershirts with undershorts that reach to their knees.

Do you wear the sacred undergarments?

BILL MARRIOTT: Yes, I do. And I can tell you, they do protect you from harm.

WALLACE: Really?

MARRIOTT: Uh-huh. I was in a very serious boat accident—fire. The boat was on fire. I was on fire.

WALLACE: Mm-hmm.

MARRIOTT: I was burned. My pants were burned right off me. I was not burned above my knee. Where the garment was, I was not burned.

WALLACE: And you believe it was the sacred undergarments?

MARRIOTT: Yeah, I do, particularly on my legs because my—my pants were gone. My undergarments were not singed.

WALLACE: And do you think that the sacred undergarments have kept you from harm

on the football field?

YOUNG: I actually take them off to play football. The sacred nature of them—I find that the nature of football and the sweating and so forth—I actually take them off. And I think that's probably prevalent with athletics in the Church.

WALLACE: Really?

YOUNG: But my teammates have enjoyed it. When, you know, you're getting dressed and you're putting your garments on, they—they think they're pretty cool, a lot of them. 'Hey, where'd you get those?' And I'd always tell them they're way too expensive.

WALLACE: There are those who say, 'This is gerontocracy. This is—this is a church run by old men.'

HINCKLEY: Isn't it wonderful to have a man of maturity at the head, a man of judgment who isn't blown about by every wind of doctrine?

WALLACE: Absolutely, as long as he's not dotty.

HINCKLEY: Thank you for the compliment.

the way people think of the Mormons, but it is also changing the way Latter-day Saints think and talk about themselves.

These perceptions were at the heart of the *60 Minutes* piece. Without making any real effort to establish a context that might explain the transformation that has been taking quaint outsiders and turning them into cultural insiders, veteran reporter Mike Wallace put a familiar face on Mormonism by focusing on the appealing, grandfatherly countenance and charming manner of the current prophet-president of

the LDS church and on the clean-cut visages and temperate remarks of prominent Mormons: hotelier Bill Marriott, U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch, and football star Steve Young. Even the inevitable, token dissident, polite and well-spoken Steve Benson (who was not identified as a Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist) came across as an adult version of Andy Hardy being patronized by an affectionate uncle.

Although this demonstration of good-natured normality seemed somewhat out of character for a program best known

for hard-hitting investigative reporting, it made the cultural acceptability case effectively. But the presentation was also made somewhat misleading by inadvertently adding depth and heft to the oft-repeated but overstated charge that the essential character of Mormonism is both very male and very American. Both points were made visually and through the editors' choice of interviews included in the segment. The only featured female was a pretty, young BYU co-ed, and all the male Saints interviewed were U.S. citizens.

Wallace concentrated on particular Mormon practices that benefit health, restrain unwholesome sexual practice, and undergird family values. This was no surprise since these are staples of nearly every media portrayal of Mormonism. But they are by no means unique to this movement. Many health-conscious people avoid tobacco, alcohol, and caffeine, and nearly all conservative religious groups have similar positions on sex and family matters. In conjunction with the mainstreaming proposition, Wallace's descriptions of the Saints' refusal

THE RLDS STORY

Now a non-prophet organization

*"Now there was no smith found
throughout the land of Israel."*

1 Samuel 14:19

THE Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints headquartered in Independence, Missouri (the RLDS church) and the LDS church both derive from the Church of Christ organized by Joseph Smith Jr. and his followers in 1830. From the beginning, this body had two major claims to legitimacy as the true church. The Book of Mormon, described then and now as a supplement to the Christian canon of scripture, was and is critically important. In addition, a revelation given through Joseph Smith specified that the president of the church is likewise a "prophet, seer, and revelator." This provides the church with access to the mind and will of God. As a result, the principle of continuing revelation has stood at the core of the movement giving the churches that stem from it a heritage of adapting to change. If the LDS church is confronted by change generated by growth, the change the RLDS church faces comes from the other direction. In 1980 it had more than 350,000 members. Due to a schism over whether a 1985 revelation extending the priesthood to women truly reflects God's mind, plus some considerable dissatisfaction with the church hierarchy's decision to build a temple, the RLDS church now has slightly fewer than 250,000 members. Notwithstanding the diminution in the size of its membership, the leadership transition that occurred at the church's World Conference last April and other changes in the offing are of an entirely different and much greater order of magnitude. Whether the church will be able to adapt to them is still open to question.

The members of these two branches of the Mormon movement share an early history of suffering horrible persecution and, during Joseph Smith's lifetime, of repeatedly having had to assimilate newly revealed doctrinal tenets into the system of beliefs on which the church rested. Their paths separated after the prophet was murdered in Illinois in 1844. A substantial proportion of the Mormon community, including the prophet's mother, his brother, and his first wife and her children, chose to remain in the midwest while

Apostle Brigham Young, then president of the Church's Council of the Twelve, led a large group of Saints to the Great Salt Lake Valley. The western Saints established apostolic seniority as the avenue to the presidency of the Church. When the RLDS institution was "reorganized" in the midwest in 1860, Joseph Smith III became its head and Smith lineage became the key to RLDS church leadership.

In both churches, the route to the presidency became a matter of historical precedent. If the way to the top was not imbedded in doctrine, however, the role of the president as "prophet, seer, and revelator" is not only is doctrine, but has been doctrine since 1835 when it was so defined by revelation. Published as section 3 verse 42 in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, it is 104:42 in the current RLDS "D&C" and 107:91-92 in the LDS version of the work. Both churches accord scriptural status to this book.

In keeping with tradition established in 1860 when his eldest son succeeded the Prophet Joseph Smith as church president, from April 1860 to April 1996 the president's office in the RLDS church was filled by Smith's direct descendants. An explicit signal that all of these leaders have been prophets is a record of their exercise of their revelatory capabilities in addressing the need for changes in the presiding leadership of the church. The church presidents indicated the revealed character of the appointments they made by using personal pronouns to indicate God's intentions—e.g., "To fill this vacancy, I [i.e., the prophet] was instructed to present the name of 'my [i.e., God's] servant . . .'" After hearing the callings announced in conference by the Presidents Smith, the church was always asked to accept them as "the mind and will of God." Receipt of this acceptance meant that the callings would be accorded the status of revelation and added to the Doctrine and Covenants.

Unlike the LDS church, whose past presidents all died in office, in 1976 RLDS President W. Wallace Smith of the RLDS church retired with the title President Emeritus. This occurred after he announced that he had received a revelation that his son, Wallace B. Smith, should, after a two-year period of preparation, be ordained as president-prophet. Joseph Smith III had articulated a set of principles related to succession in the presidency in 1912, and these were all followed in this transition. The new RLDS leader was called by a revelation to the sitting prophet/president; the call was approved by a vote of the church; and those who conducted Wallace B. Smith's ordination were clothed with the proper authority to do so. As President Smith had designated his eldest son for the post, he had

to smoke, drink, participate in pre-marital sex, and so on simply intensified the fairly commonplace perception that Mormonism's adherents are super-Americans, similar in everything but "brand name" to members of the religious right in this country.

For the Latter-day Saints (and for those who wish to understand today's Mormonism) this is a problematic suggestion, not because Mormonism is not generally conservative, but because this religious and cultural movement is so much more. What was

by and large ignored by *60 Minutes* is the dynamic combination of Mormon practice and the LDS belief system, of the seen and the unseen, that establishes the identity of Latter-day Saints and sets Mormonism apart. During the extended interviewing that leads up to a television feature of this sort, President Hinckley undoubtedly talked of the Saints as a temple-going people and highlighted other Mormon distinctives, but the only singular LDS belief to which direct reference was made is the Mormon conviction that families can persist

throughout eternity.

The reason is obvious. Belief is both more difficult to describe and complicated to understand than is practice; it is also much more difficult to capture on videotape. Yet even in the arena of religious practice Wallace celebrated peculiarities that are not so very peculiar. He intimated that the Mormons' three-hour block of Sunday meetings is distinctive. Yet too many Christians, Jews, Muslims, and other religious people in the U.S. attend comparably extended weekly meetings for LDS Sunday obser-

vance to fit in the distinctive category. The same cannot be said about the benefit that young Mormon men and women render to the Church by serving proselyting missions. Young Unification Church members do something similar, but among Christian faiths, this creative program is truly exceptional. (In my opinion, the clip of President Hinckley's speech to a missionary assembly was the best part of the program.)

The most pertinent illustration of how difficult capturing religion on videotape is, even when

followed the rule of primogeniture.

In September 1995, after having served 20 years, President Wallace B. Smith directed a pastoral letter to church members informing them that he was being directed by the Spirit to appoint his successor. After noting that "the rule of primogeniture operates if applicable" President Smith quoted Joseph Smith III as having said that "the principle of lineage in the calling and choosing of a successor is important but not over-riding." Without making any reference to the fact that he had only daughters, President Smith moved over various cousins and direct descendants of Joseph Smith through a matrilineal line to designate as his successor W. Grant McMurray, a church historian who was serving in the First Presidency. On 16 April 1996, in accordance with direction to the Church that came through President Smith, McMurray was ordained as Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and president of the church and high priesthood. Indicating its inspired nature, the retiring president spoke for God saying that McMurray's ordination guaranteed "that prophetic guidance and vision may continue to be brought to the church through the ministry of my Spirit."

Perhaps it was to be expected that, without significant exception, media accounts of this transition would emphasize what President McMurray, with a chuckle, described in a recent interview as "the negatives." The most obvious negative is that he is not a Smith—is not even connected to the family by marriage. That the RLDS church has been actively emphasizing its heritage as the church of Jesus Christ, de-emphasizing its exclusive claim, and moving closer to Protestantism for almost a generation gives rise to the second negative. McMurray is leading a church of Latter Day Saints that doesn't seem to be very Mormon. While the church continues to identify itself as the "Reorganization," McMurray's accession seems certain to accelerate the move of the RLDS church away from Mormon tradition. This is a vitally important part of the story. If the press missed it, the minutes of the church's World Conference (available at <http://www.RLDS.org> on the Internet) make it clear that far more is at stake than the simple overriding of historical precedent in the matter of primogeniture. Subtle, yet unmistakable evidence, found both in what President McMurray did and what he said during conference, indicates that the new church president is seeking to turn the church he has been called to lead into what might be called a non-prophet organization.

First he announced his desire to move the church toward partic-

ipatory management. Then, eschewing the use of personal pronouns in his "Letter of Counsel Regarding the Presiding Quorums," he proposed a series of church appointments, simply indicating that it would "be in order to receive a motion approving the following changes." Although he declared that the announced callings reflected the convictions of his heart and the assurance of the Holy Spirit, and said that the change in procedure did not imply any difference in the spiritual significance of his appointments, church members were not asked to accept them as the mind and will of God. Moreover, departing from past practice, McMurray asked that the leadership changes not be included in the Doctrine and Covenants, reserving for the church's permanent canon of scripture "words of counsel that may have a more enduring purpose."

On Sunday, April 21, as the week-long conference drew to a close, the new president preached a sermon that brought what he had said and done during the week into focus, making where he intends to lead the church abundantly clear. Admitting that being ordained as prophet, seer, and revelator in this modern scientific age created in him "unimagined turmoil," McMurray skillfully limned a before-and-after scenario that at once showed how far the RLDS Church has migrated from the church that existed in the lifetime of the first Mormon generation and indicated where he believes it should be going. Noting that the church is distancing itself from its identity as "a people with a prophet," he issued a resounding call for church members to think of themselves—and to be—"a prophetic people." In a forthright discussion with me about his new position, Grant McMurray elaborated on his understanding of his duties and obligations. "Being prophetic," he said, "is a description of a *task* of leadership, not a *role*." Recognizing that there may be times when he will need to speak authoritatively, he prefers to think of himself as one responsible for articulating a vision for the whole church, a leader who can provide affirmation and spiritual direction.

However much it has moved toward Protestantism, to this point in its existence, the RLDS church has stayed grounded in the movement that was established by Joseph Smith. Even if it can adapt to the changes it confronts, will severing its lineage link to its first prophet destroy the church's bond with its past? If that move does not rupture the church's ongoingness with its history, the question of how long a church without a president who also embraces the role of prophet will stay connected to the Mormon tradition remains. Time alone will supply answers.

the producer has the best of intentions (as seems to have been true in this instance) is the section of the program that *60 Minutes* used to maintain its tradition of revealing something to the public that is not widely known. Here the revelation was the not entirely unfamiliar news that many Latter-day Saints wear special underclothing. Mike Wallace was obviously fascinated with this part of the Mormon story, especially as it became clear that some Mormons regard the wearing of their ceremonial garments as spiritual armor against physical harm. Unfortunately, however, the connection between the wearing of Mormon "garments," as they are called, and the covenants Saints make when they participate in the LDS temple ceremony in which they receive their endowments was entirely neglected. This made the wearing of garments seem vaguely superstitious and, as a bumper sticker for sale in Salt Lake City proclaims, tended to turn the Mormon culture region into "the land of the funny underwear."

Despite the talk of ritual undergarments, Mormon leaders were extremely pleased with the *60 Minutes* program. For all that, however, this program is the quintessential TV news magazine, and the news it supplied was by no means fresh. Growth in LDS church membership has been accelerating across the past half-century, and Latter-day Saints have been moving onto the U.S. cultural middle ground for several decades, long enough to have engendered a prize-winning study of the Mormon struggle with assimilation (Armand Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation*, University of Illinois Press, 1994). Moreover, being a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has always been a lifestyle choice. In reality, it is now less of a lifestyle choice than it was in the first half of the twentieth century, when being Mormon gener-

ally involved living in a distinctive enclave culture in which social pressure practically compelled fidelity to LDS lifestyle patterns. Certainly Mormonism is less a lifestyle choice now than it was in the bygone days when plural marriage was commonplace in LDS culture.

In addition to the Church's renewed emphasis on its Christian connection, the Mormon diaspora is the other part of the truly significant Mormon news. That Mormonism is an expanding proportion of the American religious pie is only the beginning of this part of today's LDS story. Another element of the story is that the LDS movement can no longer be characterized as a regional faith or even an American religion. Even though nearly a third of all U.S. Saints continue to live in Utah (whose population is 75 percent Mormon), and more live in other parts of the West than elsewhere in the U.S., the great bulk of Church members live throughout the nation and all across the world. Earlier this year, the Church crossed a demographic Rubicon: a majority of Church members now live outside the United States.

But there is more to the story than where the Saints live. From the time they settled in the valley of the Great Salt Lake, in 1847, to the end of World War II, the great majority of church members not only lived in the West, they also lived as a gathered people, in Mormon enclaves. But as the enclave pattern has not taken hold elsewhere, it is no longer normative, and it is increasingly difficult to pinpoint LDS areas since the residences of the scattered Saints are located in and among the homes of peoples of many different faiths. This means that for most Saints, the gathering is a Sunday affair. Mormons stay in close contact with their leaders in Salt Lake City, but historically that contact was face-to-face. Nowadays it most often comes through some form of electronic communication. In addition, despite geo-

graphical dispersion, members of local LDS congregations (wards) often develop into close faith communities. But there is no direct evidence to indicate that a greater level of intra-congregational association exists among Mormons than among Methodists, Baptists, Roman Catholics, or any other Christian group.

At the outset, followers of the Prophet Joseph Smith anticipated that theirs would someday be a worldwide church. After more than a century and a half, the LDS missionary program and the universalization of the LDS message that followed the 1978 revelation opening the LDS priesthood to all worthy males—including African Americans—are turning that expectation into reality. Salt Lake City is (and will remain) the heart of Mormondom, its historic center place. Mormonism's greatest strength is still in the Intermountain West, but the American church that Mike Wallace described on Easter Sunday is rapidly disappearing.

Mormonism stood neatly poised between past and future as 1996 opened. During the first week, Mormons joined other Utahns in celebrating the centennial of Utah statehood. Yet nothing President Hinckley said when he spoke about statehood in a centennial celebration held in the Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square suggested regret or even ambivalence about the

close of Mormonism's pioneer era. Although the alterations currently transfiguring this remarkable movement are hardly universally welcome, the LDS church is looking to the future. After all, following an inescapable period of adjustment, the era ushered in by Utah statehood allowed the Church to move forward from strength to strength. Its membership increased from 241,427 in 1896 to nearly nine and a half million at the beginning of 1996.

If all the new stakes and wards are, perhaps, not everywhere as robust as its leaders would like, the Church is nevertheless organized virtually across the world. Significantly, moreover, temples are also being built across the globe, allowing Church members everywhere to participate fully in every aspect of LDS life. Traditional Mormon nomenclature would describe what has happened this way: a new era is at hand.

As eagerly as any other form of the tradition that began 2,000 years ago, Mormon Christianity is anticipating the opening of the new millennium. The members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who await that new day can look backward across the past quarter-century and detect an institutional metamorphosis that is carrying Mormonism into a new phase of existence. This is the story that *60 Minutes* missed. ☐



"I'm old fashioned, Lynne, my first kiss will be over the altar."

NEWS

CHURCH MAKES SUBTLE CHANGES IN
TEMPLE RECOMMEND INTERVIEW

THE TEMPLE recommend interview has evolved over the years, adapting to a dynamic, growing church and its members. Sometimes alterations have been substantive; these recent changes, however, are interesting but slight.

• The former first question, "Do you believe in God, the Eternal Father, in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost; and do you have a firm testimony of the restored gospel?" is now three different questions: "Do you have faith in and a testimony of God the Eternal Father, His son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost?"; "Do you have a testimony of the Atonement of Christ and of His role as Savior and Redeemer?"; and, "Do you have a testimony of the restoration of the gospel in these, the latter days?"

• The former second question, "Do you sustain the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the prophet, seer, and revelator; and do you recognize him as the only person on the earth authorized to exercise all priesthood keys?" now also includes: "Do you sustain members of the First Presidency

and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as prophets, seers and, revelators?"

• While the apparent trend has been to make recommend questions more specific, less open to semantics and loopholes, one puzzling change accomplished the opposite: a question that previously read, "[If divorced or separated,] are you current in your support payments and other financial obligations for family members, as specified by court order or in other written, binding commitments?" now reads, "[If divorced or separated,] are you current in meeting financial and other obligations?"

• The question "Do you wear the authorized garments both day and night?" now includes, "... as instructed in the endowment and in accordance with the covenant you made in the temple?"

• While only amounting to a word or two, there were other interesting changes: "in every way" has been cut from "Do you consider yourself worthy in every way to enter the Lord's house . . .?"; "and earnestly" has been omitted from "Do you earnestly strive to do your duty in the Church . . ."

RUSSIAN SECOND-IN-COMMAND HAS
HARSH WORDS FOR MORMONS

IN JUNE, Alexander Ledbed, the head of Russia's National Security Council, called the LDS church "mold and filth which have come to destroy the state" and said that "there is no place for them in our land. They should be outlawed." President Boris Yeltsin's second in command sparked a miniature international incident by saying that, as well as with his omission of Judaism from the three religions he thinks should be al-

lowed in Russia—Russian Orthodox Church, Islam, and Buddhism.

U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns called Ledbed's statement "offensive and deeply disturbing." President Clinton, at the G7 summit in France, said that he "had a very negative reaction to the remarks."

Several senators, including Orrin Hatch and Bob Bennett of

Utah, expressed their outrage in letters to Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, and the Russian ambassador to the U.S., Yuliy Vorontsov. They also sent another to Brian Atwood, administrator of

the U.S. Agency for International Development asking him to review aid to Russia. Bennett told the Senate that religious intolerance is the first step leading back to totalitarianism and that not listing Judaism as an acceptable religion was "an outrageous statement from a nation that has been the source of some of the most virulent anti-Semitism the world has ever seen."

A few days later on 2 July, Ledbed apologized for his criticism of Mormons but reiterated his stand on opposing foreign religions as well as foreigners in Russia. Ledbed said in his apology, "I didn't want to offend anyone. I apologize." Then when asked about the reaction to his comments, he stated, "The poor



NONE ITEM: RUSSIAN NATIONALISTS WANT TO KICK OUT MORMON CHURCH

Mormons."

Don LeFevre, the LDS church spokesperson, stated that he appreciated the apology but still didn't think Ledbed understood that LDS church members are law abiding and do many good works in Russia. LeFevre said he looks forward to giving Ledbed the accurate information about Mormons.

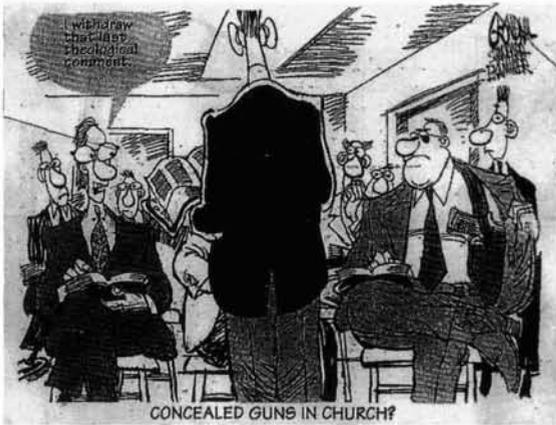
All of this occurred during the Russian presidential election campaign, and many Russians are attributing his remarks to campaign rhetoric. However, they are still a little concerned. Many Russian Latter-day Saints didn't take everything Ledbed said seriously, but they aren't passing it off lightly even if it is just campaign rhetoric.

MORMON MEDIA IMAGE

PIONEER WOMAN ENSLAVED
BY THE INDIANS

THE OCTOBER 1995 issue of *American History* features an article called "The Ordeal of Olive Oatman"—the story of a young, disaffected Mormon woman (she was part of a sect led by James C. Brewster, a visionary elder who had drifted far from the teachings of Joseph Smith) who was abducted by American Indians and held in slavery for several years. The narrative begins in 1851 with the Oatman family on a religious pilgrimage west toward California. They are attacked and after witnessing the murder of their family, Olive and another sister are taken captive. One brother, left for dead, miraculously survives. One sister dies of starvation in slavery, but, five years later, a brother rescues Olive.

UPDATE



UTAH LAW ALLOWS CONCEALED WEAPONS IN CHURCHES

A RECENT Utah law will permit carrying concealed weapons to church, schools, and businesses. Most churches are satisfied that their congregants will not feel the need to, though. But Scott Engen, of the Utah Shooting Sports Council believes it will make people safer to have the right to carry a gun in church.

Marlin Foster, the Episcopal Diocese spokesman, said, "If you feel the need to carry a gun to church, you need to reassess your attitude about going to church. In tradition and in some facts of law, a church is a sanctuary." The LDS church announced its own policy that weapons are not appropriate in church meetings.

COURT RULES CHURCH CAN KEEP TITHING AFTER BANKRUPTCY

A FEDERAL appeals court recently ruled that money given to a church as a tithe cannot be taken away, even when the people donating go bankrupt. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act protects the tithing money given by Bruce and Nancy Young to Crystal Evangelical Free Church in New Hope, Minnesota. While the church's pastor was happy with the verdict, the bankruptcy trustee's lawyer Richard Thompson was disappointed and may appeal. The ruling can have a major impact on the LDS church and many other churches who depend on tithing.

PRES. HINCKLEY ANNOUNCES NEW CHURCH MEETING HALL

IN THE April general conference, Church President Gordon B. Hinckley announced plans to build a new meeting hall in downtown Salt Lake City. The Tabernacle, which holds 7000, "is becoming increasingly inadequate" for the number of people who would like to attend general conference, President Hinckley said. The new meeting hall will be built one block to the north of Temple Square. The Temple Square complex will eventually encompass a 40-acre area, including the Joseph Smith Memorial Building to the east.

The meeting hall will be dedicated as a house of worship. It will hold not only religious services but also sacred pageants and commu-

nity events that are in harmony with its purpose. The hall will have a seating capacity of 18-24,000, and is designed to be partitioned according to the needs of different events.

DAVIS COUNTY HEALTH DEPT. INSPECTS BAPTISMAL FONT

DAVIS COUNTY, Utah, health officials say the Bountiful Temple baptismal font poses the same health risks as the Layton Surf 'N Swim and must undergo frequent inspection. Temple officials are complying, even though it is the only font in Utah to be inspected. This, according to some health officials, leaves the attenders of other temples at risk—thirty to forty people an hour use the average temple font. So far, all Health Department tests, which can be conducted only by officials with temple recommends, have turned up clean.

FEW DIVORCES IN POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGES, LDS SCHOLARS SAY

WHILE THERE are no reliable statistics, polygamists and scholars agree that the polygamous marriage divorce rate is much lower—perhaps around 10 percent—than that of traditional marriages—about 50 percent. "People go into [polygamy] knowing it's going to be hard," Mormon historian D. Michael Quinn told the *Salt Lake Tribune*. "With that expectation, they're in it for the long haul," he said.

Martha Sonntag Bradley, author of *Kidnapped From That Land: The Government Raids on the Polygamists of Short Creek*, told the *Tribune* that despite the inherent hardships, most of the plural wives she interviewed were happy. Many said they enjoy significant relationships with their sister wives and feel a strong sense of "corporate identity." What it comes down to is, "If you end up with a decent man, it seems to work," Bradley says. "But if the husband is patriarchal, authoritarian, and cold-hearted, it can make a whole bunch of people miserable."

Some say polygamy can also be difficult for men: Quinn has interviewed many who have to work two or three jobs to provide for their large families. "And even then, the families don't have a lot," he told the *Tribune*. Estimates of the number of polygamists living in the West range from 10,000 to 30,000.

PRES. HINCKLEY DEDICATES CAMBODIA FOR PROSELYTING

IN A PRACTICE dating to the earliest LDS missionary journeys abroad, Church President Gordon B. Hinckley, in May, offered a prayer in Cambodia dedicating the country for missionary work. Accompanying President Hinckley for the dedication, which took place on a hillside facing the Mekong River in Phnom Penh, were ten full-time missionaries who are assigned to that area. The visit was



Historian D. Michael Quinn says people go into polygamy knowing it's going to be hard.

part of a fourteen-city, fifteen-day tour of eight Asian countries that included the dedication of the temple in Hong Kong, the *Deseret News* reported. Thirty years earlier, President Hinckley had offered a similar prayer dedicating what was then South Vietnam for proselyting.

VA LDS TEACHER KILLS HIMSELF AFTER BEING FIRED

IN PRINCE WILLIAM County, Virginia, Darin Jensen, an LDS high school teacher, shot himself after learning he had been fired. Jensen had been suspended in April after he had failed to report a class video a student had made which showed a girl getting ready for school, including a three-second shot of her without a shirt on. Jensen said the video wasn't lewd, telling the *Fairfax Journal* that, "I'm a Mormon, and I would have been offended if it was really lewd." He also had told others that he was depressed because of marital problems and had spent time in a psychiatric hospital after he had been suspended.

TENNESSEE TEMPLE SITE FACES COMMUNITY OPPOSITION

IN TENNESSEE, the LDS church is suing the city of Forrest Hills over its refusal to change the zoning around the site chosen for a temple. "We feel [the city council members] are involved in a First Amendment violation because they are refusing to rezone the site," Alan Erb, the head of the temple site search committee, told BYU's

Daily Universe. Erb did say, though, that the council's move was in no way related to religious prejudice. The rezoning was denied because of three main objections: inconsistency with the character of Forrest Hills, potential traffic problems, and the failure of the temple to be available to members of the community.

IDAHO MURDERER CLAIMS "BLOOD ATONEMENT" INFLUENCED SENTENCE

THE SO-CALLED blood atonement LDS doctrine was in the news during the Idaho trial of James Wood, who was convicted of killing an eleven-year-old girl. The *Idaho Falls Post-Register* reported that the Mormon belief in blood atonement is what led a Mormon judge to sentence Wood to death and the Mormon defense attorney to give ineffectual counsel. The Church said it had no involvement with the case and that blood atonement—paying for a murder with the killer's own blood—is not an LDS doctrine.

Wood was raised Mormon but had become inactive. He had recently joined the Southern Baptist church. Nonetheless, after he was found guilty the LDS church excommunicated him.

"BYU" VA TO OPEN IN SEPTEMBER

IN A MOVE to help LDS college-age students in the East, two businessmen, Glade Knight and Roger Barrus, recently bought Southern Virginia College with the intention of creating a BYU-like atmosphere there. The school, formerly a small, liberal arts college, will remain

Church to Buy Heating Plant. The Church is re-purchasing a steam-heating plant from Utah Power, a move that will save the Church 20 percent on its heating bills. The Church, currently the plant's only customer, built it in 1910 to heat the Hotel Utah.

Huntsman Offers Use of Jets to Church. Utah industrialist Jon Huntsman is allowing Church general authorities to use his two \$20 million jets to help alleviate the cost and time burdens of frequent travel. One of the Gulfstreams, which costs about \$2000 an hour to operate, was recently used to fly Church President Gordon B. Hinckley to Madrid for a temple groundbreaking ceremony.

Ricks Rejects 2200 Applicants. Ricks College, Rexburg, ID, like its parent Church-sponsored school, BYU, is becoming more and more elite. This year, 2200 of 6500 applicants were turned away, and the freshman grade point average has risen to 3.36. The two-year college's enrollment cap is 7500.

Cokeville Bombing's Ten-Year Anniversary. May 15 marked the ten-year anniversary of the Cokeville, WY, Elementary School bombing. David and Doris Young took the elementary school's students hostage for two-and-a-half hours, demanding two million dollars for each one and threatening to blow them all to a "brave new world" where he ruled. When he went out of the room, his wife accidentally set the bomb off. The Youngs were the only



Church-owned Ricks College turned away 2200 applicants this year.

ones who died, although seventy-nine children were injured.

Town members told reporters when they came to interview them for the anniversary that they really only want to be left alone now, that every time people come asking about the bombing, it only brings back old nightmares and fears. School psychologist Nohl Sandall said, "When the twentieth anniversary comes up, let's ignore it."

Religion an Issue in WA Gubernatorial Race. In the Washington gubernatorial race, Mormon Republican

candidate Pam Roach says her opponent, Ellen Craswell, bashed her religion. Roach says Craswell supporters called people to tell them that Mormons aren't Christians as well as handed out anti-Mormon pamphlets at caucus meetings. Craswell, who is backed by the Christian Right, denies it, saying that she wanted to keep religion out of the race. One of her supporters, Jim McIntyre, said he was just trying to "speak out for the truth," by handing out the pamphlets. Craswell said that she respects Roach and her religion and that she told everyone in her campaign not to say negative things about Roach or any other candidate.

Mormon Temple in Mexico Denied Permit. The LDS church was denied a permit to build in Mexico the largest LDS temple. The temple was planned for the mostly Catholic San Pedro Garza Garcia (Mexico City) neighborhood where many of the residents were worried about possible problems with polygamy. They collected thousands of signatures against the proposed temple.

PEOPLE

TRANSFERS

• **Carlos E. Asay**, former president of the Seventy, has been called, along with his wife Colleen Webb, to preside over the Salt Lake Temple. With Elder Asay's release, Elder L. Aldin Porter will become the senior member of the presidency of the Seventy.



Elder Carlos Asay

• **Rodney H. Brady**, former president and chief executive officer of Bonneville International Corp., has been named the president and CEO of Deseret Management Corp., the holding company that oversees Church-owned commercial businesses. He succeeds Elder Merrill J. Bateman of the Seventy, who now serves as the president of BYU.

• **Jane Clayson**, star BYU broadcasting graduate, has left the Church-owned KSL-Channel 5 to report for

ABC's New York-based 24-hour news network.

• **Robert H. Garff**, Utah mega-auto dealer, was named chairman of the board of Deseret Book Co. in March 1996. He succeeds Apostle Russell M. Ballard who resigned as part of the new Church policy that general authorities will no longer be part of boards besides BYU's.

• **George Stewart**, the unpopular Provo LDS mayor who tried to bar the use of city recreational facilities on Sundays, has announced that he will not seek re-election. In celebration, more than 400 Utah County residents hung signs in windows and cars applauding the dethroning of "King George," the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported.

• **Michael "J" Stapley** will be succeeding Merwin U. Stewart as the president and chief operating officer of Deseret Mutual Benefit Administrators, the Church's insurance company. Stewart, now the company's chairman, succeeds Bishop Richard C. Edgley.

• **Earl C. Tingey**, former president of the Utah South Area and assistant executive director of the Church Missionary Department, has been called to serve in the presidency of the Seventy.

AWARDS

• **Alan Ashton**, co-founder of WordPerfect Corp. and former BYU professor, was recently honored as the Church-owned Ricks College Business Leader of the Year.

• **BYU's** Model U.N. team placed in the top five following the recent 1996 national competition in New York City. BYU is used to success: over the last four years—BYU started competing only eight years ago—the 52-member teams haven't failed to crack the top ten.

• **Louise Degn**, University of Utah assistant professor of communication, and **Marie Cornwall**, BYU professor of sociology, recently won a nationwide Best of Show award from the Foundation of American



Marie Cornwall

Women in Radio and Television for the video, "Utah Women Considered: Changing Lives, Changing Times."

• This summer, LDS Church President **Gordon B. Hinckley** was given the Golden Plate Award by the American Academy of Achievement for his public service work.

• **Marjorie Pay Hinckley**, wife of Church President Gordon B. Hinckley, was recently honored with BYU's 1996 Exemplary Womanhood Award, the highest honor students can give.

• The **LDS church** recently received an Emmy in Arizona for a public service announcement called "Rise Above the Blues," which is part of the youth-oriented, Church-produced television program *Center Street*.

• The **LDS church** was the recipient of 1996's Utah Symphony Corporate Council Maurice Abravanel Award for its outstanding service and leadership in behalf of the Utah Symphony.

• The **LDS church** was recently given the American Planning Association's 1996 Planning Landmark Award for Joseph Smith's community blueprint "Plat for the City of Zion." University of Utah urban planning professor Eugene Carr nominated the 163-year-old document for the award.

• **Mark Schultz**, BYU wrestling coach, recently won the Ultimate Fighting Championship IX title by bloodying a Korean martial arts expert to the point where referees wouldn't allow him to continue. The rules of the UFC are simple: "There's no eye gouging, no biting, but everything else goes," Schultz told the *Daily Universe*. "You can break his bones or punch him as hard as you want."

DEATHS

• **Ray Combs**, 40, a Mormon comedian and former host of the popular game show "Family Feud," hanged himself earlier this summer.

• **Florence Smith Prows Cullimore**, 89, long-time temple worker and widow of the late Elder James A. Cullimore of the First Quorum of the Seventy, died 14 June 1996 of natural causes.

• **Lloyd P. George**, 75, former member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy, died 13 May 1996

• **David M. Kennedy**, 90, a former secretary of the treasury under President Richard M. Nixon and adviser to the Church's First Presidency, died of congestive heart failure 1 May 1996.

• **Glen R. McClure**, 61, former associate director of the Church Educational System's youth and family programs, died of a heart attack 8 June 1996.

• **Horace M. McMullen**, 83, logophile, reverend, Merrill Fellow at Harvard, and regular Sunstone symposium presenter, died 22 April 1996.



Elder Lloyd George

MISCELLANEOUS

• **Ron Lafferty**, convicted in 1984 of murdering his sister-in-law and niece, was found guilty again in April 1996 after a federal appeals court ruled that the former judge had erred in determining Lafferty's mental competency.

non-sectarian and not affiliated with BYU, but with dorm set-up and honor and dress codes similar to BYU's. The students will also be required to give two hours of community service a week.

Although now a co-ed school, Southern Virginia College has been a women's college known for its writing and equestrian programs. Many of the old faculty and staff are staying on, though some in different positions. Most of the students are staying, though some decided to leave once the new standards were announced.

Knight and Barrus hope it will become an alternative to BYU and Ricks for those in the East. Enrollment is open for next fall, and the new dean of students, Barrus, is hoping to enroll four hundred students. The next issue of SUNSTONE will have a more complete report on the college.

UTAH EXECUTES CHILD KILLER BY FIRING SQUAD

JOHN ALBERT TAYLOR was executed 26 January 1996 by a firing squad in Utah for raping and killing an eleven-year-old girl. This was the first firing squad execution since Gary Gilmore's in 1977. It is also possible that it will be the last: state officials want to take the choice of how to die from the condemned and leave it to the discretion of the judge on the case.

Taylor said he wanted to be executed by a firing squad mainly to embarrass Utah and the LDS church (he claimed he was fulfilling the blood atonement doctrine). In response, Amnesty International and the American Civil Liberties Union are both pushing Utah to discontinue this outmoded form of execution.

LDS ATHLETE DENIED AWARD BECAUSE HE IS NOT "CHRISTIAN"

RECENTLY, AN LDS Tennessee high school athlete was denied the Athlete of the Year award on the grounds that he is not a "Christian." According to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, a national high school sports organization, Mormons do not qualify as Christians because they do not believe in the Trinity and other "fundamental differences in beliefs." Aaron Walker was to be given the award at a banquet, but about two weeks before it was held, he was notified that he would not receive it. He was elected to receive the award by his classmates. Walker and his friends decided to boycott the dinner.

SALT LAKE IS THE PLACE FOR POLYNESIAN GANGS

GANGS ARE one of the reasons Salt Lake took a violent tumble from the top of several "Best Places to Live" surveys. A May 1996 *Newsweek* article made several observations: young Tongans, Samoans, and other Pacific Islanders, "believed by some Mormon scholars to be members of one of the lost ten tribes," are joining the Church in droves—and then joining gangs just as quickly. Tonga is now roughly 45 percent Mormon. Samoa is about a third. And Salt Lake, which is 93 percent white, is now home to Utah Tongan Crip Gangsters, one of the largest and most notoriously violent Tongan gangs in the U.S. West. The situation disturbs and puzzles Church leaders like Elder Alexander Morrison. "We've got some kids who are believing, who say 'The church is important in my life, but I'm still in a gang'—I just weep for them," Elder Morrison told *Newsweek*. Some say, however, that the policy of organizing separate Tongan wards, rather than absorbing the immigrants into established congregations, has added to the alienation that makes gang membership appealing.

THE ALL-SEEING EYE

ADMIT IT: you've always wanted to know what Wilford Brimley's, Tom Brokaw's, Debbi Fields's, and the LDS apostles' houses look like. Well, now you can through *Utah Celebrities: A Guide to the Stars* by Boyd Payne (Telestial Books, a Signature Books imprint). A few general findings: a lot of stars own cabins or condominiums that are only used during Utah vacations; most of the apostles live in modest homes; and the most popular star site, by far, is Park City and Deer Valley. Here's a sample of the eighty or so celebrities featured:



Johnny Carson, long-time host of "The Tonight Show," owns a house in American Flag, Deer Valley.



Thomas S. Monson, first counselor in the Church's First Presidency, lives in Carter's Circle, Holladay.



Russell M. Nelson, member of the Quorum of the Twelve, lives in Normand Heights, Salt Lake City.

BYU DATE

BYU RE-ACCREDITED FOR ANOTHER TEN YEARS

TO THE surprise of exactly no one, BYU has been re-accredited for another ten years.

Actually, the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges didn't just re-accredit the university—it gushed. Noting “an impressive array” of graduates who occupy leadership roles throughout society, the committee said faculty, staff, administrators, and students “have an uncommonly pervasive . . . dedication to the institution's clearly articulated dual mission of excellence and service to the principles of [the LDS church].” Regarding the last few year's well-publicized academic freedom rifts, the committee found that the university's policies are consistent with the principles outlined in the *Accreditation Handbook of the Commission on Colleges*. (The report did note that there is a perception among some faculty members that BYU restricts academic freedom.)

If the report had a down side, it was the attention it gave to the university's burgeoning bureaucracy, sinking faculty morale, and lack of campus involvement in policy decisions: “There is an overabundance of administrative layers, confusion between staff and line functions, and a thick lattice of administrative arrangements that obscure core administrative systems,” the committee reported; morale problems are a result of the perceived dearth of academic freedom and a lack of upward mobility for some faculty and staff; and evaluators specifically recommended that BYU make substantial efforts to involve students in the formation of institution policies.

The committee was impressed with BYU's intercollegiate athletes'

average GPAs (3.2) and that the sports program is one of only five “high profile” national programs that has never had a major NCAA violation. Administrators were also commended for the professional manner in which they handle school finances.

PRES. BATEMAN, BOARD WANT TOP 10 ATHLETIC TEAMS

IN A MEETING this spring, BYU President Merrill J. Bateman made it clear just what he and the board of trustees expect out of BYU's athletes. “I want every one of your teams to be in the Top 10,” he is widely reported to have said. “That doesn't mean just twenty wins. It means being a Top 10 contender,” he said. Barbara Lockhart, BYU's faculty athletic representative said the meeting with President Bateman was “wonderful.” “He outlined his vision for athletes and said it is not only his vision, but the vision of the Board of Trustees,” she told *Cougar Sports Magazine*.

Cougar Sports and other sources reported that President Bateman said athletes can open doors that missionaries can't. This is one way we can fulfill not only the mission of the Church but the university, he said. Kennan Vance, a volleyball player, told *Cougar Sports* that President Bateman specifically mentioned gated Beverly Hills, CA, neighborhoods as areas the Church currently cannot go. “One of the ways we can get to these people is on television,” President Bateman reportedly said, “with a Top 10 team on ESPN every week, a Top 10 football team playing big-name schools each week.” “We want to do everything necessary [to have Top 10 and Top 20 teams] except compromise our standards,” he added.

Student Accuses Advisors of Bias. The first-ever female doctoral candidate in BYU's electrical engineering program has accused her academic advisors of “exploiting her work for personal and/or financial gain without regard for her academic progress.” In a civil-rights action filed in July 1996, Lisa M. Talbot said her dissertation proposals were “repeatedly rejected” even though some were eventually approved for development by male doctoral students, the *Deseret News* reported.



Academy Square will stand, for now.

Academy Square Library Idea Rejected. The latest proposal to save Academy Square have been rejected by the Provo City Library Board as too costly and full of problems. The plan to spend approximately 15–27 million dollars to put the library in the old buildings did not mesh with the library staff's ideas. They presented problems with parking, building access, and locating sections of the library for optimal supervision and aesthetics.

BYU Divorce Statistics Released. The divorced population of BYU students makes up 4 percent of the student body. As of last year, there were 111 divorcees attending BYU, a recent *Daily Universe* article reports. Of the 111, eighty-six were women and twenty-five men. Most are returning students with an average age of

over twenty-seven years old; the youngest is twenty.

Former Player's Lawsuit Against BYU Athletics Dropped. Bud Orr, a former BYU lineman, recently dropped his lawsuit against the BYU athletic department after U.S. District Judge David Sam severely limited its scope. He ruled that any witnesses that dealt with deficiencies in the program would not be allowed and the suit could not judge whether Orr would have had a professional career if

he hadn't been injured.

Proposed LDS Academies to Help Enrollment at BYU. In an effort to expand the opportunities of a BYU education to more Mormon youth, the board of trustees has investigated the possibility of satellite campuses in Europe, South America, and the U.S. The board is also looking into an expanded use of technology to get classes to people and trying to increase the number of afternoon and evening classes as well as bolster attendance at BYU.

BYU professor Kim S. Cameron told BYU's *Daily Universe* that, “The first reason is that BYU doesn't fulfill its destiny if it limits its enrollment to 27,000 students. BYU has a moral obligation to reach many students who cannot come to BYU.” President Bateman cautioned optimism saying, “nothing has been approved to date.”

NEW OFFICE TO FILL PROVOST DUTIES

IN JUNE 1996, BYU President Merrill J. Bateman announced that there would be no new provost to fill the vacancy left by Elder Bruce C. Hafen, now a member of the the Seventy. Instead, Elder Bateman has re-assigned the provost's duties to the academic vice president, the president, and a newly created Office of Planning and Budgeting. Elder Hafen, after being appointed by President Rex E. Lee in 1989, was the only person to serve exclusively in that second-in-command spot.

Among those staffing the new office are: Janet S. Scharman, former associate director of the BYU Counseling and Development Center, now vice president of Student Life and dean of students; Ned C. Hill, former chair of the BYU Department of Business Management, now assistant to the president for planning and budgeting; Cheryl Brown, former associate dean of the College of Humanities, now an associate academic vice president; and L. Robert Webb, associate academic vice president, now director of planning in the Office of Planning and Budgeting.

A W A R D S

Awarded at the joint meeting of the Mormon History Association in Snowbird, Utah, 18 May 1996.

MORMON HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Award for Best Book

MAUREEN URSENBACH BEECHER

Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow
(University of Utah Press)

Ella Larsen Turner Award for Excellence in Biography

MARY LITHGOE BRADFORD

Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, Counselor, Humanitarian
(Dialogue Foundation)

Steven F. Christensen Award for Excellence in Documentary/Bibliography

JOHN HALLWAS AND ROGER D. LAUNIUS

Cultures in Conflict: A Documentary History of the Mormon War in Illinois
(Utah State University Press)

Francis M. and Emily S. Chipman Award for Excellence in a First Book

C. MARK HAMILTON

Nineteenth-Century Mormon Architecture and City Planning
(Oxford Press)

BYU Women's Research Institute Award for Excellence in Women's Studies

MAUREEN URSENBACH BEECHER

"*Tryed and Purified as Gold: Mormon Women's 'Lives'*"
(BYU Studies)

Special Citation

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for their work in compiling *Mormon Americana: A Guide to Sources and Collections in the United States*
(BYU Studies)

T. Edgar Lyon Award for Best Article

ROGER D. LAUNIUS

"The Murders in Carthage: Non-Mormon Reports of the Assassination of the Smith Brothers"
(*John Whitmer Historical Journal*)

T. Edgar Lyon Award for Excellence in Mormon History

GLENN M. LEONARD

"Picturing the Nauvoo Legion"
(BYU Studies)

T. Edgar Lyon Award for Excellence in Mormon History

LAGA VAN BEEK AND MARIE CORNWALL

"The Mormon Practice of Plural Marriage: The Social Construction of Religious Identity and Commitment"
(*Religion and Social Order*)

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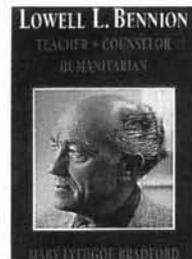
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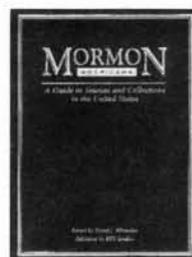


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THE MORMON UNIVERSE



Bushman to Speak on "Making Space For Mormons." Prominent Mormon historian Richard L. Bushman will present "Making Space for the Mormons: Ideas of Sacred Geography in Joseph Smith's America," 22 October 1996, 7:30 p.m., at the Utah State University's Eccles Conference Center. This is the second annual Leonard J. Arrington Mormon History Lecture.

Scholars Discuss Religion's Effect on America. Cleveland State University's Levin College of Urban Affairs is organizing an interdisciplinary conference on the impacts and contributions religious institutions have had on American urban life. Send abstracts to Patricia Burgess, The Urban Center, Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University, 1737 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, 44115; 216/751-1699.

Bilingual Publication on Canadian Saints Available. The Canadian Mormon Studies Association (CMSA) now offers *Canadian Mormon Studies*, a semi-annual newsletter in both French and English. CMSA also publishes an annual journal, *The Third Eye*. To subscribe, write 71 Lincoln Cross, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3M 3S6.

New Play Looks at Cannon's Trial. *The Raid and the Trial of George Q. Cannon*, an original play by Paul Larsen, can be seen at Kingsbury Hall at the University of Utah, 19 September 1996. For information, call 801/524-2753.

Mormon Churches Now on the Internet. The LDS church and several other Mormon churches are online. In February 1996, the LDS church activated a Web site at <http://www.lds.org>. It features news, official announcements, and basic information about the religion. The LDS Church News is available at <http://www.desnews.com/cn>; churchnews@desnews.com. The True and Living Church of Jesus Christ of Saints of the Last Days, based in Manti, Utah, has a Web page at <http://www.sisna.com/tlcmanti>; tlcmanti@sisna.com. The Web site offers an introduction to the church, a calendar of events, apostolic witnesses, and church texts. The Restoration Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has started a Web page at <http://www.execpc.com/~talossa/restoration.html>.

LDS Anthropologist Tours the Andes. David Knowlton, noted Mormon anthropologist and former BYU professor, is organizing two-week-long tours to Peru and Bolivia. Make reservations for October 1996. The cost is \$2,499, departing from Miami. For details, contact Knowlton at 517 West Capitol, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84103; 801/355-6645; knowlton@xmission.com.

Affirmation Meeting Announced. Affirmation: Gay and Lesbian Mormons' 1996 International Conference will be in Palm Springs 11-13 October 1996. For details, call 213/255-7251 or write P. O. Box 46022, Los Angeles, California, 90046.

BYU Newspaper Now Online. Brigham Young University's campus newspaper the Daily Universe now can be accessed through the Internet at <http://newsline.byu.edu>; the e-mail address for letters to the editor is letters@du2.byu.edu.

History Association Now Online. Mormon History Association

Members can now retrieve news, reviews, and information about Mormon documents at eMHA; online discussion of Mormon history is available at mormhist. To subscribe to either service, contact Arden Eby, arden@teleport.com. Also, to download Mormon history documents from an FTP site at the University of Utah, contact Scott Kenney, 801/222-7567; scottkn@wordperfect.com.

Iowa Mormon Trails Association Needs Support. In conjunction with the sesquicentennial of the beginning of the Mormon trails across Iowa, the Iowa Mormon Trails Association (IMTA) will be receiving a major grant through the Iowa Department of Transportation. To receive the full amount, matching dollars are needed. To help, please call Melissa Farrens, 515/347-8873.

CHANGES

- The new address for Pioneer Press is 3332 Ft. Union Blvd., Salt Lake City, Utah, 84121.
- The Society for the Sociological Study of Mormon Life (SSSML) has changed its name to the Mormon Social Science Association (MSSA).

ANXIOUSLY ENGAGED

Arkansas Members Aid Tornado Victims. Members and missionaries from the Fort Smith Arkansas Stake worked with the Red Cross to help the 500 to 600 people who were left homeless after a tornado ripped through that area. In addition to shelter and clothes, food from a nearby bishops' storehouse was donated to the Baptist Men's Cooking Club where over 1000 meals were prepared.

Church Now Has New Service Agency. Earlier this year, the Church stepped up its humanitarian efforts by creating Latter-day Saint Charities, an agency that is part of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), a worldwide fraternity of religious and secular efforts. Recently, LDS Charities used its NGO status to go where it couldn't before—Cambodia, to help victims of land mines and booby traps. Other NGOs include Catholic Relief Services, CARE, and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Nashville Saints Help Homeless. Over 150 members of the Nashville Tennessee Stake were part of a recent fund-raising walk sponsored by the Nashville Coalition for the Homeless. Money raised will help the local homeless, who have jobs, with housing deposits, utilities, and the first month's rent.

SUNSTONE CALENDAR

Sunstone Finally Embraces the Computer Age. Subscribers and friends no longer need to rely on so-called snail mail to contact Sunstone: our e-mail address is SunstoneUT@aol.com.

Dates Announced for 1997 Sunstone Symposium. Mark your Franklin Planners: the 1997 Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City will be August 6-9 at the Salt Lake Hilton. (Call 1-800-421-7602 for hotel reservations.)



SUN SPOTS

SWRM SURVIVALIST SEEKS SAME

AN ANONYMOUS reader recently sent us the following ad from the "Survivalist Directory," found in the August 1996 issue of *American Survival Guide: The Magazine of Self Reliance*. We have just two questions for that reader: What in heaven's name were you doing reading that magazine? and, How did the date go, because the singles scene out here has been a little slow . . .

ASG 0805
 Western Colorado. SWM, 22, LDS survivalist, seeking LDS female recently off mission or soon to be. As partners we can face the coming world chaos. I belong to a small LDS preparedness group now. Pro-Constitution, anti-NWO, pro-gun, patriotic and well prepared. All serious replies answered.

MICROSOFT TO ACQUIRE LDS CHURCH

THE FOLLOWING "news" brief was recently circulated on the internet: SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—In a surprise move that left competitors stunned, Microsoft has followed up its successful merger with the Roman Catholic Church by announcing a cash buyout of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In recent weeks, high officials of the LDS church (more commonly known as the Mormons) had been rumored to be in negotiations with both Novell and Lotus, but the Microsoft move came as a complete surprise to most industry/religious observers. With much of Microsoft's competition based in Utah, many current employees of WordPerfect and Novell commented (anonymously) that they would feel morally obliged to jump ship to Microsoft. Novell is countering by pointing to non-competitive clauses in senior personnel's contracts, and urging conversion to the Reorganized LDS Church, with whom Novell has entered into hasty negotiations. Microsoft officials denied any intent to pirate Novell employees with this move, though they indicated that they were willing to sell Novell their Eastern Rite Catholic subsidiaries to avoid anti-trust action. According to the official press release, Microsoft CEO and Pontiff Bill Gates said, "We've been hoping to acquire the Mormons for a long time. They're a fast growing organization with a large, mobile and highly dedicated sales force with which work synergistically with our worldwide Catholic retail outlets. More importantly, we're acquiring the LDS "convert-the-dead" technology which we will incorporate into OLE 3.0 (scheduled to arrive in the next versions of Windows and Windows NT, currently code named "Rome" and "Jerusalem" respectively)." Gates went on to say, "This will expand our user base to generations of users who never before had the chance to purchase Microsoft products." Microsoft insiders who declined to be quoted predicted record profits from requiring deceased church members to purchase annual upgrades in order to maintain their eternal salvation.

OXYMORMONS



AN OLIVE LEAF

“... plucked from the Tree of Paradise, the Lord's message of peace to us.”
(See History of the Church 1:316 and D&C 88.)

THE WEIGHTIER MATTERS

By Lowell L. Bennion

This essay originally appeared in the January–February 1978 SUNSTONE.

NEAR THE CENTER OF THE SALT LAKE VALLEY AT THE end of a picturesque lane lives a little lady of seventy-five in a two-room shack. Her house is heated by a coal range which has a broken grate and a big hole between the fire box and the oven that prevents her from baking. The pipe from the stove to the chimney has a large crack that releases smoke and soot into her kitchen. She heats water for dishes and a sponge bath on top of the stove. Since the drainage system doesn't work, she throws her waste water out the front door. Years ago, a leaky roof rotted away the bedroom ceiling and caved it in; so she now sleeps on the living room couch and looks up at another ceiling that is bowed towards her. The kitchen floor is covered with pieces of linoleum to cover up the cracks.

Her Social Security income is about \$173 per month, so she can't fix up the house herself. Her husband died 19 years ago, her only son eight years later. She has two daughters—one divorced with four children, the other chronically ill with six children and a husband of modest means.

Less than a block away stands an LDS chapel where the faithful meet regularly to praise God, to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, and to discuss the Lord's poor in priesthood quorums. A few miles to the east, other Saints live in luxurious homes with many bedrooms and multiple bathrooms.

While this woman's condition is extreme, it is not wholly unique. In the Salt Lake Valley, there are 58,000 persons over 65, 22 percent (about 12,000) of whom live below the Federal poverty level. They must go without food or heat or medical care to survive. How can these conditions exist in Zion?

Similar conditions were found in ancient Israel in the days of Amos (760 B.C.). Large class distinctions had developed, a few people becoming rich while many suffered in poverty. The wealthy had no regard for the plight of the poor but denied the poor their legal rights and sold debtors into servitude. Amos, in the fury of the Lord, lashed out against those who lived in luxury, indifferent to the suffering of their fellow Israelites.

“Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion, . . . That lie on beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David; That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: *but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.* (Amos 6:1, 4–6; emphasis added.)

The scene Amos describes might be compared to a ward dinner or social. The Saints are busy enjoying the food and entertainment, and they do not sorrow for the suffering of their brothers. Somehow these affluent Saints lack any concern for those beyond their eyesight who are in need. Perhaps the greatest modern convenience is the ability to

insulate against the poor—to assume either that there are no poor nearby or that some church or government program will take care of them.

There is a couple in their sixties in the south end of the Salt Lake Valley who have had neither teeth nor dentures for four years. They each have a pair of old misfit uppers they put in their mouths to go to funerals. The rest of the time they stay home, social isolates, surviving on soft and liquid foods. One set of dentures costs \$350, but the cost is not covered by Medicare. Most of the health needs of the elderly—tooth, eye, and ear care—are not covered by Medicare. Government programs are not the answer. The generosity of some physicians is not enough. Occasional fits of charity are not sufficient.

Another woman, an intelligent, cultured lady of eighty-three, lives alone in her comfortable Salt Lake home. She is not in need financially, but she is nearly blind. Just cooking a meal is difficult, even dangerous for her. After she has eaten, she worries that she has forgotten to turn off the stove. When she answers the door, she wonders if it could be an intruder. Once a voracious reader, now she is unable to read her mail, write a letter, or look up a number in the phone book. She sits alone hour after hour in a dark room reviewing her life again and again, trying to keep her keen mind from slipping into forgetfulness and aimless wandering. She longs for conversation. She would like to have someone read to her. Friends and neighbors are good to her, but their occasional visits make up only a small fraction of her waking moments.

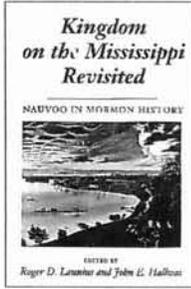
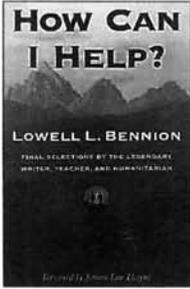
Yet Latter-day Saint youth in the surrounding area have time for skiing, shows, popular concerts, television and sports events. In church the list of announcements often includes fathers and sons' outings, Halloween and Christmas parties, even money-raising projects to finance a trip from Salt Lake to Disneyland. Seldom is a planned service project announced. It seems we are more often motivated by personal excitement and entertainment than by a sense of brotherhood or community.

In a village in Idaho a few years ago, my neighbor's haystack caught fire and burned to the ground. It was his winter's supply of hay to feed ten cows—his whole livelihood. Neighbors rushed to the scene, contained the fire with a bucket brigade, and saved his barn. Then they went home and each returned with a load of hay to rebuild their brother's stack.

Perhaps it is difficult in an urban society to reach out to the stranger, to the non-member as well as to the co-believer. But we must become personally involved. Our time and means are desperately needed, not only to build human relationships but to save the health and lives of the poor in our midst. Otherwise how can we escape the wrath of Amos or the condemnation of Jesus, who said in his day: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” (Matt. 23:23.) ☒

SUNSTONE MERCANTILE

Which book is best for the beach?



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foreword by Emma Lou Thayne, ~~\$14.95~~ \$13.50

Essays selected for publication by Brother B. shortly before he died. They represent his lifetime of remarkable contributions. The topics range from the dangers of perfectionism to the joys of service.

Kingdom on the Mississippi Revisited

edited by Roger D. Launius and John E. Hallwas, ~~\$16.95~~ \$15.25 paper; ~~\$36.50~~ \$33.00 cloth

Contributors provide 14 thoughtful explanations that represent the most insightful and imaginative work on Nauvoo published in the last thirty years. Topics include the Nauvoo Legion, the Mormon press, the political kingdom of God, the martyrdom of Joseph Smith, and the meaning of Nauvoo for Mormons.



Same-sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-Century Americans: A Mormon Example

by D. Michael Quinn, ~~\$29.95~~ \$27.00

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The authors show that the united order is not merely a historical curiosity, but has practical applications for our world today.

Faith and Intellect as Partners in Mormon History

by Leonard J. Arrington, ~~\$6.95~~ \$5.50

Arrington examines the lives of Joseph Smith, Eliza R. Snow, Brigham Young, George Q. Cannon, and Emmeline B. Wells to demonstrate the relationship between faith and intellect in the Mormon tradition.



Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation

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by John Hallwas and Roger Launius, ~~\$37.95~~ \$34.15

Desert Quartet: An Erotic Landscape

by Terry Tempest Williams, ~~\$18.00~~ \$16.25

Good-bye, I Love You by Carol Lynn Pearson, ~~\$9.95~~ \$9.00

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