

# SUNSTONE

MORMON  
EXPERIENCE  
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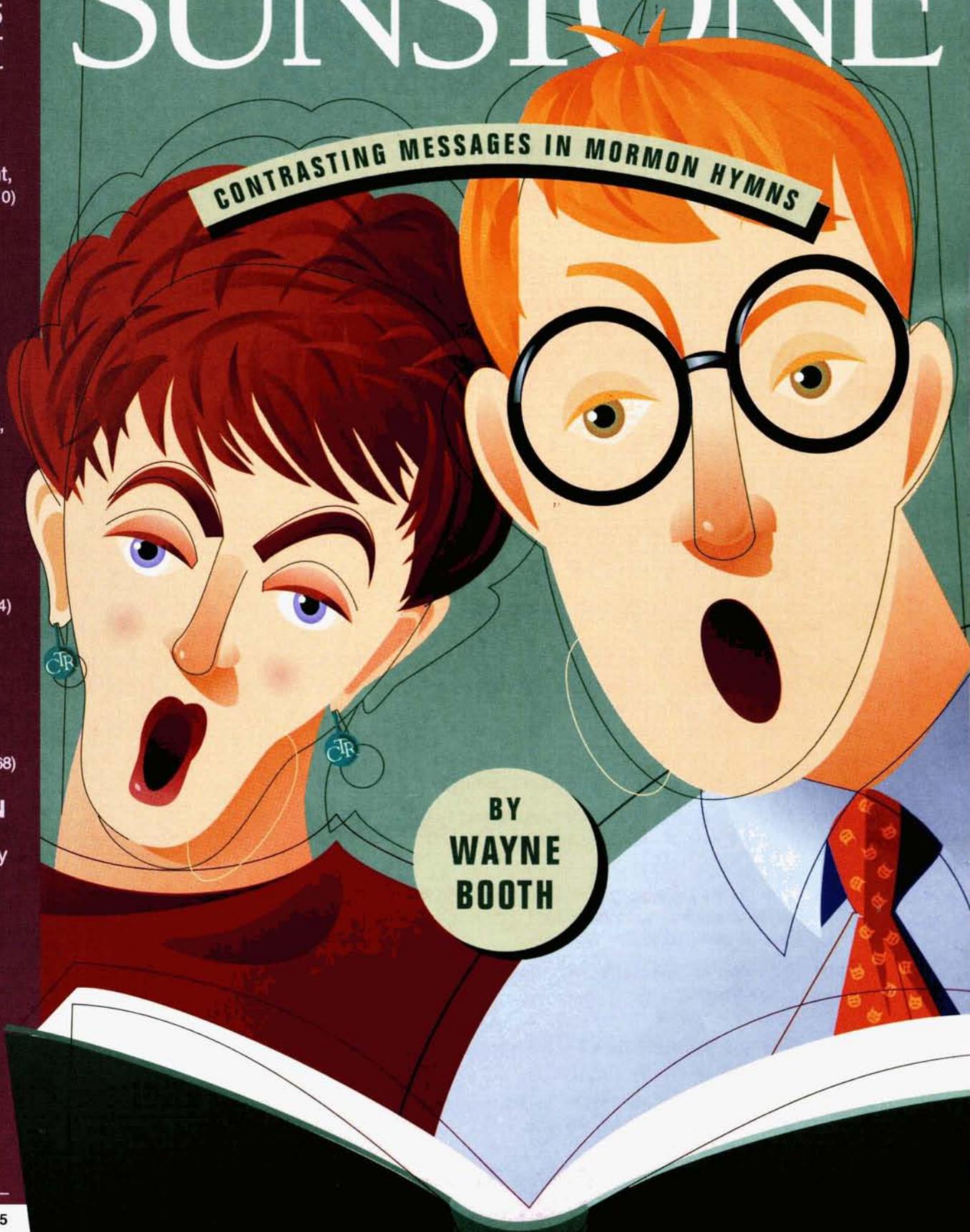
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**WAYNE  
BOOTH**



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# SUNSTONE

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Cover *Brian Bean*

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YEA, YEA  NAY, NAY



## WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

WHAT'S THE POINT of the Calvin Grondahl cartoon on the current cover (SUNSTONE Dec. 1998)? My friend says it's a mean-spirited attack on the Church—that all who vote in Church are a bunch of clowns. Is that so?

CRIS BJORN  
Palm Springs, Calif.

#### Editors' response:

According to the cartoonist, he intended to show that everyone—including the clowns—can be enthusiastic members of the congregation. Cal meant it as an affectionate statement on Mormon diversity.

Not everyone read the drawing that way, and in the next issue we'll feature a collection of short responses/commentaries by readers on what responses to the humorous drawing say about how humor functions in Mormonism and in Sunstone. We welcome submissions (<SunstoneUt@aol.com>).

## A WORLD SECT

THE circle-the-wagons-mentality portrayed in your account of the AAUP censure of BYU—a sad day in the history of a great center of higher learning in the USA and in the world—suggests that someone is imagining that James Buchanan is president and the U.S. cavalry is galloping to attack Salt Lake City ("Policing 'The Lord's University': The AAUP and BYU, 1995-98" by Bryan Waterman, SUNSTONE Dec. 1998). But the LDS church has made itself a world religion,

and it is time that the Saints acknowledge their own remarkable accomplishment. Even the first century and a half of Islam does not compare! The LDS church is behaving like a sect, but it is now a world church.

As a world religion, the LDS church would do well to learn the lessons that the Catholic church once had to learn and now teaches. The contrast between the U.S. Roman Catholic universities' record in the past half-century—enlightened, great-spirited, tolerant, and confident—with the same universities' record the century before tells the story. The Catholic universities chose to tell themselves the story of Catholic intellect embodied in the great tradition of criticism and inquiry, rather than the story represented by the narrow tradition of Inquisition and persecution. They have not weakened but have strengthened in the faith, taking pride in the example of the intellectual leadership, for all world religions, undertaken by Pope John Paul II.

From that perspective, the recent past of BYU hardly shows faith in the affirmation, "The glory of God is intelligence," which the LDS offer the world.

JACOB NEUSNER  
St. Petersburg, Fla

## SPECIAL NEEDS

I WAS SURPRISED to find in the January 18 Associated Press story, "Utah Agonizes Over Image-Tarnishing Olympic Scandal," the following statement:

Brigham Young stood before his embattled Mormon followers and spoke candidly of bribing federal officials "to grease the wheels."

"There is something in Mormonism that we're willing to make compromises politically to achieve what we want to do, and I can see Mormons doing that," says Elbert Peck, editor and publisher of SUNSTONE, an independent Mormon periodical. "I mean, we were willing to pay bribes to get statehood."

Since Peck's SUNSTONE affiliation is noted, I would be interested in an explanation.

There's no reference, so it's hard to catch Brigham Young's context, if he indeed made the statement. However it was spoken, such a comment in the context of the conflict that sharply aligned the Church and city against federal authorities in nineteenth-century Utah is an intriguing one.

Undoubtedly, the conflict was a lot more complex than Peck indicates and ultimately had a lot more to do with power than merely polygamy. Pulling Brigham Young out of that nineteenth-century battle with the feds and into the Salt Lake Olympics, like there should be some kind of "fit," is disturbing.

But more troubling to me, as a long time SUNSTONE reader and admirer, are the quote's implications: that bribery and Mormonism easily mix, or that Mormonism from its earliest times condoned bribery, or that for most Mormons the end justifies the means. Peck may have said much more in qualifying his statement, but as it stands, the quote is filled with "small-think," the type of stuff SUNSTONE, from its origins, has opposed.

J. MICHAEL CLEVERLEY  
Helsinki, Finland

Elbert Peck responds:

My quote in that story was selected from an hour's conversation with the A.P. reporter, but I did not supply him with the Brigham Young quote. Because he's a friend, I got

more chatty than I should have on the record. I apologize.

I was not misquoted. I do indeed feel that there is something in Mormon culture, at least in Utah Mormon culture (but not in official Church teachings), that does allow "good" Mormons to compartmentalize, rationalize, or overlook questionable actions, especially of their supervisors. Maybe it's Mormon pragmatism or our good follower skills.

But my single quote inaccurately conveyed my overall views. As I discussed in the rest of my A.P. interview, I don't believe the LDS church did anything unethical, nor do I think Mormonism *per se* had much impact in the Olympic bribery scandal. The dominant factor was a desire to get the Olympics, which was driven by business and civic leaders for economic reasons, and not by Mormons or the Church for proselyting reasons.

To the *small* extent that Mormon culture did play a role in the Salt Lake Olympic cam-

paign, I attribute that role to our desire to be taken seriously on the world stage, with our insecurities that come with that desire, which compounded the "don't-ask" inclinations we sometimes have.

But I understand the world's curiosity about whatever Mormon context there may be. It is to Mormonism's and Salt Lake's credit that we have such a reputation that these acts are such a big deal here. All this I said to the A.P., and more.

Whatever. The story wasn't about my opinions, so I don't fault the reporter for not quoting me more. Nevertheless, in his focus on the Mormon angle, I do think that he got the overall emphasis wrong, and I wince at being quoted in that context. I blew it.

## SPIRITUAL POLYGAMIST

WHEN LDS Church President Gordon B. Hinckley was interviewed on *Larry King Live* in September 1998, the discussion inevitably turned toward the subject





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of modern polygamy in Utah (SUNSTONE Dec. 1998). Again I heard the disclaimers I have been hearing throughout my short life:

... people mistakenly assume that this church has something to do with it. It has nothing whatever to do with it. It has had nothing to do with it for a very long time. It's outside the realm of our responsibility. These people are not members. Any man or woman who becomes involved in it is excommunicated from the church.

Despite such denials, a growing minority in the Church today are theologically polygamists. I refer to men who through divorce and subsequent remarriage are sealed to more than one living spouse simultaneously. Although these men may not live polygamy according to civil law, under the laws of the Church, they are spiritually polygamists. They live with the promise (or threat) that in the resurrection their plural wives will be sealed to them eternally.

I am among this group. After my mission, I went to BYU and fell in love with and married a beautiful young woman. Gradually, I realized that much was amiss in our relationship. Eventually, I learned that my wife was having a sexual affair with the missionary who had taught her parents. Realizing that our marriage was a sham, I filed for and received a civil divorce. I was so angry that I also asked my bishop for a cancellation of our temple sealing. After writing the required appeal to the First Presidency, I learned that my request had been denied. My sympathetic bishop took me into a room and broke the news to me. He said that my ex-wife had expressed remorse to her bishop and was not excommunicated. Furthermore, my bishop said that it was decided that the blessing of our temple marriage should remain with her until the time when she was ready to remarry in the temple.

I was greatly disappointed that my eternal destiny would remain tied to hers. I saw her as my spiritual "ball and chain." Over the next few years, I made two more attempts to get a cancellation but was turned down. Finally, I worked with her bishop to try to arrange the cancellation under the rationale that she had remarried civilly and wanted to be sealed in the temple. Since she

was never able to make herself worthy of returning to the temple, this request was also denied. Meanwhile, I met my true soulmate. We planned a marriage in the temple. It was hard explaining to my fiancée the many reasons she was to be my second wife in the eyes of the Church. She was understandably upset and concerned.

One week before our marriage, my bishop read a letter from the First Presidency requiring that males seeking subsequent remarriage in the temple need to undergo an extensive screening process. It is a lengthy procedure that takes six months. I ran up to my bishop immediately following the meeting. He told me the policy was not retroactive and would not affect my marriage that week. I was satisfied the Church was taking its silent polygamy more seriously. We, the future polygamists, would have to go through a screening process to check our backgrounds for abuse or abandonment. This made sense to me, although I was relieved that I had beat the deadline. My stake president had made me feel like a jerk for divorcing my first wife, and I was glad to avoid meeting with him on the issue.

Three days before my temple marriage, a temple worker phoned my fiancée and told her rather matter-of-factly that she needed to change her wedding plans since we could not get sealed. Can you imagine hearing that so close to your wedding? It was my darkest day since finding out about my first wife's adultery. I was being denied sealing because I had not gone through a process I had been begging someone to put me through for years! In a panic, I called all over Mormondom. Finally, after interviewing several of my former bishops, someone with authority gave us approval just a day and a half before our wedding. The ugly episode

cast a shadow over an otherwise beautiful ceremony. We were lucky. I found out later that some couples were denied sealing when they arrived for their scheduled marriages.

So there I was, not yet out of my twenties and sealed to two women. I had reluctantly become a spiritual polygamist. My situation prompted me to study the history of polygamy in the Church. I came to realize that under nineteenth-century policy, my ex-wife's children are considered sealed to me. The standard ecclesiastical answer to my queries on this issue continues to be, "let the Lord sort it out." While I wait for him, I still have not found any official renunciation of this policy.

As I get older, I meet many men in my situation. Most, like me, are embarrassed by our spiritual polygamy. We are hesitantly, and in some cases, unwillingly, participating in the Church's last grasp on this otherwise abandoned practice. We cringe when we hear our leaders claim that polygamy has no place in today's Church. We are modern-day polygamists.

I eventually gave up trying to cancel my sealing. I understand the sanctity of the temple sealing, and I also appreciate the Church's reluctance to break that covenant. Somewhere deep inside, I do understand that he who created the universe can fix my marital mistakes. But if the Church is going to create spiritual polygamists, shouldn't it also be up front about the policy? Although the Church no longer condones simultaneous civil marriage to more than one living partner, yet spiritually, a man can still be "married" to multiple partners. Please don't deny our existence—you created us!

NAME WITHHELD  
Texas

## KEEPING IN THE MAINSTREAM



We fit too many of the categories on the apostate profile, and so home schooling and food storage had to go. You know, I don't miss 'em at all.

## SILENT MAJORITY

WHEN I READ the letter from President Madison U. Sowell of the Italy Milan Mission (SUNSTONE, Dec. 1998), I was reminded of a comment reported to me by one of my missionary companions. During the "worthiness" interview prior to the mission call, my companion's stake president said, "I'm not going to ask you if you masturbate, because 50 percent of the boys I interview admit to the practice and the other 50 percent are lying." Based on the information in President Sowell's article, it would appear that 80 percent are now lying.

I haven't had contact with that former missionary companion since we parted company in Argentina, but the *Church News* once reported that he had been called as a stake president. My experience with him as a missionary suggests that as a Church leader he will treat masturbation with the same highly developed sense of humor he manifested during our mission. For example, I remember that as the straight-laced side of the pair, I was shocked by his comments like, "Her pants are so tight you can see a freckle on her butt." Of course, we both knew that it was against the mission rules to look at female butts, clothed or otherwise.

Another of my missionary companions confessed to me one day with great sorrow that he masturbated in the shower in the morning. I really don't remember what my response was as his senior companion, but it was probably not helpful. That same missionary later became a district leader, and then a zone leader. If, as a mission leader, he continued to spend that extra few minutes in the shower, I do not know.

Whether 50 and 80 percent represent true statistics or someone's off-the-cuff estimate, the reality is that such things as mas-

turbation are personal and private matters. And indeed, during the years the Church exercised oversight in certain sexual practices in the bedroom, does someone seriously believe that any significant number of couples "confessed" to their bishops about their favorite positions and fetishes? I believe that more and more, as President Sowell's statistics would seem to support, the attitude of even the most devout LDS is that anyone who asks about such things deserves to be lied to.

STEVE POWELL  
Puyallup, Wash.

## WHERE'S THE BEEF?

THE FACT that I thoroughly enjoy SUNSTONE from cover to cover—truly cool water to the thirsting—and am more grateful for it than I can convey scarcely weighs in your favor in the face of the serious transgression you have committed.

I refer to the Mormon Index column of the March 1998 issue:

- SUNSTONE Item: "Ranking of Church-owned Deseret Cattle Ranch among world's largest beef ranches: 1"
- SUNSTONE Item: "Number of acres encompassed by the Deseret Cattle Ranch: 312,000."

Really, the Deseret Ranch is just a weekend hobby farm. Get real. Australia has cattle ranches (we call them stations) a little larger than this. Strangeray Springs Station in South Australia, for instance, is reputedly the same size as Belgium. Anna Creek Station, owned by the Kidman family, totals 30,028 square kilometres. After some of it was sold last year, it is now only 23,000 square kilometres—8,880 square miles or 5,683,397 acres.

Brunette Downs in the Northern Territory is relatively small—only 12,000 square kilometers (4,633 square miles or 2,965,248

acres). And Headingly at Mt. Isa, Queensland, has 1,007,200 hectares (approximately 2,488,000 acres).

According to an article in the *Australian Farm Journal* (Nov. 1998), one company—the Australian Agricultural Co. in Brisbane, Queensland—owns twelve properties that are larger than the Deseret Ranch, including Brunette Downs and Headingly. The smallest of the twelve has 226,000 hectares (558,220 acres), and eight of the twelve are over 400,000 hectares (that is, each is more than 1,000,000 acres). There are, of course, many other companies with similarly large cattle stations in Australia.

Hmm. A correction note is warranted.

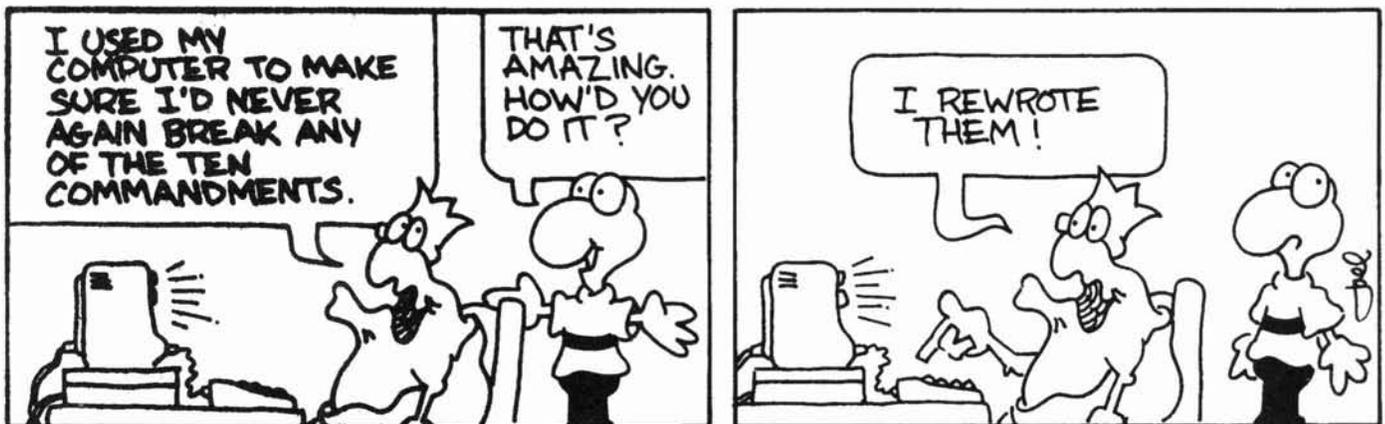
MARJORIE NEWTON  
Bass Hill, New South Wales, Australia

*Editors' response:*

Oops. You'd think we'd have learned by now not to trust *Time* magazine.

## NAME CALLING

TURNABOUT is fair play. So, let's say I composed what I considered to be a witty, Swiftian satire in which I suggested that I put letter codes on cards and forced women in a singles ward to wear them so that we, the males, might know in advance what faults these single women possess. My chances of seeing such sexist folly in print would probably be pretty slim. However, if you change the genders around, it's perfectly all right for Miriam A. Smith to make such a, albeit satirical, suggestion in "A Modest Proposal for Reducing the Population of Single Men in the Church" (SUNSTONE, June 1998). I doubt that I am the only single man in the Church to view this as just one more incident of sanctioned guy-bashing, blaming us for perceived ills in the ward, the world,


**Pontius' Puddle**


and the universe beyond. I am just surprised SUNSTONE would put it in print.

JOE FASBINDER  
Santa Monica, Calif.

## DARWINIAN EVOLUTION

**I**N an otherwise excellent essay ("Whither (Mormon) Scholarship?", SUNSTONE Dec. 1998), Karl C. Sandberg makes an error that should be corrected before a myth is spread throughout intelligent Mormon circles. Sandberg states that "Wallace . . . had reached Darwin's conclusions before Darwin had." A more correct statement would have been, "Wallace almost published a portion of Darwin's conclusions before Darwin did."

Darwin developed natural selection over a number of years (beginning more than two decades before Wallace came up with his similar theory). Darwin had written his theory down and allowed others to read it (Joseph Hooker among them) more than a decade before Wallace formulated his theory. Darwin was fearful that publication of his thoughts and evidence would cause him and his family much ridicule, given its controversial nature at the time. Had it not been for Wallace's subsequent "co-discovery" of nat-

ural selection, *The Origin of Species* might have been published posthumously.

The 1858 Darwin-Wallace paper (see <<http://www.inform.umd.edu/PBIO/darwin/darwin01.html>>) clearly shows that Darwin was the first to postulate "Darwinian Evolution." Wallace, similar to other lesser-known co-discoverers like Leibnitz with calculus, was fortunate to formulate a comparable theory before Darwin had published, so Darwin was kind enough to share the discovery with him (unlike Newton with regard to Leibnitz). See Adrian Desmond and James Moore's outstanding *Darwin: The Life of a Tormented Evolutionist*, W. W. Norton, 1994, and <<http://www.2think.org/darwin.html>>, for more on this issue and Charles Darwin's fascinating life.

AL CASE  
San Jose, Calif.

## WHY MORMONS ARE MOSTLY REPUBLICANS

**M**ANY SUNSTONE articles have lamented the fact that Utahns, and Mormons in general, are overwhelmingly Republican. In the recent Senate vote to im-

peach President Clinton, the message came out loud and clear that the Republicans were the party of higher ethical and moral standards. The Democrats' argument that "the President did terrible things, but his actions were not impeachable" places them at a lower level. They themselves lied when they argued on the issues and voted "not guilty." Obstruction of justice and perjury are serious crimes, and their commission was so obvious to anyone who pays attention to the news. In addition, Church leaders are always excommunicated for adultery or telling lies. Similarly, college presidents, corporate leaders, and others quickly lose their jobs with no questions asked.

If one holds high public office, his/her behavior should be well above that of the average citizen. Mormons—Utah and elsewhere—should never have to apologize for being mostly Republican.

JAY BAXTER  
Modesto, Calif.

**L**ETTERS IDENTIFIED FOR PUBLICATION ARE EDITED FOR CLARITY, TONE, DUPLICATION, AND VERBOSITY. LETTERS ADDRESSED TO AUTHORS WILL BE FORWARDED, UNOPENED (fax: 801/355-4043; [SunstoneUt@aol.com](mailto:SunstoneUt@aol.com)).

## THE MORMON UNIVERSE

"**Mormonism as a World Religion**" is the theme of a conference that will be held at the College of St Hild and St Beden, Durham University, in England, on 19-23 April 1999. It will feature numerous well-known Mormon scholars as well as sociologist of religion B. R. Wilson and comparative religion authorities Ninian Smart and John Hinnells. For more information, contact conference organizer Douglas Davies as <??>.

A new, regional Mormon newspaper has published its first edition. The **LDHerald** serves Saints in the District of Columbia, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The premiere issue featured a story on the Washington Temple's Festival of Lights and Eugene Morlan, emeritus director of the Mormon Choir of Washington. For more information, contact <[announce@LDHerald.com](mailto:announce@LDHerald.com)>.

"**Covered Wagon Roads to the West,**" a new map published by Patrice Press in conjunction with the National Park Service offers detailed information on the Mormon Trail and six other western U.S. trails. Contact Patrice Press at 800/367-9242 or <<http://www.patricepress.com>>.

Independently owned, Mormon-oriented **Southern Virginia College** in Buena Vista, Virginia, is offering a new spring term program running 28 April to 18 June 1999. Full-time students will visit various historical and scenic sites around the SVC campus, including Monticello, Appomattox, Washington, D.C. Call admissions at 800/229-8420 for information.

## SUNSTONE CALENDAR

**1999 Symposium West.** The conference will be on 16-17 April at the San Francisco Airport Clarion. Contact Richard Rands (415/969-6567; <[rands7@aol.com](mailto:rands7@aol.com)>).

**1999 Sunstone Symposium.** 1999 marks the silver anniversary of the Sunstone Foundation, and its annual symposium will be held at the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City on 14-17 July 1999. Proposals now being accepted. Contact Sunstone to be on the preliminary program mailing list (343 N. Third West, Salt Lake City, UT 84103; 801/355-5926; fax 801/355-4043; <[SunstoneUt@aol.com](mailto:SunstoneUt@aol.com)>).

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## FROM THE EDITOR

## SILVER LIMNINGS



By Elbert Eugene Peck

**B**ELOW are many fun ideas and projects that reevaluate and expand Sunstone's contributions. Please share your ideas with us. (Sunstone, 343 N. Third West, Salt Lake City, UT 84103; 801/355-5926; fax 801/355-4043; <SunstoneUt@aol.com>.) While reviewing this list, note how what Sunstone does is only possible by the generous donations of time and money and talents of those who have at least one of them in abundance.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Sunstone needs volunteers.** We need help (a) updating Sunstone's subscription database computer; it's an on-going labor—address corrections, subscription changes, e-mail addresses, symposium attendance; (b) entering editing changes in upcoming magazine articles; (c) stuffing and mailing Sunstone Mercantile book orders; (d) general filing; and (e) organizing the symposium and art auction (phone calling). One-time, irregular, and regular help is welcome. Just let us know before you come so we can have things ready. We don't pay money, but we do give valuable coupons redeemable for symposium cassette recordings or session admission.

Thanks to these individuals who've made an on-going difference for years: When she's not tanning in St. George, Virginia Bourgeois volunteers one day a week, often packaging and mailing book orders. Whenever we need him, Steve Mayfield comes in on his day off and duplicates symposium recordings to fill orders. Similarly, another couple comes in and stuffs, sorts, and bundles our international subscriptions.

2. **Brookie and D. K. Brown Memorial Fiction Contest.** SUNSTONE's short stories are selected through our fiction contest, which is made possible by the annual, generous donation of the children of the late Brookie and D. K. Brown. The contest deadline is June 1, and we're looking for both short stories (less than six thousand words) and short short

stories (less than one thousand words). Contact us to receive the detailed submission rules. Thanks to Phyllis Baker who is, once again, coordinating the contest.

3. **1999 Sunstone Symposium.** Mark your calendars, and plan to attend this year's gathering, which promises to be the largest, most successful symposium ever. It will be at the Salt Palace in downtown Salt Lake City, 14–17 July. As usual, we welcome responsible, well-researched and gracious expressions from a variety of points on any subject that does not violate sacred covenants or attack others. This year, we encourage presentations that address the theme "Being a World Church in the New Millennium." Contact us for a copy of the call for papers.

The preliminary program will automatically be mailed to current subscribers and past symposium attendees in *Utah*, others should contact us to be put on the mailing list. This year, current subscribers will get a discount in the registration fee.

We need volunteers in the office prior to the symposium and at the conference's registration table and as door monitors (there are a depressing number of freeloaders). Volunteers get passes for free symposium sessions or tape recordings; it's a good way for students and other needy souls to attend free. Because of generous donations, travel grants for young, student-scholar presenters are available. Thanks to those who donate frequent-flyer award plane tickets.

4. **Send us your e-mail address.** If you have an e-mail address and didn't recently receive Sunstone notices of the fiction contest or Symposium West, it's not entered in our computer. Send it to <SunstoneUt@aol.com>.

## SUNSTONE'S SILVER ANNIVERSARY

**T**HIS year marks twenty-five years since six individuals met, in 1974, at E. E. Ericksen's cabin in Salt Lake's Millcreek Canyon and organized The Sunstone Foundation. It took these young, ideal-

istic students time to produce the first issue, and it's been a long, winding journey since. In fact, Sunstone's first publication was not the magazine but the fund-raising Mormon History Calendar, which became an annual Sunstone publication. The calendar marked the first step of the foundation's expanding journey in sponsoring diverse and worthwhile Mormon studies projects from symposiums to fiction contests to cartoon books to book sales to a news magazine.

It's a fun tale. This year we're going to celebrate and commemorate our achievements, and we're going to do it in ways that—while reflecting on our journey so far—help us gird up our loins to better carry on for the next twenty-five year trek.

Here are the projects we're planning, and, surprise!, we need help. (Taken together, these points and pleas might make us appear overly needy, even greedy, but a few volunteers for a project make a big difference.)

1. **Sunstone History.** We've commissioned six authors to each write a chapter of Sunstone's history. The first installment, "The Scott Kenney Years" by Robert Lee Warthen, appears in the next magazine. Throughout the next twelve months, we'll also feature short, paragraph-length, commentaries by readers that both reflect on Sunstone's past and project its future. Please share your own musings, along with a photograph, if you wish. Write about what Sunstone does best that must be kept; share your hopes of what you would like Sunstone to begin. This year-long conversation can make a difference.

2. **Silver Anniversary Issue.** Early this summer, a special issue of the magazine will reprint a dozen or so of SUNSTONE's groundbreaking articles with updating reflections by each article's author. This special collection will also be used as a get-to-know-SUNSTONE promotional gift for new subscribers. When you get the issue, take time to revisit these classic articles; they're worth a second or third reading and are as fresh and relevant today as they were when they first appeared.

3. **The Silver Anniversary Symposium Reunion/Party.** This summer's twentieth, annual symposium will feature sessions that take critical looks at what Sunstone's accomplished and where it needs to go. It will be a celebration/birthday party/reunion of old and new friends. Come! We will also host healthy evaluation by insiders and outsiders who'll consider just how Sunstone can better serve its readers and the larger Mormon community. We welcome proposals.

We are inaugurating two annual symposium lectures that will strengthen every symposium from now on and the magazine—the

Lowell Bennion Lecture on Mormon humanitarianism and the Leonard J. Arrington Lecture on Mormon history. Each lecturer will receive an honorarium; we need donations to establish their on-going support.

4. **Sunstone Web Site.** This year we will, finally, launch a web page. Its sections will eventually include:

- ☑ subscription information with secure, online credit-card subscription and renewal;

- ☑ a detailed summary of the contents of the current issue;

- ☑ a list of the table of contents of all past issues (with cover reproductions), with on-line, back-issue ordering;

- ☑ a complete subject/author/title index of all past issues of both SUNSTONE and the late *Sunstone Review*;

- ☑ an up-to-date listing of upcoming Sunstone symposiums, with online registration and cassette tape ordering;

- ☑ a complete list of past symposium presentations, with publication references and online cassette recording ordering;

- ☑ the Sunstone Mercantile book store with online ordering.

We'll start small and add the above information as we are able. Obviously, we need volunteers to make this project a reality. It's one that will aid all of us for years to come.

5. **Readers' and Symposium Attenders' Survey.** It's been more than fifteen years since Sunstone surveyed its audience to better understand just who Sunstone serves. We intend to conduct two surveys this year—one of our subscribers and one of the Salt Lake symposium attendees. Again, we need volunteers to collect data and tabulate results.

6. **Mormon Art Exhibit and Auction.** For six years, the Salt Lake symposium has hosted an art auction. Its profits help cover the symposium's and magazine's expenses. This year, we are planning our biggest exhibition. The art auction/sale will be on Thursday and Friday, 15–16 July, at the Salt Palace. Since it is in downtown Salt Lake City, we hope many businesses and law firms will purchase high-quality works of art at affordable prices for their offices. We need art donations, art buyers, and volunteer help. Thanks to Pam Weilenmann, who is, again!, chairing the event.

4. **Printing Endowment.** Years ago, former SUNSTONE editor Peggy Fletcher extolled the virtues of Sunstone being financially "always a little hungry." Well, when you read the history, you'll see how for much of its quarter-century life, Sunstone has not just been a little hungry, it has almost always been malnourished and occasionally on the brink of starvation. Sunstone will always have a tight

budget, and that is a good thing. A frugal budget doesn't cause malnutrition—an uneven and unpredictable cashflow does.

Running Sunstone is like running a hurdle race. Each week there are low financial hurdles to leap—rent, payroll, supplies, phone and utility bills, Xerox and computer lease payments, typesetting, mass mailings, and postage. For the most part, these bars are leaped by on-going subscription, donation, Sunstone Mercantile, and other incomes.

Then comes the high hurdle—printing and mailing the magazine. That financial hurdle is frequently difficult to leap in one, natural stride. Sometimes we have to back up, take a deep breath, and start running on faith that we'll have the energy when we need it. Occasionally, it takes several tries. Once, in Sunstone's long ago, darkest years, there were three pasted-up magazines just waiting for funds to go to the press. Fortunately, that kind of starvation hasn't happened in over a decade; nevertheless, this kind of pause in our course's run delays renewal income and puts us farther behind.

If we could regularize Sunstone's ability to cover printing costs, we would significantly reduce many other financial and editorial challenges, too. *This is the most important change we could effect to strengthen Sunstone.* Here is our plan:

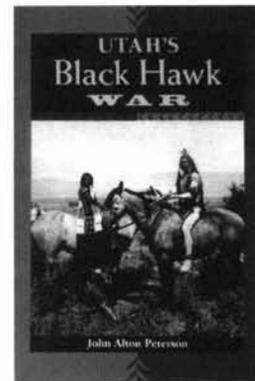
The magazine needs to come out more regularly, and the major key to achieve this goal is to lower the printing financial hurdle. That is where a printing endowment comes in. We need a permanent, non-touchable fund whose interest would help lower each issue's printing cost. An endowment of \$100,000 at a modest return of 5 percent interest would generate \$5,000 annually—a little under \$1,000 per issue. That helps; ideally, we need a \$500,000 endowment. In the next twelve months, our goal is to get between 100 and 500 friends to donate \$1,000 or more *beyond their normal level of giving.*

A committee has been organized to work on this project; you'll hear more from them later. But if you're inclined to help, send a check to the Sunstone Printing Endowment Fund, or tell us of your commitment to donate. You can make installment payments (we'll even bill a credit card for a specified amount each month). If a thousand dollars is too much for your budget, even in increments, consider recruiting ten friends to each give one hundred dollars. If we really want Sunstone to be here for its golden anniversary, we need to lay this foundation now, because, frankly, our current mode of operation relies on the energy and resources of too few people who can easily burn out.

## VISIONS OF SUNSTONE

THESE projects are a large agenda. They both strengthen and expand Sunstone. I am committed to working flippin' hard this year to make them happen because Sunstone is worth it.

While talking with a past SUNSTONE editor about our twenty-five year history—what it has achieved, what it hasn't, what people criticize it for, what they crave about it—we began to daydream about what we would do with SUNSTONE if we had unlimited resources. How we would commission articles that document and explore the dynamic changes in this growing church. An in-depth feature on how Mormonism is getting involved in humanitarian causes, for example. Or one on how a temple near every member will change the Church. Or ones that explore the everyday aspects of being Mormon. We'd send thoughtful observers to investigate what is happening in Africa, eastern Europe, and Latin America. We'd commission careful writers on timely issues facing the Church—both those generated from inside and those generated by larger social currents. These writers would survey scholars and informed individuals and distill



### Utah's Black Hawk War

John Alton Peterson

"For almost eighty years, historians and the Utah community have waited for a scholar to write the history of Utah's Black Hawk War. We finally have the answer in this exemplary work."

—Brigham D. Madsen,  
University of Utah

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their findings in well-crafted articles. Then when someone says, "SUNSTONE should feature an article on \_\_\_\_\_," we won't have to reply, "Well, we don't pay, so people write on what *they're* interested in." Sunstone is fundamentally submission-driven, and that volunteer aspect builds community by sharing authentic, unscripted voices of individual Mormons. That should always be Sunstone's heart. Still, it'd be nice to shape our discourse a little more, too.

In my ideal magazine and symposium, I want a broader array of voices and perspectives, with more excellent expression and careful thought and less whine and lament. The FARMS and Signature Books authors talking to each other, sans the personal attacks; the candid, self-reflective experiences of the ultra-orthodox contrasting those of the expansive heterodox. I benefit from hearing how people put the theological/spiritual puzzle together differently.

But that all-inclusive, utopian, intellectual family reunion is not really possible, although we never stop trying. For we Mormons are human—we're a line-drawing people, and, by golly, each individual's line of acceptability is usually just beyond where they stand. At Sunstone, we confront that dynamic daily. As a result, I try not to play that exclusionary line-drawing game in Sunstone; I want every *responsible* voice sharing their experiences and thoughts in our tent. Yet, in practice, because Sunstone hasn't been willing to exclude some controversial liberals—say a Michael Quinn—others conclude that they can't join us. So while we don't draw a hard line, nevertheless the resulting imbalance from others' choices effectively draws one for us. (And, the judgmental line-drawing of the so-called liberals creates the situation just as much as that of the so-called conservatives.)

I have learned by sad experience that almost all men and women use their own *current*, although still evolving, theological map as the ruler by which they quite rigidly judge things. It's as if they want to recreate the Church and world in their image. Only a chosen few habitually approach things tentatively, humbly, open to being influenced by different perspectives, without becoming defensive, threatened, and uncivil. One thoughtful, BYU professor regularly exits symposium sessions on a controversial topic by telling me, "That was interesting. I don't agree with this position for the following reasons, but I'm glad I heard what they had to say. I now know better what I think." We all could be a little more adult, and a little less excitable, in hearing differing positions.

In the last week, I received two letters. Each listed the articles from a recent issue that the writer enjoyed; each upbraided me for one piece they found theologically objectionable. Of course, their very certain judgments conflicted. I value these letters; we need more feedback like that. What saddened me was that each correspondent basically concluded: "I can't continue to subscribe if you continue to run such articles!" Such polarized times.

In fact, we try to design each issue so that in it there is something speculative and something faith-affirming, some faith journey and some scholarly analysis, and something "conservative" and something "liberal." Regardless of where they stand, I hope every reader finds both comfort and unsettlement in each issue.

And so we think a lot about tone, perceived and real—a true, twenty-five year Sunstone topic. We don't always get things right. I regularly question Sunstone's larger worth. There are things Sunstone should have done or should have done differently or should not have done at all. Some days, I'm darn proud of our product; other days, we're all characters in the Okefenokee Swamp.

Recently, after a friendly, stinging critique, I spent a night listening to Beethoven while thumbing through *all* the back issues. Long-forgotten articles jumped out. Oh, that's a good one. So's that one! I'd forgotten about that. The cartoons were funny, too! Even the stale news was fresh. So often, we remember the things we don't like and then reinforce that bias with only a few periodic confirmations. But that night, I took Sunstone whole, and, O my heck!, it is an impressive enterprise. So many sensitive voices, so many great articles. Items I still wince at, to be sure, but overall, a thing of faith, of humanity, of thoughtfulness and understanding, of care and passion, of concern and love, of celebration and joy. A worthy undertaking. I know incredible, self-forgetting, holy Saints whose lives demonstrate, as one pundit said of Ronald Reagan, that the unexamined life can be worth living. Sunstone is not for them. But for many whose spiritual gifts include the intellectual bent, Sunstone is a blessing.

As your personal commemoration of our silver anniversary, make time to flip through the pages of past, and bask in the light that bursts forth; it's an enriching experience. Then share your reflections with us, while yet in the spirit. ☐



## ONE LAST TIME

That Sunday afternoon  
with my father  
we watched a football game,  
joked, and shared dinner,  
laughing at my mother's cooking  
while she fumed  
like her overdone pot roast.

I yelled, "See you!"  
He waved me into the night,  
neither of us knowing  
it would be for the last time.

When my brother called  
the next night,  
and when we stood  
by the grave that seemed  
a bad practical joke,  
I was too stunned  
to wish for one more  
time with my father:  
a wish granted  
only in fairy tales.

It was months later—  
seeing a man  
who walked like my father,  
that same jaunty stride  
as if he were on his way  
to meet my mother  
at their favorite restaurant—

that I wished we'd said  
our loving goodbyes  
with a handshake,  
a kiss, some wise words  
to carry me through my life  
and my father into the darkness.

—ROBERT COOPERMAN

## TURNING THE TIME OVER TO . . .

Robert A. Rees

## THE LORDS OF MISRULE VS. THE LORD OF THE DANCE

### THOUGHTS ON THE IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT CLINTON



*“Listening to the House debate, I was struck by the rhetorical devices, tricks of elocution, and public relations spinning employed by speakers on both sides.”*

When I remember [that golden summer,] I think of it as dancing. . . . Dancing as if language had surrendered to movement—as if this ritual, this wordless ceremony, was now the way to speak, to whisper private and sacred things, to be in touch with some otherness. Dancing as if the very heart of life and all its hopes might be found in those assuaging notes and those hushed rhythms and in those silent and hypnotic movements. Dancing as if language no longer existed because words were no longer necessary . . .

—BRIAN FRIEL, *Dancing at Lughnasa*

**I**N THE WEEKS just preceding and following last Christmas, I was caught up in the hearings on the impeachment of President Clinton, first by the House

Judiciary Committee, and then, respectively, by the full House and Senate. The entire affair left me feeling depressed. Throughout the sorry ordeal of the President's sordid af-

fair with Monica Lewinsky, the opprobrious behavior of Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr and his staff, and the partisan politics of the House and Senate hearings, I was struck by the contrast between what was going on in the Capitol and the various celebrations of Christmas and the New Year which were taking place in our community.

During the last Saturday of the impeachment hearings by the Judiciary Committee, my wife, Ruth, and I went to the Christmas Revels. The Revels celebrates Christmas and the winter solstice with poetry, music, dance, and drama in an exuberant and joyful festivity. All through the Revels, I was struck by the significance between what I had read in the newspaper, heard on the radio, and seen on television with what I was witnessing at Scottish Rite Theater in Oakland, California.

**T**HE Revels opened with the Abbots Bromley antler dance. The program notes state, “Recent carbon dating indicates that the reindeer antlers still used today at Abbots Bromley [England] date back to 900 C.E., about the time of the Danish invasion.” In the antler dance, two rows of male dancers with horns on their heads dance and click their horns together. To me, this choreographed rutting resembled what was going on between the Republicans and Democrats in Washington, except that the horn-locking in the Capitol lacked both the grace and beauty of this ancient stag hunt ritual. The stag hunt going on in Washington, also a blood sport, lacked any sense of invoking the spirits of Nature.

After a folk carol from the Donnington Woods in Shropshire, and then “The Gower Wassail,” came “The Lord of Misrule.” This is taken from the Feast of Fools, a medieval celebration that marked the Twelve Days of Midwinter. During this festival, the Lord of Misrule was “traditionally chosen from the lower ranks of the populace to rule over the topsy-turvy revelry.” Now my mind was alive with the associative possibilities with the House hearings. What an apt description of the midwinter, topsy-turvy impeachment hearings.

The Christmas Revels also included a “Mummers’ Play,” a drama “celebrating the seasonal rituals of fertility, death, and rebirth” from the village of Marshfield in Gloucestershire. Mummers’ costumes were made entirely of cut up newspapers and magazines. I thought them a fitting symbol of the media that covered the impeachment hearings. When an observer first heard the Mummers’ song in England, she “said she couldn’t see any sense at all in it,” to which one Mummer replied, “That’s the whole

ROBERT A. REES lives in Santa Cruz, California, where he writes and teaches at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is the Santa Cruz Stake interfaith specialist.

*“This dance and song was a dramatic contrast to the political hair-splitting and hypocritical pontificating going on in Washington. The Lords of Misrule, I thought, will have their day, but the Lord of the Dance goes on in spite of their antics.”*

thing. If the likes of you could understand what it means, where would be the magic?”

The first part of the Revels ended with the company performing the historic “The Lord of the Dance,” a joyful music and dance tribute to Christ that is set to the Shaker tune of “Simple Gifts.” At a certain point, dancers and musicians go into the audience and invite everyone to join in. More than a thousand of us joined hands and danced throughout the hall singing:

Dance, then, wherever you may be,  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,  
And I’ll lead you all, wherever you may be,  
And I’ll lead you all in the dance, said he.

In its purity and beauty, this unifying, joyful dance and song was a dramatic contrast to the political hair-splitting and hypocritical pontificating going on in Washington. The Lords of Misrule, I thought, will have their day, but the Lord of the Dance goes on in spite of their antics, and He will continue to go on as kingdoms rise and fall and the devil exacts his due.

The second half of the Revels provided further symbols and images exemplifying the contrast between the passing world of politics and the enduring world of spiritual celebrations. There was a thirteenth-century conductus, “O Maria Virgo Pia”; a “Sword Dance,” in which the dancers’ swords were locked together to symbolize the sun; an American folk carol, “Star in the East”; and an Orlando Gibbon’s anthem, “Hosanna to the Son of David”—all celebrations of the sun and the Son. There was poetry from Donne, Emerson, Jeffers, and Yeats. Emerson’s and Yeats’s lines, respectively, seemed almost deliberately chosen to comment on the Judiciary Committee hearings:

Things are in the saddle and ride mankind.

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

Then the Revels chorus and the audience sang in canon “Dona Nobis Pacem,” lovely with its intertwining harmonies of Gregorian chant. This was followed by a reading of Susan Cooper’s poem “The Shortest Day,” which celebrated the winter solstice. The last line, “People singing and dancing to drive the

dark away,” seemed an appropriate summary of what I had just experienced—the Revels had indeed driven the dark from my heart.

I left the revels humming “The Lord of the Dance” and thinking about the Judiciary Committee hearings still going on in the Capitol. I thought how such ritual celebrations, such religious festivals as the Christmas Revels, had been going on for centuries, that in forests and villages throughout medieval Europe, men, women, and children gathered annually to mark the turning from dark days, to celebrate the coming of light, to sing and dance to the gods of the woods and the rivers as well as to the God who was born in a manger. With their musical instruments, with their brightly colored costumes, they sang and danced to the lyric joys of life while, to use a line from Yeats’s “Lapis Lazuli”:

Old civilizations [were] put to the sword.  
[and] they and their wisdom went to rack.

On the following Friday, I listened to the House debate while driving to a Christmas concert in Palo Alto. I was struck by the rhetorical devices, tricks of elocution, verbal games, and public relations spinning employed by speakers on both sides. Speaker after speaker shoved and pushed to claim the high moral ground, which, for a politician, as Russell Baker has observed, is like a hog standing in a bathtub. (I remarked later to my daughter Julianna that I couldn’t tell if the congressional hearings were a Feydu farce or a Sophoclean tragedy. She replied, “Dad, you are witnessing a Sophoclean farce!” And so I was.)

Like the Revels of the previous week, the concert was a dramatic contrast to happenings in our Capitol. It was an evening of Advent and Christmas cantatas by the German baroque composer Dietrich Buxtehude, performed by the San Francisco Society of Early Music.

The text of the first work, “Fallax mundus,” included the following lines, which, like the texts of the Christmas Revels, provided ironic commentary on the House proceedings:

False world, with adorned face,  
and hidden deceptions;  
do not trust in its blandishments;  
to escape this net

swiftly dive into the ocean of Christ,  
turn away from lies.

.....

Good Jesu, may springs flow  
generously in our hearts  
and may rivers of graces run;  
as this world’s soul  
is healed,  
behold! The angels rejoice.

As each piece was performed, notes flowing melliflously from vocal solos and duets and from antique instruments, I again felt a cleansing and purifying of my mind and soul. Buxtehude’s sweet praises to Christ filled my heart to overflowing.

The final number, “In dulci júbilio,” celebrates the “peerless boy,” “our heart’s delight,” lying in a manger. The singer imagines what it would have been like to have been present at this miraculous birth:

Joys are there  
As in no other place,  
there the angels sing  
new songs,  
and the bells ring out  
in the court of the king.  
O that we were there, there, there!

In imagination, I was there, transported by Buxtehude’s dulcet sounds, by the clear, melodious soprano, and by what I can only describe as the Spirit’s joyful presence.

Ruminating on all this, I remembered an experience from the time my wife and I served a mission in the Baltics. As education missionaries, we were teaching at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania. I was having difficulty getting my students to understand symbolism in poetry. Having been educated under the Soviet system, many were used to seeing only one meaning in things, and often that meaning dictated to them. It had not been safe during their school years to find levels of meaning in things, or at least to speak of them if they did.

I was trying to get them to see what Wallace Stevens has called “the paradise of meaning.” In mid-semester, we all attended a ceremony inducting the new rector of the university. As the ceremony proceeded, I was struck by the contrast of images on the audi-

torium's stage. On one side, half a dozen university administrators were dressed in black academic robes with black, red, and yellow hoods. On the other side, a student ensemble of women folk singers and dancers were dressed in elaborate and colorful Lithuanian folk costumes with details that went back to the nation's pagan past. The costumes were decorated with the rich, hues of the forest and countryside—emerald and grass green, bright burgundy and carmine, lavender and purple, rose and strawberry, indigo, beryl, and many other colors, all highlighted against snow-white muslin.

Back in class, I asked my students to consider the symbolism of that academic tableau. At first, they puzzled about trying to find deeper meaning where they were not used to seeing it. I tried to show that the picture on the stage was as much a text as were the poems we were reading. I asked them to note the contrasts: old men in academic robes set against young women in folk costumes; the colors of the academic robes (black, red and yellow) set off against the vibrant colors of the women's long skirts, blouses, aprons and head bands; the stiff, formal rhetoric of the various academic speakers contrasted with the lyrical yet almost strangely wild harmonies of the singers. I asked them what the colors of the academic robes had in common. One student timidly ventured, "They are all colors of death?" "Exactly!" I replied. "And what about the colors of the folk costumes?" "Just the opposite—colors of life!" "Yes!" Then they began to peel back the layers of meaning.

The students were aware that the six men on the stand exercised enormous and sometimes unrighteous power over their lives. There had been a tremendous struggle for power when the university, which had been disbanded by the Soviets in the 1940s, was reconstituted in 1991 with the help of a number of expatriate Lithuanians from the United States and Canada. Although an American-Lithuanian was titular rector, a vice-rector, who had been the former head of the Communist party in Kaunas, wielded the real power. My students knew that the university administration had abused the rights of staff and students alike, that there had been charges of serious misuse of university property, and that the governing body was nearly all older men.

After this discussion, I noted something like the following: "The administrators with their academic robes, sashes, and medallions, hold nearly absolute power within the university. At the convocation, they sat behind a table, stiff, formal and austere. The symbols

here are full of meaning—the academic robes are really a corruption of priestly robes, the ceremony a secularized version of what once took place in a sacred setting. The colors worn by the rector and his associates are indeed the colors of death. The table which they sat behind separates them from the very people they are pledged to serve. Everything says, 'We are the important ones here. We have the power.'

"The officers of the university did not look to their right during the entire ceremony; they seemed totally unaware of the women in folk costumes. But those women also represent power. With their multi-colored striped and plaid dresses, with their intricately stitched and embroidered aprons, sashes, and headbands, they represent the power of nature itself. The songs they sang and the dances they danced originated long before there was a university here. The instruments the musicians played date to a time when the Lithuanian kingdom spread from the Baltic to the Black Sea, when Lithuania was ruled by the pagan king, Vytautas the Great, after whom this university is named."

I concluded, "Even though those women have little power within the university, they represent the oldest powers in the world—the variety and fecundity of nature, the procreative and regenerative power of the plants

and animals, and the impulse of men and women to celebrate God, nature, and themselves with their bodies and their voices. Their power is the power of life."

THE dance those Lithuanian students danced that day, like the one we danced to "The Lord of the Dance" at the Christmas Revels, epitomizes what is most important and most enduring in human experience. I was glad to be reminded that while the House proceeded with its impeachment hearings, most of us focused on the events of Christmas, on the miracle of God coming to earth to be our savior, of his light driving away the darkness, of our being renewed through him in the New Year.

I love the image of Christ as the Lord of the Dance. He was, as Ezra Pound says in "The Ballad of the Goodly Frere," "no mouse of the scrolls," but an exuberant, joyful Lord, one who sings and rejoices, who fills our hearts with love, who, as he leads us in the Dance, says,

They cut me down and I leapt on high,  
I am the life that'll never, never die;  
I'll live in you if you live in me.  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.

Hallelujah!



## MANITOU PINES

In the resinous grammar of pines  
most verbs come out of being nouns  
so long—nothing could hold them back.  
That word pine for instance.

Here, every other sentence happens to be  
incomplete, as if something else  
caught the attention and what was  
being said fell away.

Such a haunted presence in the vacant  
greens whispering—in the sticky sap,  
orange colored bed underneath—a haystack  
with nothing but needles . . . remember?

They only seem to wait, only seem  
to remain here in the same tall place.

—MARK MITCHELL



# CORNUCOPIA

## Conversion Story

### THE MAKING OF A "VERY ATYPICAL MORMON"

Sylvia Cabus, a native Californian, is twenty-eight and a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. She wrote a version of this column for the 5 September 1998 Washington Post as part of a "faith stories" series. It is reprinted with permission. SUNSTONE queried Sylvia Cabus about her experience in writing her story. A few of this "unlikely Mormon's" comments follow the column.

I AM PROBABLY ONE OF THE MOST unlikely people to have become a Mormon. I'm a Filipina American, a committed feminist, politically progressive, and single. I was raised Catholic, and I'm a proud product of the wonderful Catholic school system. I graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, I served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa, and I study international relations in graduate school.

I didn't learn about my church through a TV commercial or because a pair of fresh-faced missionaries came knocking at my door. I'm not blond, and I don't have a perm. I've never lived in Utah. I'm terrible at crafts, and I don't cook very well. I don't own a Franklin Planner, and I've never stayed in a Marriott hotel. I've never read *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* or any book by Stephen Covey. I'm a registered Democrat.

All in all, I'm a very atypical Mormon.

However, within this hierarchical, ascetic, and plain-speaking church, I have found my place. As a single woman in her late twenties, I've found what Trappist monk Thomas Merton called "the four walls of my new freedom."

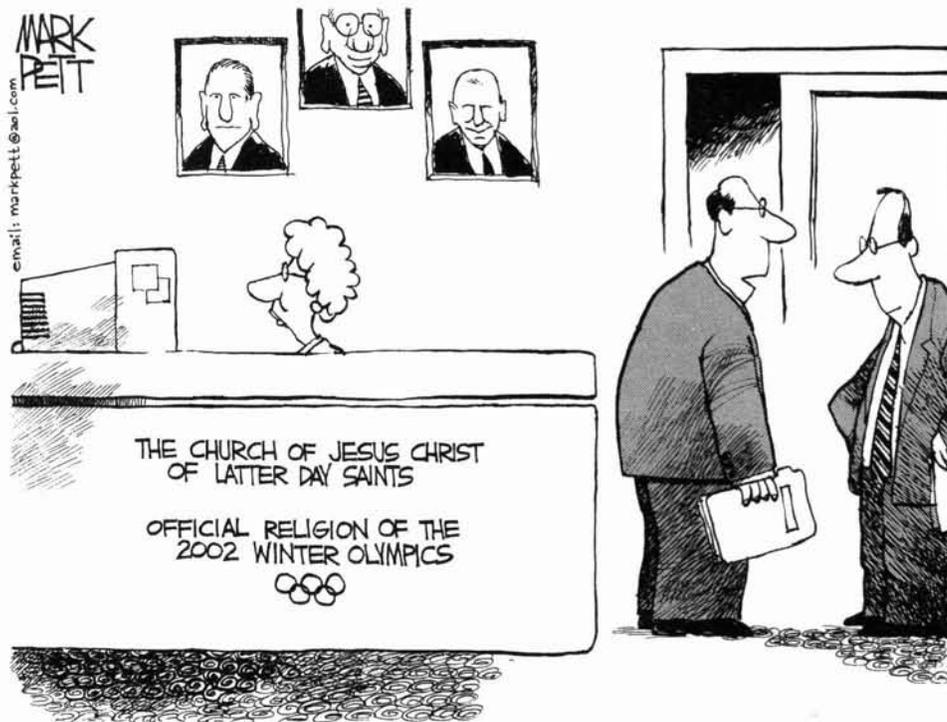
The stereotype of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is that it is made up of people from the Inter-mountain West—large, mostly white families with pioneer ancestors. In reality, though, our church is more geographically expansive and ethnically diverse than some would expect.

It's through an odd combination of coincidence and friendships that I became Mormon. I've been attracted to the Church ever since I could remember. I've always had Mormon friends, and everywhere I've gone, either overseas or in the United States, I've run into Mormons.

In the summer of 1994, when I was doing Peace Corps training in Cameroon, I met a Congolese trainer who was a Latter-day Saint. Unlike other Mormons I'd met, she didn't have a Book of Mormon to share with me. Instead she shared her conviction, her faith, and, as a single African woman in her early thirties, the fullness of life in the Mormon community in Africa. That was enough for me.

At the same time, I really had become uncomfortable being Catholic. It didn't seem "real" or participatory to me because it was easy to be passive and anonymous going to Mass just once a week. I didn't feel I was part of a community. Mormonism offered me both.

Since being baptized as a Mormon early in 1997, I have found myself both resisting and being comforted by the boundaries, by "The four walls of my new freedom."



*"The Olympic Committee said it's the least they could do after tarnishing our image with that bribery scandal."*

There are quite a few things I'm not accustomed to, like giving so much of my time and energy to the Church. And there's a lot I don't understand, such as how women in the Church had more authority and power at the turn of the century than they do now. But studying, praying, questioning, and learning all have contributed to my testimony's growth. And there is lot of joy and challenge in that process. What I find so gratifying is strengthening my relationship with Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother, and Jesus Christ, and trying to live the principles of the Gospel every day. There is a sense of completeness and symmetry in our scriptures, in our services, in our complex organization, and in our temples.

Everything that we strive to do and be as Mormons is infused with an eternal perspective and understanding.

My favorite character in the Book of Mormon is Enos, a man who lived in America in the fifth century B.C. The Book of Enos is a touching account of "the wrestle," the spiritual struggle one man had before being forgiven for his sins. His soul hungered, Enos recounted. My soul hungered, too.

And it's within this Church, with this peculiar people, that I



*Though the odds might have seemed against it, Sylvia Cabus—a Filipina, feminist, politically progressive, single woman—has found a spiritual home among the Mormons.*

have found my strength and my comfort.

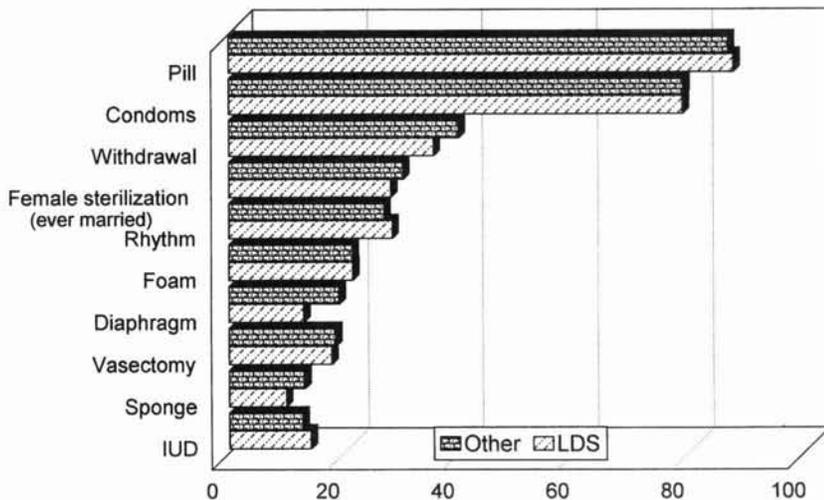
*Author's reflections after publication:*

After submitting my story to the *Washington Post*, and as a

Peculiar People

COMPARISON OF TOP 10 CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS BETWEEN AMERICANS AND LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Among Those Who Have Ever Used a Method % Who Have Used Each Specific Method



THE DECEMBER 1998 ISSUE OF SUNSTONE presented information suggesting that Mormon women are less likely to use birth control than United States women, largely because LDS women are less likely to be sexually active before marriage. This graph presents more specific information on the contraceptive methods that women or their partners have ever used. The top ten methods, ranked in terms of the percentage of women who have ever used that method, are the pill, condoms, withdrawal, female sterilization, rhythm, foam, diaphragm, vasectomy, sponge and IUD. There is very little difference between Mormons and other women in use of specific methods.

fairly recent convert, I didn't want to misrepresent the Church. I faxed the column to the Church public relations office in Washington, D. C., and had a conference call with two of the staff members, Stephen Whyte and Kathryn Newman. I explained to both of them why I wanted to include certain subjects, like Heavenly Mother, and they both thought I'd done a good job. Neither of them suggested any changes in content. Hence, the article had, unofficially at least, the Church's imprimatur. I like to think that Gordon B. Hinckley himself took a look at it on his way to *Larry King Live*.

If I were to re-write my essay for an exclusively Mormon audience, I would spend a lot more time discussing how my feminism and my Mormonism interact, as in my callings as Relief Society teacher and Young Women president and in the temple endowment ceremony. I would acknowledge the two LDS e-mail lists on which I first articulated a lot of my initial thoughts and observations. I would also detail my discomfort with Mormon material culture and what seems to be a Utah-centric bias in an ostensibly global church. A lot in the Church does drive me completely batty—I bristle whenever I'm asked if I need a Spanish translation box, or when people wonder out loud in my presence why a good Mormon girl like me isn't married yet, or when I hear once again what a fine role model I am. And yet, while I swore I would never utter the words "I know the Church is true," in my heart and soul, I do believe it.

—SYLVIA CABUS  
Washington, D. C.

### Twenty Years Ago in Sunstone

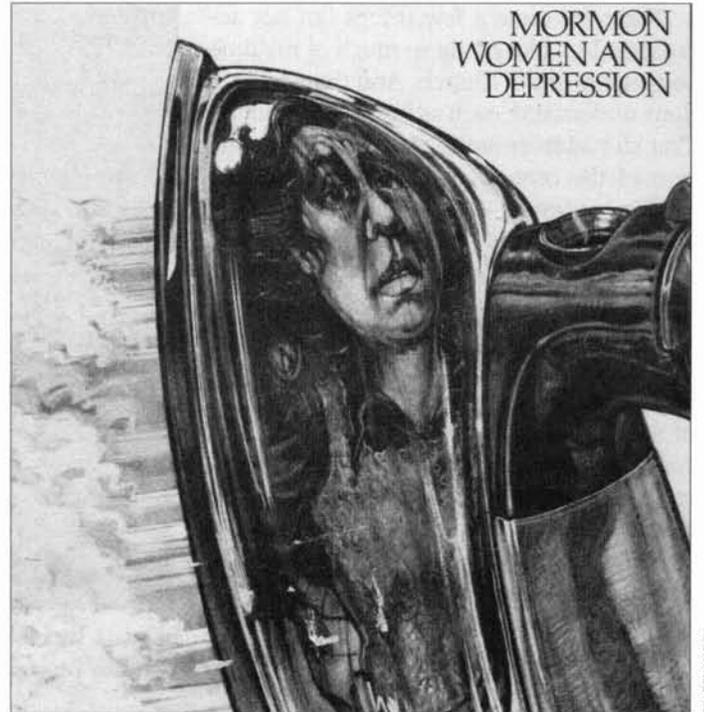
## MOTHER-IN-ZION SYNDROME

THE MARCH/APRIL 1979 ISSUE OF SUNSTONE featured the transcript of Louise Degn's groundbreaking KSL-TV documentary, "Mormon Women and Depression," which legitimated a widespread but closeted darkside of Mormon culture. LDS counselors Carlfred Broderick and R. Jan Stout were two of the talking heads:

BRODERICK—We do have a lot of depression in the Church around the issue of not being able to be the perfect Relief Society woman: not grinding your own wheat and making your own bread and having your own garden and taking casseroles over to all the sick and not also being a perfect mother and an ideal housewife and well-groomed and reading the scriptures every day. And being something less than that makes a lot of people depressed who, if their standards weren't quite so high, might be more self-accepting.

STOUT—I think in Mormonism the women themselves tend to apply a great deal of pressure on each other. I don't see it coming so high from Church pronouncements of leaders. Some of it is there, but it is largely the women themselves who carry around with them excessive expectations of what they should or should not be as Mormons.

Some of them feel they have to reach this kind of idealized, crystallized, beautiful Mormon woman, which I term the Mother-of-Zion syndrome. This is a woman who is really a



*Social pressures to become a Mother-in-Zion "superwoman" can still lead Mormon women toward depression—just as those pressures did twenty years ago or longer.*

myth, a mystique. She doesn't exist at all, in fact. But all Mormon women in almost any ward you wanted to go into would tell you they know a woman who is like that: She's got it all together; her children are well-groomed; she bakes bread every day; she has wonderfully clean things in the house; her husband is happy and whistles off to work; she never complains at any of the Church meetings he goes to; she's supportive and loyal; and not only that: she gets up and reads her scriptures at six in the morning. She's got it all together. And that's a very intimidating thing for the average Mormon woman.

Now, in fact, this woman exists only in the minds of other women. They may try to approximate it. But I've seen too many cases of these super-Mormon women who themselves are depressed or who have private faces, private lives that are quite different from what their ward members see out on the street.

### Mormon Musings

## DO-RE-ME-FA-SO-LA-TI-DO

EVERY CHORISTER IN THE CHURCH KNOWS AND quotes, like a cheerleader, the second half of Doctrine and Covenants 25:12: "yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads." But have you ever noticed they usually pass over the poetic parallelism that begins this passage?: "For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart." Now, I'm not going to

suggest that this scripture solves the Mormon conundrum concerning whether an unrighteous person can produce inspired/inspiring art. One could argue that even the Lord delights in a song sung from the heart, regardless of the singer's righteousness, whereas the song of the righteous is more than merely delightful: it is a prayer. But my point is that Doctrine and Covenants 25:11 may have been the inspiration for one of my favorite books in my library: *Recreational Songs*, copyright 1949, by the Corporation of the President, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Run, do not walk, to your nearest Deseret Industries, and see if you can find it for fifty cents or less. You may even be able to pilfer it from a lost-and-found shelf in the chapel foyer or convince your mom to give you hers. It's probably next to her Relief Society grapes in the coat closet. It's easy to spot: it's bright red buckram-bound and has a treble clef gliding across the cover in the wake of some quarter notes embossed in silver.

Many will remember singing from this book during MIA opening exercises in days of yore. As late as 1974, we sang from it in my ward in Knoxville, Tennessee. Let me whet your appetite with a guided tour through its pages.

The book begins with a prophecy that has already been fulfilled: "Community singing, although fundamentally a recreational function, will most surely degenerate and cease to be if there is not generated with it a genuine musical experience." Here is a listing of some of the song collection categories and selected quotes about them from the book:

- Patriotic Songs: "Everyone should join in the singing of our patriotic songs and should be induced to sing them with sincere patriotic fervor."
- Folk Songs: "Everyone should learn . . . these beautiful songs."
- Negro Spirituals: "The Negro spiritual is the miracle of all songs." To which I sincerely say, amen.



Run, do not walk, to your nearest Deseret Industries and see if you can find a copy of the Church's 1949 *Recreational Songs*.

- Western Songs: "Many of the Western Folk Songs contain little but doggerel verse. We present in this section four of the better ones."
- Master Composers: "Nothing can tone up a community 'Sing' more than the inclusion of a song from the Master Composers."
- Gilbert and Sullivan: "The team of 'Gilbert and Sullivan' knows no counterpart in the field of collaborators."
- Nonsense Songs: "Wholesome fun is the objective to be attained when songs from this section are used in a community 'Sing.'"

Here are some representative songs from *Recreational Songs*:

- "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes," by none other than Ben Jonson.
- "A Kiss." The first verse: "A kiss is such a curious thing, It's never understood. You eat it not, you drink it not; and yet it is so good."
- "The Low-Backed Car," by Samuel Lover (suspicious last name). A quote: "The lovers come near and far And envy the chicken That Peggy is pickin', As she sits in the low-back'd car." Do not adjust your monitor; you have not entered the Twilight Zone. A funnier, weirder song I've never heard at church.
- "Volga Boat Song." Everyone sing along with me! "Yo, heave, ho, yo, heave, ho."

### A Psalm



## LOVE PSALM 14 OR LEO AND SAGITTARIUS

Oh Lord, let me find possibility everywhere: in the bend of my own elbow, in a body arched as it reaches after thee.

Teach me to value the laughter of others, and preserve me from the pompous and the mirthless.

What is this you have given me? It is a vision of myself, aged and peacefully asleep.

I have folded my hands over my heart, I have blessed my own suffering, and now joy springs up about me, Lord, joy!

For I have entered into conversation with the universe, and discovered the dissonant beauty of large yellow cats.

I have been a hunter and pulled back my bow with pleasure in watching my elbow as it bends,

I have shot my arrow at the heavens, I have abandoned the kill,

and you and the lionesses watch me and are glad to hear me laugh.

—HOLLY WELKER

Translated Correctly

Missionary scriptures (in context)

## "LIVE IN THE SPIRIT"

1 PETER 3:13 – 4:6

KING JAMES VERSION

## CHAPTER 3

13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

21 The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

## CHAPTER 4

FORASMUCH then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to *Love* wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

6 For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

NEW AMERICAN BIBLE

Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1992

## CHAPTER 3

**Christian Suffering.** <sup>13</sup>Now who is going to harm you if you are enthusiastic for what is good? <sup>14</sup>But even if you should suffer because of righteousness, blessed are you. Do not be afraid or terrified with fear of them, <sup>15</sup>but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, <sup>16</sup>but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame. <sup>17</sup>For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that be the will of God than for doing evil.

<sup>18</sup>For Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the sake of the unrighteous, that he might lead you to God. Put to death in the flesh, he was brought to life in the spirit. <sup>19</sup>In it he also went to preach to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup>who had once been disobedient while God patiently waited in the days of Noah during the building of the ark, in which a few persons, eight in all, were saved through water. <sup>21</sup>This prefigured baptism, which saves you now. It is not a removal of dirt from the body but an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup>who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.

## CHAPTER 4

**Christian Restraint.** <sup>1</sup>Therefore, since Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same attitude (for whoever suffers in the flesh has broken with sin), <sup>2</sup>so as not to spend what remains of one's life in the flesh on human desires, but on the will of God. <sup>3</sup>For the time that has passed is sufficient for doing what the Gentiles like to do: living in debauchery, evil desires, drunkenness, orgies, carousing, and wanton idolatry. <sup>4</sup>They are surprised that you do not plunge into the same swamp of profligacy, and they vilify you; <sup>5</sup>but they will give an account to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. <sup>6</sup>For this is why the gospel was preached even to the dead that, though condemned in the flesh in human estimation, they might live in the spirit in the estimation of God.

- "Come Let us be Gay." Just goes to show you that over time, the English language lends itself to terrific ironies.
  - "Short'nin' Bread," "Old Black Joe," and "Old Folks at Home." A few of the songs are painful reminders of the past, especially some of the dialect and phrases such as "Feed dem darkies on short-'nin' bread."
  - "Beautiful Dreamer," by Stephen Foster.
  - "Tit-Willow," by Gilbert and Sullivan. We couldn't sing this song in MIA without snickering.
  - "Vive L'Amour." Cool.
  - "O Me! O My!" A couple of years ago, circa 1994, I tried to wake up the congregation during one of my sacrament meeting talks by suggesting that the chorister lead them in this song, which I quoted: "O me! O my! We'll get there by and by. If anybody likes the speaker, It's I, I, I, I, I." This is a true story. I was unsuccessful.
  - "John Johnson's Army." I bet many of you know this one. "Four black mules and a pack a dern fools, and they landed on the other side of Jordan."
  - Finally, "Comrades in the MIA." As I recall, we sometimes did sing, arms locked in arms, swaying the pews. Or maybe not.
- I'll end with a final timeless note from the book for the instructions of the song leader: "He is the epitome of musical enthusiasm. He organizes people into singing groups at the least provocation." I, for one, rue the passing of those blessed MIA days. And I am not snickering.

—EDGAR C. SNOW JR.

*Journals of Discourse*

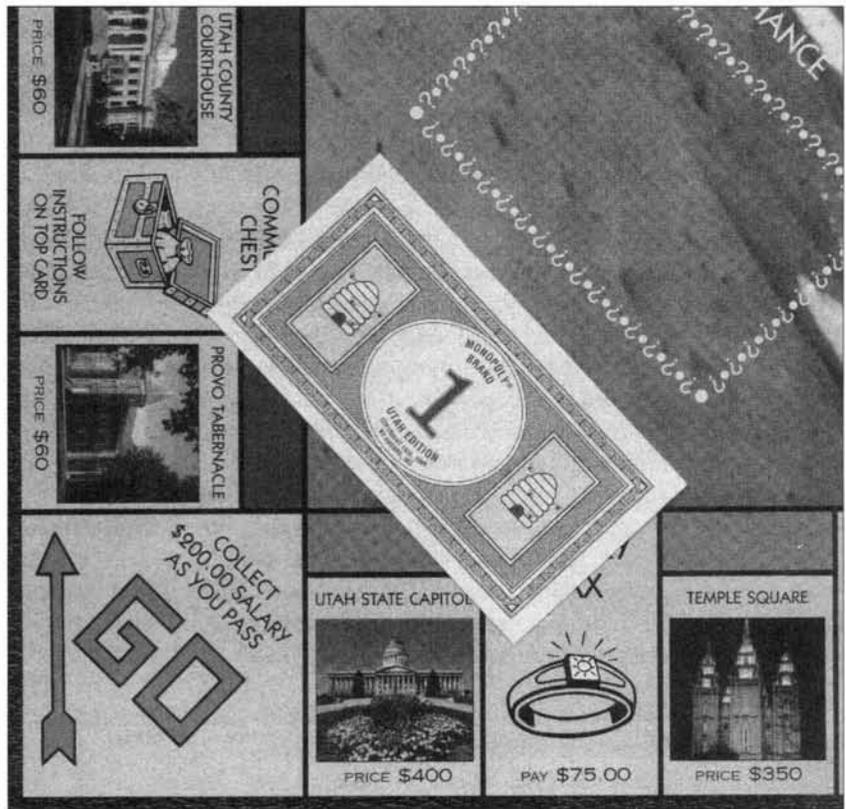
SHOULD PRACTIC-  
ING POLYGAMY BE  
CONSTITUTIONAL?

The First Amendment of U.S. Constitution explicitly states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," and on that basis, Mormons defended their right to practice polygamy. In the landmark case on religious freedom, which was brought by imprisoned, polygamous Apostle George Reynolds, the U.S. Supreme Court, however, reasoned that while

Congress may not forbid belief, which it holds sacrosanct, it can legislate concerning objectionable behavior. And then the Mormons began their long process of stopping the practice of polygamy.

In the April 1998 *Stanford Law Review*, Mormon Elizabeth Harmer-Dionne notes that "many scholars have written about both *Reynolds v. United States* and the belief-action distinction, but few outside the Mormon community can truly appreciate the impact that decision has had on Mormon belief." She recounts how the forced cessation of polygamy not only caused many Mormon practices to be changed but, also, many Mormon beliefs and doctrines that once were central to Mormon theology were dramatically recast and repositioned as

All-Seeing Eye



BABYLON ACQUIRES ZION

Ever since Salt Lake City bagged the 2002 Winter Olympics, people there have been calling the Crossroads of the West a "world-class city." Then came the international capitalistic incursions, including the Hardrock Cafe. With this past Christmas's commercialization, Utah joins the exclusive ranks of capitalistic capitals, including Manhattan, with its own edition of Parker Brothers' Monopoly® (\$29.95), and, finally, you really can get anything in this world for money. A rich man still may not be able to get to heaven, but he can buy the temple (\$350), and a poor one can own the Provo Tabernacle (\$140).

a result. "The purpose of this note is not to defend polygamy, but rather to highlight the very real effect suppression of religious practice has on belief. After decades of persecution, Mormons abandoned their notions of polygamy and Zion and instead turned to a radical program of assimilation. . . . The radical assimilation and accommodation necessitated by the struggle over polygamy has had ramifications far beyond merely forsaking the practice of plural marriage." She then notes how many Mormon scholars chart a fundamental movement away from early Mormon liberalism to religious conservatism and neo-orthodoxy as a result of the forced Great Accommodation.

Harmer-Dionne concludes that *Reynolds's* belief-action dichotomy is a myth: "suppression of religious practice, under the guise of the . . . neutrality principle, actually changes belief and that this comes dangerously close to violating the Free Exercise Clause. This is particularly true for churches that place as much or greater emphasis on action as on faith. For them, to act is to believe."

. . . for a liberal polity such as the United States that purports to value freedom of religion, speech, and conscience, there is a marked philosophical difference between theological developments that result from organic evolution and those that result from massive persecution and forced cessation of social customs and marital practices. The sharp divide between the Church's historical and current conceptions of both Zion and polygamy has unquestionably impacted Mormon theology and belief. Rather than reaching independent theological conclusions, the young Church was forced to accept laws in opposition to its then current beliefs and practices.

Given that changing practices does change beliefs, thus violating the First Amendment, Harmer-Dionne reasons that religiously motivated practices such as polygamy should be allowed, but that the government would not be required "to affirmatively support particular religious practices," it "would not have to recognize polygamy or give it equal status with monogamy. It simply could not criminalize or otherwise attempt to suppress the practice." And there are still limits to what practices could be allowed:

Recognizing the religious rights of some does not require society to sanction religiously motivated conduct that sacrifices the civil rights of others. For example, when the physical safety of abortion doctors and patients conflict with religiously based attempts to stop abortions, protecting the civil rights of the former justifies suppressing the religiously motivated conduct of the latter. The Supreme Court has proved capable of protecting such civil rights. The Court, however, has not shown itself to be as capable of defending religious rights. Meaningful free exercise of religion requires that when the rights and well-being of individuals or society are not at stake, the beliefs of religionists be accommodated.

She concludes by acknowledging that polygamy is not now a concern of today's LDS church, but, if Mormonism had been

permitted a "natural evolution," she wonders "what contemporary Mormonism would have to say regarding polygamy and why it would say so. Because of past governmental interference, this is not an answerable question."

### *Sunstone Top Twelve*

## PRESIDENT HINCKLEY TOPS '98 NEWS STORIES



**K**ENT S. LARSEN RECENTLY ASKED THE SUBSCRIBERS to his Internet Mormon-News list to vote on the most important Mormon news stories in 1998. (For list information, visit <<http://www.panix.com/~klar sen/mormon-news/>>.) And the top twelve winners are:

12. Sunrise Video sued by Paramount Pictures for editing copies of *Titanic*.
11. Texas jury found LDS church liable for \$4 million in abuse case.
10. Apostle Dallin H. Oaks testified at congressional hearing on the Religious Liberty Protection Act of 1998.
9. Temple announced for Kiev, Ukraine.
8. Seventy Marlin K. Jensen called for more political diversity in the Church.
7. Church President Gordon B. Hinckley toured West Africa.
6. LDS church donates \$1.1 million to anti-gay marriage campaigns in Alaska and Hawaii.
5. Missionary Jose Manuel Mackintosh killed in random attack in Russia.
4. Two missionaries kidnapped in Russia.
3. Russia officially recognizes LDS church, thus preventing the need for missionaries to leave country every three months to renew visas.
2. President Hinckley interviewed on Larry King Live.



*Elder Marlin K. Jensen explains why the Church needs Democrats and Republicans.*

*And the number one news story about Mormonism was:*

1. President Hinckley announces the Church will build thirty small temples, making one hundred operating temples by the year 2000.





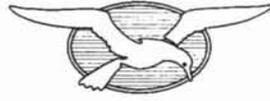
# MORMON INDEX

- Number of new buildings the Church builds each year: 600
- Estimated value of Mormon meetinghouses and temples in the U.S.: \$12 billion
  - Value of foreign meetinghouses and temples: \$6 billion
- Number of sister missionaries assigned to Temple Square: 175
- Number of languages Temple Square missionaries represent: 28
- Number of languages general conference proceedings are translated into: 35
- Approximate number of cable television and radio stations in the United States and Canada that carry some conference proceedings: 1,200
- Approximate percentage of attendees at Logan, Utah's 1998 Martin Harris pageant who requested that missionaries visit them: 6
- Number of miles one thousand Boy Scouts marched along Joseph Smith's "Trail of Martyrdom" from Nauvoo to Carthage, Illinois: 23
- Percentage of BYU population that are people of Black, Hispanic, Asian, or American Indian background: 11.3
- Percentage of University of Utah population that are of ethnic minority backgrounds: 6.7
- Percentage of UCLA students that are of ethnic minority backgrounds: 51
- Academic ranking of BYU among 228 major American universities: 77
- Number of jars of food preserved by 150 Armenian Saints in a recent welfare project: 1,200
- Number of Saints to attend the tailgate party for "LDS day" at a San Francisco Giants baseball game: 5,000
  - Percentage of Utah population in 1860 that was non-LDS: 12
  - Percentage of Utah population in 1880, after valuable ores were discovered, that was non-LDS: 21
- Number of nondrinking Mormons to drinking non-Mormons on Utah's liquor oversight panel: 4 to 1
  - Percentage of active Mormons who say they drink alcohol: 6
  - Percentage of nominal Mormons who say they drink alcohol: 59
  - Percentage of Americans who say they drink alcohol: 71
- Number of LDS high school students to receive perfect scores on either the SAT or ACT college entrance exams in 1998: 13
- Ratio of Mormons in the House of Representatives who voted to impeach President Clinton to those Mormons who did not: 10:0
- Ratio of Jews in the House who voted to impeach President Clinton to those Jews who did not: 2:22
- Ratio of Baptists in the House who voted to impeach President Clinton to those Baptists who did not: 27:31
- Ratio of Catholics in the House who voted to impeach President Clinton to those Catholics who did not: 49:72
- Number of LDS stakes worldwide as of 18 January 1999: 2,503
- Number of administrative areas the Church has divided the globe into, as of August 1998: 28
- Number of LDS missionaries teaching English in Thailand: 22
- Number of subscribers to the Church's international magazine: 220,000
- Number of languages into which the Church's international magazine is translated: 37
- Finishing place for Southern Virginia College's women's soccer team in a 1998 national championship tournament: 1
- Number of Honduran Saints evacuated from their flood-damaged homes after Hurricane Mitch: 4,000
  - Number of Honduran LDS chapels seriously damaged by the hurricane: 16
- Number of people clothed by cloth the Church donated to Hurricane Mitch survivors: 112,000

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1 *Church News* 12 Sept. 1998, 4; 2, 3 *Time*, 4 Aug. 1997, 54; 4, 5, 6, 7 *Church News* 3 Oct. 1998, 10; 8, 9 *Church News* 22 Aug. 1998, 11; 10, 11, 12 *Daily Universe* 12 Oct. 1998, 13 BYU press release, 27 Aug. 1998; 14 *Church News*, 29 Aug. 1998, 9; 15 *Church News*, 5 Sep. 1998, 8; 16, 17 *Journal of Mormon History* 24:1 (spring 1998), 91; 18 *Salt Lake Tribune* 8 July 1998, B2; 19, 20, 21 Rodney Stark, "The Basis of Mormon Success: A Theoretical Application," in *Latter-day Saint Social Life: Social Research on the LDS Church and Its Members*, ed. James T. Duke (BYU Religious Studies Center), 50; 22 *Church News* 5 Sept. 1998, 10; 23, 24, 25, 26 *Washington Post* 9 Jan. 1999; 27 Mormon-News Internet service, 1 Jan. 1999; 28 *Salt Lake Tribune* 24 August 1998, C3; 29 *Deseret News* 1 Jan. 1999; 30, 31 *Church News* 3 Oct. 1998; 32 *Church News* 21 Nov. 1998; 33, 34 *Church News* 7 Nov. 1998; 35 "News from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," radio program produced Church public affairs, broadcast by U.S. radio stations during 14-20 Nov. 1998

NO TOIL NOR LABOR



Chapter 5

THE MOTHER'S LEG

By Neal Chandler, Margaret Young, Linda Sillitoe, Levi S. Peterson  
and Pauline Mortensen

*This is the fifth installment of a short-short story by six authors.*

JENEAL SAT OUT ON THE DECK IN THE KENNEDY rocker Larry had bought on credit in 1986, brought up to the summer cabin to stain and to varnish for her birthday, but then forgotten and never looked at again. Now the naked pine was smoke yellow except where it was gummed and charcoal beneath her hands. She liked to sit on the shabby, neglected wood and rock slowly for perspective. Sun was warm through the thin air, the sky clear, the mountain hushed with bird song, but Jeneal was working. That's what she'd told the bishop on the phone. She was conducting an audit, which she hadn't told him exactly, but if he wanted to talk, had time for rumors and for nosing into private business, then he'd have to come up to her office. She sure wasn't going down to his. She wasn't even going to get dressed.

Among other things, things like politics and sexual intercourse and family values, Jeneal was reassessing religion. She kept on rocking and squinted down over the road that climbed up through the canyon. She stroked the deer rifle in her lap and studied things out in her mind. The establishment was coming to have its say. She was calm now. She was looking forward to the conversation.

THE doe she called "Marquita" rustled the scrub oak then peeked through the buds at her. Jeneal nodded, rocking, stroking the rifle. The one time she had caught Marquita nudging her hungry head into the Designated Territory, Jeneal had shot into the air. It was pure poetry, the way a deer could leap for its life.

Marquita was eying her now, like something omniscient. Frankly, these were the visions getting her to reassess. She wasn't wondering if it might all be a lie and a damn waste of time, that establishment-religion she had married into. (God save us, three hours of hard benches and slow songs, and Larry looking like God's personal Fuller Brush Man waiting for some sparkly commission to fall from the sky!) She was wondering if it could actually be true—Heaven and Hell and eternity and that. If a deer could paw into her secrets that



*Jeneal was thinking of tomorrow's news: "Crazed woman, disappearance something something, big picture of the gun, yadda yadda."*

way, eye her that way, then maybe there was a God, and He was using deer eyes.

The bishop's rusted truck rounded the bend. She took off her sweater (Larry's sweater, actually, the grey one his mother gave him one Christmas, two sizes too big). She wrapped the rifle in it, then set it under the rocker. The bishop would, no doubt, comment on the weather, ask her wasn't she chilly without a coat, wasn't she awful lonely away

from bright lights and grocery shoppers, and what kind of work was she doing anyhow that couldn't be done in an office building, and wasn't there some marshmallow-Jell-O salad the Relief Society sisters could make her? He'd look briefly toward the peak, and he'd be thinking avalanche, but not saying it. (Spring melt was upon them. Everyone expected once the sun finished its business, Larry's white, white body would come through the icy veil, hands frozen frantic, wide-eyed face, all nicely preserved. But that wouldn't exactly be happening, because that's not exactly where Larry was.)

**W**HY are you even doing this, the deer asked as the bishop parked in the roadside rut, since you've already had the conversation? I mean, what's in it for you?

Nothing, Jeneal answered, more surprised by that truth than the implication of talking with a deer. I just didn't know how to say no other than making it inconvenient, she added.

Marquita nodded. You could lose a lot, she said, her eyes even wiser.

Jeneal sighed, and a small cloud of knowing passed between them. Really, she'd always been able to converse this way except the other person pretended not to hear unless every word was uttered.

Marquita tipped her graceful head as the truck door slammed. Besides, she said, you're already free.

Jeneal smiled deeply at the sky. Free was precisely the word that had eluded her. But how do I get rid of him? she asked. I mean not—

Marquita lifted a hoof toward the sweater under the chair. Bishops leap almost as high as deer, she said; he'll run. Then she vanished into the scrub.

**I**T wasn't the bishop who came around the corner of the cabin and up the steps onto the deck. It was an elderly woman who wore rubber-bottomed boots, a soiled mackinaw coat over a flowery dress, and a scarf tied over mouse-grey hair. She had no upper teeth, and her eyes, magnified by thick glasses, looked like peering moons.

"I've got a deal on the Shermoor and Thrale encyclopedia set," the old woman said. "Nothing down, thirty-five dollars a month. Can't beat that."

"Lord, no," Jeneal said. "I've already got too much information at my fingertips."

The old woman opened her briefcase and took out a book. "For example, any-

thing you want to know about Stalin is here. You look in the S volume. Everything is alphabetized. You can't believe what that fellow did! Eight million Soviet citizens died in the labor camps. Eight million!"

"I've got a visitor coming," Jeneal said. "You better leave before he comes up the road. There isn't any place to turn around if you meet each other."

"You should read this book," the old woman insisted. "I know what you've got wrapped up there in that sweater. It's one of those short-barreled carbines. I hope you're not into that militia stuff like the folks across the valley."

"It's none of your business whatever I'm into," Jeneal said. "Sometimes I take a shot at a fence post. Just for practice."

"What you ought to do is quit talking to those deer," the old woman said. "That's an old religion—a very old religion! I'd have thought you'd have better sense."

"I don't have to take this," Jeneal said. "Clear out of here. Get off my property!"

Then the old woman was gone. It was just like people said: it happens in the twinkling of an eye. Jeneal ran to the edge of the deck. The rusty pickup was gone, too. There were no tire tracks in the muddy road.

Jeneal took the rifle and went into the cabin and put water on for a hot drink. "I'll be damned," she said. "Who would have thought it? The Three Nephites are women."

**S**HE turned up the gas.

Well, of course. It didn't take a college professor to figure that one out. She would add this latest item to the conversation. Squirt it over smoking coals like lighter fluid, bring it all back to the flame. All the evidence would add up to something. At least she had faith in that much. Sure, the bishop would quote some scripture, remind her about not speaking of the mysteries, but for nothing else she would bring up the old woman in memory of her Larry. Larry, who even in his final moments could not abide her own growing necessity to talk. She would say it for him. Because she could say anything now, knowing that it would never make print.

Tomorrow's news would read, "Crazed woman, something something, disappearance of her husband earlier that year, something something, big picture of the gun, yadda yadda." They will come looking for facts, but they will miss everything.

Beads were already forming on the side of the pan. And who said a watched pot never boils? And that was it exactly. They would miss the way she stood there bringing the water to a boil, the great barrels of water behind the piddling amount now in the pan. They would miss the barrels and see the piddle. Never see the way the mother stands there at the stove, the child playing underneath the skirts, the father's feet coming in reeking from the barn, his voice booming overhead, "We are going because I have the say. I have the final say. We are selling everything we own and moving out. We are going." They would miss all that. And the child, both arms around the mother's post of a leg, wondering what would come next, after going.

Now that was religion. The mother's leg.

The boiling water hissed off the hot metal. Someone else was coming up the drive. She flipped off the gas and picked up the gun. Whoever it was, this one would be for Larry and her mother's leg.

*To be continued . . . Next issue, the conclusion by Brian Evenson.*



STEVE KLAMM

of her husband,

*American Christian women activists have, historically, had two motivating tendencies: a desire for direct spiritual experience and/or a concern for the pragmatic effects of religion in improving society. Are there parallels among Mormon women?*

## RECURRING TENDENCIES IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN CHRISTIAN WOMEN

*By Amanda Porterfield*

**I**N NOVEMBER 1637, ANNE HUTCHINSON WAS brought before the General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony and sentenced to banishment. The magistrates of the court disapproved of her considerable influence in Boston, especially among women, and objected to the meetings she held in her house, where she explained the sermons delivered by her minister, John Cotton, and compared his knowledge of grace with the lack of it in other ministers. The court regarded her as a threat to social order and convicted her of dishonoring the ministers and magistrates to whom she owed filial respect. In the prolonged examination that preceded this sentencing, Hutchinson proved herself to be knowledgeable in scripture and quick in her own defense. She justified the meetings held in her house as conforming to the "clear rule in Titus, that the elder women should instruct the younger" and claimed that such gatherings were "in practice before I came." She explained that she began to hold meetings in her home to prove to her neighbors that she did not believe such meetings were "unlawful." To the irritation of her examiners, she defended her willingness to "harbour and countenance" those among her male associates already found guilty of sedition by invoking the religious principle that had led all Puritans to New England: "That's matter of conscience, Sir."<sup>1</sup>

Hutchinson's sense of righteousness eventually destroyed her defense. In a burst of confidence, she revealed more than her examiners needed to condemn her. When asked how she

knew some of the ministers in Boston were "wrong," and that others, like John Cotton, were "clear," she replied that the Holy Spirit showed her the difference. When pressed as to how the Spirit did this, she retorted with a question of her own, quickly exposing her belief that she was divinely inspired: "How did Abraham know that it was God that bid him offer his son, being a breach of the sixth commandment?" she asked. "By an immediate voice," answered Deputy Governor Thomas Dudley. "So to me by an immediate revelation," rejoined Hutchinson. "How! an immediate revelation," exclaimed Dudley. But Hutchinson persisted: "By the voice of his own spirit to my soul." She further instructed the Court that God would intervene to free her from persecution: "[T]his place in Daniel was brought unto me and did shew me that though I should meet with affliction yet I am the same God that delivered Daniel out of the lion's den, I will also deliver thee."<sup>2</sup>

These claims proved to Hutchinson's examiners that she had elevated her religious experience to the status of biblical revelation and herself to the status of Abraham and Daniel. As John Eliot defined the problem while the court moved toward sentencing her, it was fine to have "an expectation of things promised" in scripture, "but to have a particular revelation of things that shall fall out, there is no such thing in scripture." In the view of the Puritans presiding at her trial, Hutchinson's claim that God would free her from her persecutors as he had saved Daniel from the lion's den was a "delusion"<sup>3</sup> that undermined her obligation to submissiveness as a subject and a woman, and it threatened their authority.

The intellectual contest between Hutchinson and the magistrates of the General Court defined fundamental differences between radical and more moderate Puritans. While radicals

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AMANDA PORTERFIELD is visiting professor of religious studies at the University of Wyoming. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 1992 Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City (tape #SL92-119).

argued that the Holy Spirit inspired Christians directly and that Christians were aware of that direct inspiration, other Puritans argued that Christians knew the Spirit only indirectly, through reading or listening to the inspired truth of biblical texts. On questions of the Spirit's indwelling, the nature of fellowship in the Spirit, the value of lay prophecy, and the relative merits of prescribed or spontaneous prayers, radicals emphasized the authority of individual experience while others emphasized the Spirit's conformity to social order and rationality.<sup>4</sup>

Such questions about the Holy Spirit's activity reflected Puritan preoccupation with defining the normative characteristics of religious experience and personal faith. This preoccupation can be understood as part of a general concern in Puritan culture to define the nature of subjective experience and the extent of its authority. In Puritan culture, which was in transition between fear of external authority and reliance on conscience, questions about the nature of religious experience were paramount. Thus the examination of Anne Hutchinson, her claim to divine inspiration, and her banishment were part of a larger intellectual debate about the relationships between subjective feeling and moral conscience, and moral conscience and social order.

The General Court magistrates respected the claims of conscience, so long as they did not challenge their own authority or the authority of duly appointed ministers. Hutchinson's position was no less complicated: she had elevated her personal experience above all political authority, while at the same time subjecting her intelligence to that experience and its defense. She was committed to a force inside herself she believed she could not control, and at the end of her examination, she did not restrain herself from making the claim to immediate inspiration she must have known would condemn her. Her claim to immediate inspiration lent authority to her subjective experience, but it also involved a certain element of passivity and irresponsibility. She believed in the power of the Holy Spirit working in her, but during the church trial that followed her examination by the General Court, she suggested that the de-



MARK BREWER

#### ANNE HUTCHINSON

*Her commitment to the Holy Spirit is a recurring tendency in the history of American Christian women—to assert publicly the ultimacy of one's subjective religious experience in a way that challenges social convention.*

scriptions of the working of the Spirit she had given to the General Court were probably unreliable.<sup>5</sup> In other words, she relinquished any public claim to intelligibility.

THE PRIMACY OF  
SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE  
*From Anne Hutchinson to Mary Daly, there has been a tendency to celebrate women's prophetic experiences and to associate social convention with oppressive patriarchy.*

I N recent years, a number of feminists have recognized the relevance of Anne Hutchinson to their own issues. For example, Rosemary Skinner Keller, Lyle Koehler, and Ben Barker-Benfield all celebrate Hutchinson as a heroic proto-feminist and condemn as patriarchal oppressors the Puritans who banished her. Thus Barker-Benfield represents the theological concerns of Hutchinson's examiners as a thinly disguised rationalization for male dominance. He interprets Hutchinson's radical commitment to the Holy Spirit as a response to the exclusion of women from the "priesthood of believers" promised in

covenant theology. He argues that John Winthrop, the presiding governor at her examination, "recognized that response; and that his own reaction was largely influenced by what he perceived as a sexual threat."<sup>6</sup> Barker-Benfield is rightly sensitive to the similarity between Hutchinson's situation and the polarized situations faced by some feminists in his own day, but his partisan sympathy for Hutchinson and hostility to Puritanism leads him to overlook some larger implications of that similarity.

From a broader perspective, Hutchinson's commitment to the Holy Spirit can be seen as an example of a recurring tendency in the history of American Christian women—to assert publicly the ultimacy of subjective religious experience in a way that challenges social convention. Recent examples of this tendency are found among feminist theologians who celebrate women's prophetic expressions and spiritual insight and who associate social convention with the evils of patriarchy and with men's rational, linear thinking. One of the most influential spokeswomen for such a position is the renegade Catholic

theologian Mary Daly, whose criticisms of Catholic sexism in the late 1960s developed in the 1970s and 1980s into an antinomian indictment of Christian misogyny and a joyful celebration of the natural characteristics of women.

Although she no longer considers herself Christian, Daly's commitment to criticizing Christianity is well-precedented in the history of Christian theology. Among those to whom her theology is heir, Daly has specifically identified Protestant theologian Paul Tillich, whose ideas serve as "springboards" for her own. Although she reinterpreted Tillich's existential idealism in feminist terms and came to attack his theology as insufficiently liberating, Daly developed her thinking out of his, which identified subjective experiences of ecstasy with divine being and criticized Christianity for supporting the constraints of middle-class morality.<sup>7</sup>

Daly differs from Hutchinson in her explicit feminism, general hostility to men, and post-Christian embrace of paganism, but she is similar in her advocacy of immediate inspiration and in her moral outrage against all who deny inspiration or seek to frame it in the context of social convention. These similarities and differences are evident in Daly's prose. Thus in her celebration of the "Wild wisdom and wit (of Wonderlusting women), which cut through the mazes of man-made mystification, breaking the mindbindings of master-minded doublethink," and in her assertion of a "subliminal connection . . . between the spirits represented by the names *principalities* and *powers* . . . and the spirits of Elemental, Untamed women," Daly is as righteously confident of her inspiration as Hutchinson was. She rejects the submissiveness to Christ that Hutchinson gloried in, but shares Hutchinson's eagerness to publicize her feelings and speak out against potential challengers. While Hutchinson claimed she was united to the body of Christ through the Holy Spirit and that the Spirit spoke directly to her, Daly interprets criticism of such claims as misogynist suppression of female authenticity. Thus Daly calls her readers to interpret "portrayals of Christ as the one who 'disarmed the principalities and powers' . . . as . . . justifications for male breaking, humiliating, and gloating over" the elemental spirits of women.<sup>8</sup>

Many of Daly's views can be found in the writings of other feminist theologians. Although Daly's complete rejection of Judaism and Christianity represents a kind of extreme, her tendency to identify the spontaneous, natural feelings of women as sacred and the systematic ideas of men as oppressively profane is common in feminist theology. This tendency among Christian feminists is well-represented in the writings of Sharon Welch. Welch restates Daly's claim that "patriarchy is the prevailing religion of the entire planet and its essential message is necrophilia," an obsessive love of death and violence. But Welch maintains her ties to Christianity by placing herself in the tradition of Christian theologians since the nineteenth century who have called for a radical critique and reinterpretation of Christian faith. Welch follows Daly in identifying patriarchy as the ultimate evil but retains a Christian framework for this position by defining patriarchy as the sin true Christianity should overthrow. Similarly, Welch places

Daly's sharp distinctions between the evils of men and the virtues of women in the context of liberation theology, suggesting that Christianity should be understood in terms of women's appreciation of freedom, diversity, and change rather than in terms of men's desire for transcendence, power, and security. And Welch follows Daly in denouncing interpretations of Jesus as "a model of sacrificial love" that encourages "women to accept, rather than actively resist, their own victimization." Thus Welch does not reject Jesus but only those interpretations of him that focus on his sacrificial love rather than on his exemplification of freedom.<sup>9</sup>

This tendency among feminist theologians to contrast liberation with sacrifice, and female righteousness with male oppression, can be framed in the context of a recurring debate in American religious history about the relationships between emotional feeling and moral conscience, and between moral conscience and social order. While feminist theologians often balance their desire for freedom from oppression with a strong commitment to social justice, many are like Hutchinson in their tendency to polarize moral conscience and social order, and to conflate moral conscience with emotional feeling. They might be considered heirs to the religious outspokenness of Hutchinson, whose interpretation of the Holy Spirit has become wholly and explicitly identified with feminism.

#### SPIRITUALISM AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

*Nineteenth-century spiritualism's emphasis on individual rights resonated with women who were expected to suppress their individuality in the service of men.*

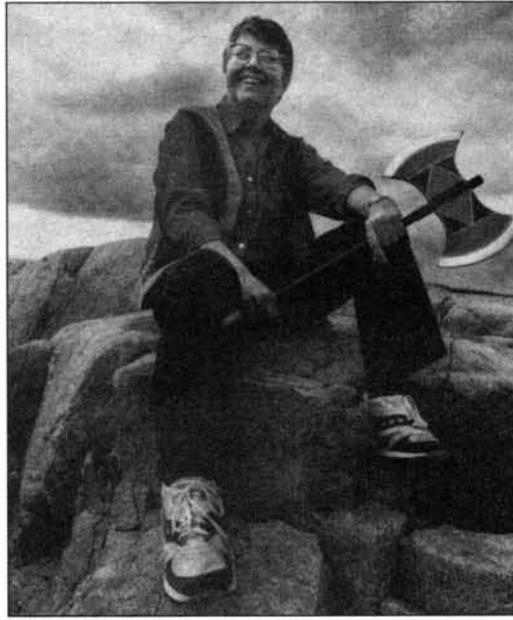
A MID-POINT between Hutchinson and her intellectual heirs among current feminist theologians can be found in the mid-nineteenth-century religious movement known as spiritualism. In the late 1840s, spiritualism emerged among Hicksite Quakers, who had separated in 1827 from less radical members of the Society of Friends. Hicksites rejected what they perceived to be the worldliness of less radical Quakers and sought a return to the devotion to the inner light within the individual Christian that had characterized John Fox and other early Quakers. Hicksites were among the first to seek out the Fox sisters, who heard rappings from the spirit world in their farmhouse outside Rochester, New York, and among the first to incorporate communications with the dead within the context of Protestant theology.<sup>10</sup> In the tradition of Anne Hutchinson, Hicksite Quakers prized the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and believed that it could speak directly through Christians. However, Hicksite Quakers who became spiritualists were less mystical and more individualistic than Hutchinson was. While Hutchinson believed that election and immortality were successive stages of being swallowed up in the spirit body of Christ, spiritualists believed that individuality persisted after death.

This individualism was closely associated with women's concerns. In a culture in which children frequently died in childbirth or from birth defects or childhood diseases, and in which middle-class women had relatively little outlet outside

of religion and domestic life, spiritualist beliefs in communication with the spirits of deceased loved ones helped women cope with losses they suffered. Moreover, the spiritualists' deep concern for individual rights resonated with many women, who felt enormous tension between being taught to focus on the development of their characters and those of their children, and at the same time being expected to suppress their individuality in the service of men. Spiritualists managed this tension by embracing beliefs and practices that encouraged individual expression but that also subjected women to the control of higher forces.

As a recent historian of spiritualism has shown, most spiritualists were female and the whole spiritualist movement was associated with what one nineteenth-century writer called "the persuasive accents of inspired woman's tongue." The male mediums who did exist were perceived to speak with the characteristics of feminine voice.<sup>11</sup> But interestingly, the most salient characteristic of this feminine voice was passivity. Although spiritualists were often quite outspoken with regard to women's rights, that outspokenness was believed to have its origin in women's innate capacity to serve as vehicles for messages from the spirit world. Thus mediums often spoke out publicly against slavery and against laws and customs that oppressed women, but they were perceived able to do so by virtue of being in a state of trance and, hence, not fully conscious. It is important to note that this perception enabled women's public speech in a culture that otherwise disapproved of it, although it would be a mistake to view spiritualism as a device that women consciously exploited in order to speak. The call for women's rights in antebellum America emerged partly in the context of earnest and widespread beliefs in the existence and activity of a spirit world. The most pragmatic of the women's rights leaders, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Susan Anthony, did not commit themselves to such beliefs, but many of the boldest advocates of women's rights in antebellum America, including the Grimke sisters, did.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1870s and 1880s, spiritualism was largely su-



MARY DALY

*Although her complete rejection of Judaism and Christianity represents an extreme position, her tendency to identify the spontaneous, natural feelings of women as sacred and the systematic ideas of men as oppressively profane is common in feminist theology.*

perceded by Christian Science and theosophy. Christian Science addressed women's concerns about health and death while positing a politically conservative and extremely idealistic form of Christianity. The founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, defined Jesus as a healer who had mastered the scientific principle that matter did not exist and that belief in matter produced sickness and evil. Although her belief in the supremacy of mind over matter can be seen as an outgrowth of spiritualism, Eddy rejected spiritualism because its tendency to materialize the spirit world enabled practitioners to exercise a negative power over others, a power that she called "malicious animal magnetism."<sup>13</sup> In the same vein, while spiritualism had allowed women to express desires for political and legal rights, Eddy eschewed such materialisms.

Theosophy was more open to women's rights, although it, too, elevated the spirit above such mundane realities as politics and the law. Founded in the 1870s by Henry Olcott and Russian immigrant Helene

Blavatsky, theosophy combined spiritualism's belief in spiritual communication (especially through women) with Eastern and ancient philosophies. Olcott and Blavatsky popularized some of the mystical writings of Hinduism and Buddhism, which they believed to be related to gnosticism in the West. In anticipation of Mary Daly and other goddess theologians of the present day, Blavatsky argued that witches burned in early modern Europe were practitioners of a form of magic derived from ancient gnostic wisdom and celebrated gnosticism for its belief that wisdom, personified by the goddess Sophia, was female.<sup>14</sup> As Janet Nelson has discovered, Daly relied on the writings of Matilda Joselyn Gage, who carried forward Blavatsky's concept of Christianity as the suppressor of women's religion.

In their concern for women's rights and criticism of male oppression, the spiritualists in antebellum America and their theosophical successors anticipated later feminist concerns for social justice. But feminist theologians like Daly and Welch go beyond spiritualists and theosophists in their rejection of any

supernatural spirit or spirit world, or any supernatural justification for feminism. Indeed, they have come to define God in terms of women and have relinquished belief in any spiritual reality that could be described as independent or antecedent to feminism. What they have not relinquished as heirs to the spiritualist and theosophical traditions is commitment to the authority of personal inspiration. Like spiritualist and theosophical beliefs in female receptivity to the spirit world, Daly's commitment to subjective inspiration is reminiscent of Hutchinson's radical and ultimately passive reliance on the Holy Spirit.

#### RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCE

*Women as far removed from one another as Anne Bradstreet and Eleanor Roosevelt have demonstrated a tendency to mediate religious experience through self-control and concern for moral conscience.*

THE tendency to elevate inspiration above pragmatic consideration for social convention has not been the only recurring tendency in the history of American Christian women. No less significant or influential has been the complementary tendency to filter personal religious experience through deliberation about social purposes and consequences. This tendency has not been any less religious, necessarily less feminist, or always unmixed with the tendency to celebrate religious impulse. But it is more deliberately self-conscious and more accepting of social convention.

A good example of this tendency can be found in the writings of Anne Hutchinson's contemporary in seventeenth-century New England, Anne Bradstreet. In contrast to Hutchinson, Bradstreet did not prophesy in public, nor did she attribute metaphysical objectivity to her internal voices. As befitting the daughter and wife of high-ranking officials in Massachusetts Bay government, Bradstreet's criticisms of her social order were more circumspect than Hutchinson's and apparently designed not to provoke outrage or fear. But her deliberately modest and highly educated form of self-expression allowed her a great range of self-expression and earned her lasting fame as a poet, while Hutchinson's more radical and more unconscious claim to authority led to her notoriety and, ultimately, to her exile and death.

While Hutchinson viewed the Spirit as an absolute and wholly external power that seized and spoke to her without her help, Bradstreet did not attribute such aggression to the Spirit, or so little control to herself. In her poem, "The Flesh and the Spirit," she depicted Flesh and Spirit as two sisters she happened to overhear debating their respective assets beside a stream. As the author of a poem rather than a prophet seized by a power outside herself, Bradstreet presented the Spirit as she wanted the Spirit to be seen. And her picture of Spirit and Flesh as siblings emphasized the Spirit's human qualities.<sup>15</sup>

Bradstreet established her authority and skill as a poet by using the Puritan ideal of pious modesty to her own advantage. In "The Prologue" to her book of poetry, *The Tenth Muse*

*Lately Sprung up in America*, the first book of poetry written by an American, Bradstreet referred to her "foolish, broken, blemished Muse," and insisted that great epic verse was beyond her power: "To sing of wars, of captains, and of kings, / Of cities founded, commonwealths begun, / For my mean pen are too superior things." Following this disarming expression of modesty, she proceeded to write about wars, captains, kings, and commonwealths and to castigate every "carping tongue" that denigrated "female wits." This ironic dimension in Bradstreet's verse is compounded by the further irony that her censure of carping, misogynist tongues had no apparent referent in her own social experience. As one of her twentieth-century critics commented, "We have no contemporary reference to [Bradstreet] or her poetry which is not somewhere between admiration and adulation."<sup>16</sup>

Bradstreet's reliance on irony was not simply a means to her public renown, but an important ingredient in her moral and religious thought as well. Thus her elegy for her eighteen-month-old granddaughter Elizabeth turns on a statement about God's inhumanity that indirectly attests to her own humanity as a woman and a poet. She admits that death should be accepted when it comes as a natural culmination of age: "By nature Trees do rot when they are grown. / And Plumbs and Apples thoroughly ripe do fall." But the death of an infant is unnatural, and Bradstreet's rocky lines acknowledging God's omnipotence speak against his justice: "plants new set to be eradicate, / And buds new blown, to have so short a date, / Is by his hand alone that guides nature and fate." Thus before God's power, Bradstreet makes a heartfelt bow, the religious and moral significance of which lies in its difficulty.<sup>17</sup>

One twentieth-century heir of this Christian tradition of indirect female assertiveness is Eleanor Roosevelt. Although no woman in her own lifetime was more involved in public life, or more eager to succeed in attaining her political goals, Roosevelt repeatedly downplayed her political activism and its importance in her life and portrayed herself as primarily a wife and mother. She framed her efforts in behalf of social reform in the context of the very values that limited women's participation in public life and realized that it was on these terms that the chances of realizing her political goals were greatest. Thus in 1928, when she was working full-time on Al Smith's presidential campaign, she gave an interviewer for the *New York Times Magazine* the impression that she never allowed politics to "interfere with her devotion to her home," and that she "believe[d] that a woman fitted to serve her community or her country can show that fitness best in the management of her own home." Like Bradstreet's claiming ineptitude for epic verse as a prolegomenon to writing it, Roosevelt's claim to domesticity appeared in the same month as a strongly feminist article she wrote for *Redbook*, which called women to organize themselves to demand more equality in politics and claimed that "Politically, as a sex, women are generally 'frozen out' from any intrinsic share of influence." Roosevelt criticized male politicians who would support a woman for office only if they knew "their ticket cannot win the district selected." She also criticized women who professed themselves "horrified at the

thought of women bosses bartering and dickering in the hard game of politics with the men."<sup>18</sup>

Roosevelt was discreet about the fact that she and her husband had different homes and different friends after 1920. She was also discreet about her involvement in campaigns for social reform, especially if those campaigns might have upstaged her husband. She did not even attend the Democratic Party convention that nominated Al Smith for president, and when her husband was elected governor of New York in 1928, she resigned as editor of the *Women's Democratic News*. Although her name no longer appeared on the masthead of that forum of political and social reform, according to her recent biographer, "she continued to write most of the editorials, raise most of the money, and do most of the troubleshooting."<sup>19</sup> As her leadership became increasingly well-established, Roosevelt accepted the role of a public representative of concern for social welfare. But her tendency was always to subordinate her public persona to her causes.

Roosevelt's willingness to yield the limelight was not a cynical form of political art, but an outgrowth of a habit of deference to others that developed into a political art. This habit of deference was initially shaped by a sense of inferiority instilled in her by the neglect and early deaths of her parents, and reestablished, after her 1905 marriage, by her mother-in-law's authoritarian intrusiveness and her husband's infidelity. These hard experiences were undoubtedly one source of Roosevelt's lifelong compassion for the suffering of others. But her commitment to political activism in 1920 was also the result of a deliberate decision to rise above her feelings of abandonment and inferiority and live on her own terms as fully as she could.<sup>20</sup>

No less important, Roosevelt's tendency to minimize her own accomplishments also grew out of an indifference to celebrity she associated with Christian conceptions of selfhood and duty. After her death, one of her friends characterized her as "thoughtful, serious, with a terrible sense of duty. Good New England conscience at work all the time." This



ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

*She repeatedly downplayed her political activism and her private religious beliefs and framed her efforts for social reform in the context of the very values that limited women's participation in public life, such as primary commitment to home and husband.*

sense of duty was a prominent aspect of the Christianity that figured importantly in her worldview. She grew up "in a family where there was a deep religious feeling," and when she became an adult, her commitment to Christianity was well-known to her family and friends. During her early years in the White House, she carried a prayer in her purse reminding her "to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends and every day of Christ."<sup>21</sup>

Roosevelt was rarely explicit or demonstrative about her religious beliefs. In campaigning for the relief and reform programs of the New Deal, she invoked the Sermon on the Mount in her arguments for a "New Social Order" based on the teachings of Jesus, but this public expression of religion was unusual. She preferred going to church at Hyde Park, where she was most likely to be unaccompanied by reporters and photographers. And in an essay published in 1932 titled, "What Religion Means to Me," she asserted that churchgoing and churchwork were only "outward symbols" of the "inner growth" that

was the purpose of all religions and the hallmark of civilization. It did not trouble her that some people might achieve this inner growth "without the help of what might be called religious routine." She believed that "true religion has nothing to do with any specific creed or dogma." True religion was that "faith in the heart of man [that] makes him try to live his life according to the highest standard which he is able to visualize." She argued that "real civilization" could be reached only "through a revival of [this] true religion."<sup>22</sup>

Roosevelt's commitment to Christianity was emphatically this-worldly. After her death, the pastor of her Hyde Park church during the last twenty years of her life reported that she did not believe in personal immortality. And she was more skeptical of spiritualism than was her husband; he thought one should remain open-minded about spiritualist claims whereas she completely rejected them. Also in contrast to her husband, who often reminded his speech writers not to omit the "God-stuff" at the end of his scripts, she felt that religious language could be out of place in the public arena. Thus

during her tenure as chairman of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations, she was happy to make the Declaration of Human Rights more acceptable to representatives of Communist countries by changing "all men are created free and equal," which implied the existence of a Creator, to "all men are born free and equal," which did not. Not wanting the religious beliefs of her fellow Americans to become an obstacle to accord, she offered a lighthearted warning against religious self-defense: "I thought for those of us who are Christians, it would be difficult to have God defeated in a vote."<sup>23</sup>

In her political activism and in her association of Christianity with public benevolence, Roosevelt went far beyond Anne Bradstreet. Although Bradstreet defined herself in terms of others no less consistently, her circle of others was much more circumscribed. But Roosevelt was like Bradstreet in her investment in modesty as a social skill as well as a personal virtue, and in her pragmatic commitment to developing her own talents in the context of conventional social expectations. Unlike Anne Hutchinson and Mary Daly, who developed their talents in opposition to ideas they perceived to dominate their societies, Roosevelt and Bradstreet developed their talents as extensions of ideals of womanhood that were widely shared among their contemporaries.

#### MISSIONARIES AND THE MIDDLE GROUND

*As representatives of the pragmatic tendency to self-control, Mary Lyon and the missionaries of Mount Holyoke Female Seminary occupy a middle ground between Bradstreet's cultivation of her own moral conscience and Roosevelt's public benevolence.*

A MIDPOINT between the largely private sphere of Bradstreet's benevolence and the much more public sphere of Roosevelt's benevolence can be found in the missionary activism of New England women before the Civil War. Their pragmatism distinguishes them from the spiritualists who were their contemporaries, and is exemplified in Mary Lyon's founding of Mount Holyoke Female Seminary in 1837 as a school for women's advanced education and missionary training. In 1833, Lyon relinquished an earlier plan to expand the already-existing female seminary headed by Zilpah Grant in Ipswich where she was second in command. As Lyon described her change of mind to Grant, "I feel more and more that the whole business must, in name, devolve on benevolent gentlemen, and not on yourself or on myself. . . . Fewer needless, unkind remarks will be thrown out, less jealousy will be excited, and our private influences will be more extensive and useful in directing matters for the good of the institution." As she explained more specifically,

There is danger that many good men will fear the effect on society of so much female influence, and what they will call female greatness. They will think and say, "Miss Grant and Miss Lyon want to do some great thing, to have a large sum of money raised, and a great institution established, and to see themselves at the head of the whole, and then they will be satisfied."

I imagine I have seen a little of this already, and if more interest were to be felt in the cause, more jealousy might be excited.<sup>24</sup>

After establishing her independence from Ipswich and selecting a committee of well-respected men to represent her publicly, Lyon decided to present her plan for a publicly endowed institution for the advanced education of women as a necessary wing of the missionary enterprise. Many New England Protestants of modest means contributed to missionary causes, and Lyon carefully linked her appeal to their benevolence as missionary supporters with an appeal to their self-interest as parents of young women who could afford an advanced education only if it was priced considerably below the tuition at private female seminaries. Thus the first circular describing the organizational plan of the new seminary announced that "contributions" would "furnish" both "buildings and furniture," that "Teachers . . . possessing . . . a missionary spirit" would "receiv[e] only a moderate salary," that life in the seminary would be "very plain and simple" and require students to take responsibility for domestic work, that room, board, and tuition would be sold "at cost," and "The whole plan . . . conducted on the principles of our missionary operations," such that any "surplus" would be "cast into the treasury [from which] further reductions [in] expenses [would be made] next year."<sup>25</sup> By proposing the new seminary as an object of missionary benevolence as well as a center for inculcating it in young women, Lyon established the principle of advanced education for women and brought the first publicly endowed institution for women's higher education into being.

After the Seminary opened, Lyon encouraged missionary interest among her students in every way she could. Her pragmatic management of a series of revivals reportedly made it more difficult not to be a Christian at Mount Holyoke than anywhere else.<sup>26</sup> She encouraged committed Christians to meet regularly to discuss their faith and responsibilities to others, gathered, for special instruction, students who were hopeful of conversion, and made those left out feel their exclusion. As one of her friends observed about her effectiveness in leading recalcitrant students to conversion, "She never begged and besought her pupils to serve God, as though the infinite could not do without them. . . . Sometimes she would lift the curtain, and give her auditors a glance into the holy of holies," at which point a reluctant student might be encouraged to see that there was "no vacant seat" and be forced to admit that "Heaven will be full without her."<sup>27</sup>

The early missionaries educated at Mount Holyoke avoided overt publicity, much like Bradstreet, whose book of poems was first published without her knowledge or name. But also like Bradstreet, who wrote epic poetry of sweeping historical proportions, nineteenth-century female missionaries loved historical panorama; they studied the histories of many nations and saw themselves figuring modestly but importantly in the glorious work of God's redemption. While they shared their society's conventional belief that women were unsuited for public life, these missionaries moved in the direction of Roosevelt's public activism by devoting their lives to the ser-

vice of others. And like Roosevelt, they enlarged their opportunities for responsibility and influence through that devotion. Indeed, they often found their work as educators and teachers so fulfilling that they willingly absented themselves from America, where women's opportunities for work were more limited. Of course, separation from New England culture was considered a great sacrifice, especially in times of sickness, but the willingness with which many of these missionaries made that sacrifice suggests enjoyment of responsibility as well as capacity for self-denial.

For example, Rose Murphy Edwards's experience on leaving Holyoke in 1851 as a missionary to the Choctaws in U.S. Indian Territory was the high point of her life. According to her daughter, Edwards's "health was much broken after the first few years, but she had great executive ability, and an affection for [the Choctaw] people which was greater than any she ever felt for others. She often said the ten years spent there were the happiest in her life." Fidelia Fiske's experience in Persia was

no less rewarding. From Seir, where she stopped in 1843 on her journey to Urmiah to found a girls school for Christian Armenians, she wrote her uncle, "I go out among the women and children of this village very often, and enjoy it very, very much." Not long after she became settled in Urmiah, Fiske began to generate revivals among her students that spread through their families, where they affected several priests and bishops and helped precipitate a reformation in the Armenian Church.

Similarly, Mary Lyon's niece, Abigail Moore Burgess, a student and teacher at Mount Holyoke before her departure for India in 1846, influenced a considerable number of Hindu women and children. In addition, her fellow missionaries in the area around Ahmednuggar became so reliant on her cheerful administrative ability that they were devastated when she died of a breast abscess in 1853.<sup>28</sup>

Antebellum missionaries from Mount Holyoke were similar to spiritualists in several important respects. Both were enthusiastic about enlarging their opportunities as women,



MARY LYON

*Midpoint between the private and public spheres of benevolence, Mary Lyon's missionary activism in founding Mount Holyoke Female Seminary in 1837 combined women's private spiritualism with social reform in a way even men championed.*

but equally ready to insist on their own submissiveness to higher powers. Thus missionaries were eager for responsibility as educators and religious leaders but sure that if they exercised any positive influence, they did so only as instruments of Providence. And spiritualists were eager to claim women's rights but hesitant to advance those claims without associating them with the authority of the spirit world. Missionaries and spiritualists also shared a strong commitment to the elevation of women, and both associated that elevation with Christianity's emphasis on the importance of each individual. Finally, like spiritualists, missionaries held concrete beliefs in personal immortality. For example, one of Fidelia Fiske's correspondents apologized for not providing more details of a revival at Mount Holyoke but consoled Fiske by assuring her, "You will know all about this interesting scene in Heaven."<sup>29</sup>

Spiritualist theology differed most from the theology of Mary Lyon and her missionaries in its focus on direct communication with the spirit

world. The missionaries regarded belief in direct communication with the spirit world much as Anne Hutchinson's examiners regarded belief in immediate inspiration, namely, as a prideful and embarrassing delusion they scrupled to avoid. In the tradition of New England theology stemming from Jonathan Edwards and his theological heirs, Mount Holyoke missionaries measured the authenticity of their religious experiences in terms of the degree of disinterested benevolence those experiences produced. This pragmatic tendency, which missionaries shared with Bradstreet and Roosevelt, did not diminish their belief in divine grace, but it did draw attention to the close relationship between the effects of grace and the nature of grace itself. In contrast, belief in mediumship gave spiritualists the confidence to advocate women's rights, much as belief in immediate inspiration gave Hutchinson the confidence to preach against the leaders of her society; but the spiritualists' radical commitment to subjective experience exalted that experience beyond criticism and discouraged women from analyzing their religious experiences in terms of the ef-

fects of those events on others.

If deliberate attention to the effects of their own subjective states on others, and to the means of replicating those states in others, made antebellum New England missionaries more successful than spiritualists were in realizing their goals, missionaries did not think twice about the erosion of other cultures that was associated with conversion. And they did not even think once about the enculturation of their own beliefs in personal immortality. While the spiritualists' commitment to women's rights has stood the test of time, at least among academics, the missionaries' goal of converting the world to their own belief in personal immortality has been judged less kindly, even by later missionaries.<sup>30</sup>

#### LDS WOMEN BLEND TWO TENDENCIES

*LDS women prize both the direct expression of religious experience and the concern to interpret that experience in terms of communal order.*

AFTER the Civil War, the "social gospel" and its critique of otherworldly theology affected missionary activism profoundly. The Social Gospel's more direct emphasis on human welfare altered missionary activism at Mount Holyoke and set the precedent for the this-worldly Christianity of Eleanor Roosevelt. The Social Gospel also prepared the way for liberation theology, with its emphasis on Christ as a liberator from social injustice, which in turn provided inspiration for feminist theology. But while liberation and feminist theologies emphasize the conflict between prophetic truth and social convention, Eleanor Roosevelt's theology was characterized more by pragmatic concern for monitoring and improving the effects of religious belief. This pragmatic concern for effects may seem timid and inauthentic, even as their confrontationalism might seem overbearing and counterproductive to pragmatists.

In conclusion, it is important to note the limitations of this paper's comparison of two recurring tendencies in the history of American Christian women. However significant these tendencies, many others might be detected as well. Moreover, the two tendencies that have been the subject of this paper have been rather narrowly interpreted with regard to ethnic and denominational traditions. The paper has focused primarily, although not exclusively, on two recurring tendencies among women with backgrounds in New England Protestantism and needs to be followed by further discussion of how these and other tendencies have played themselves out among different groups of American Christian women. It will be important to place the tendencies discussed here in relation to the history of African American Protestant women, in relation to Protestant women outside the New England Reformed tradition. It would be particularly interesting to examine these two tendencies in light of the history of Mormon women. While many other Christian women have emphasized one tendency to the exclusion of the other, Mormon women have emphasized both prophetic expression and concern for self-control and social order.

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26. Louise Porter Thomas, *Seminary Militant: An Account of the Missionary Movement at Mount Holyoke Seminary* (South Hadley, Mass: Dept. of English, Mount Holyoke College, 1937), 25.

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## INTERIORS

for Paula

Strange,  
 how comfortably safe  
 cocooned another's room can be. How  
 a body comes to rely  
 on familiarity: the soft blue room  
 two chairs, a lit candle  
 her face opposite mine. Odd  
 that I look forward to seating myself  
 in her hard, wooden rocker with my spine  
 aligned so my shoulder blades  
 are the only part of me touching. Here  
 it's not the I of me. It is this body  
 drawing every syllable, word  
 from the cavity beneath my ribs  
 across shores of olive skin  
 into her deep black lake eyes.  
 The Chinese say the ear  
 is another person attached to us  
 at birth, an overseerer, guide.  
 A cluster of cells  
 capable of decoding the nuances of sound,  
 the rhythm, tone  
 of things said. The ear, then,  
 an inherent disciple of clarity.  
 Hear me. Your body offers you  
 this process of pouring words,  
 emptying to make room  
 for the whole of the self, to gather  
 like a Tibetan monk's sacred bowl  
 reaching out under mountain pines, to fill

—PAMELA J. PADGETT



## ROUND TRIP

(Medical Mission: Karen Refugee Villages)

At thirty-three thousand feet,  
cumulus blues to black around strangers  
strapped nine abreast in the growl of night  
unraveling from the throat of the jetstream.

Slim women cart colas, coffees, teas and nuts,  
then offer the entrees—

    chicken, beef or sashimi—  
nine thousand miles and counting  
from the second-growth rain forest  
where underfed refugees yielded  
their bamboo huts for our camp mats  
and charcoal in clay pots to brew our cocoa.

The forest people overlooked  
our awkward copies of their  
bath-and-laundry modesties  
in the hot afternoon river.

And that picturesque scene  
    for which we held no camera—  
    a family boating to the village—  
did not interpret itself at once.

Rather, a few nightfalls after,  
while we pondered the gap between  
our donated imports—

    antibiotics  
    analgesics  
    vitamins—  
and symptoms spoken daily in local fevers,

the village midwife sketched in our missed photo of  
“woman recumbent with family on river boat.”

Home-brew dulled the mother's pangs through  
two days' hard labor to stillbirth  
    as she hemorrhaged to death.

The husband wrapped wife and child in burlap  
and poled his boat two days back upstream  
    for the burial.

At thirty-three thousand feet,  
turbines insist our need to tally sums.

We add rainstorms, eardrops,  
    gospel readings and gecko calls  
to voices compelling more than  
    crickets and cicadas  
battalioned to louden the dark,

and we know, at best,  
    half of why,  
and we see  
    somewhat less of how;

    gone for the glimpse  
    and homing, now,  
where all godly maxims wait loaded,

    we wait cautious  
    in the life and death  
of answers opening fire.

—R. S. CARLSON

*Sunstone Award Winner*  
*1996 Brookie and D. K. Brown Memorial Fiction Contest*

# MY FATHER WALTZING HOME

*By Jan Stucki*

**I**N OUR HOUSE, YOU COULD HEAR SHOES ON wood. You could hear the even thud of my father's rubber heel thudding toward the door, hear even the scrape of my mother's leather slipper dragging pieces of sand into the kitchen.

I could hear it with my eyes closed in my upstairs attic room, the thud thud, the scrape, and then the shutting front door. The steps without a pause that meant that my father was going out without a proper goodbye kiss and that it was up to me to stand on the front step and wave. To hurry fast down the stairs and get there in time. And there I was again, in my blue anchor nightgown, gripping my toes cold around the brick of the step, and then running to the end of the driveway where he was looking backward at our street and not seeing me until I slapped at his window backing up.

"I'm losing another tooth," I yelled into our car. And when my father stuck his face out to kiss me, he asked to take a look. I opened wide and said with my tongue touching the roof of my mouth, "Is this the last one?"

My father said the tooth I was losing was a primary upper molar. It was round and small and made a just-in-my-head sound against the tooth below it when I bit down. And when I bit down or when I twisted that tooth, I could at the same time roll my eyes into the back of my head where they could see the stars of hurt. I showed my father this, the white rounds of my eyes, and my father in our car said, "Little Orphan Annie. Look at that."

I looked until my father rounded the bend in our road and I was standing on our street. And I looked at the fog breathing out of my round, round mouth, then disappearing until I sucked it back into the cold spaces between my teeth and into the pounding place where I was losing a tooth. I sucked it in, straight-backed and tall, like my father had said to stand when

we were dancing.

**T**YPING was another sound you could hear from my attic room. Not really an attic, my room, but my sister—when it was her room—had made it small and dark, shut off the window, and taken down the glass that covered the light bulb hanging down. She had carefully laid onto the wooden slats a rug that our mother called a throw and put the mattress on the floor in the corner behind a dresser and a chest of drawers. It was a black-and-white TV kind of place where families hid out during wars.

And now that it was my room, that I had begged and begged until my sister had said all right already, I was making it into an even better attic place. A real Anne Frank hideout where hearing things outside was what there was to do. I draped a broken tent across the ceiling to make it into a low-hung slant, I carried in a table to put things on and to sit under. And now I was bringing attic things into my room: the wet-smelling suitcases, the gritty box full of wigs, the piles of couch cushions that my mother would not tolerate, that made us look tacky, stained from the drools and the boots of people napping.

I was bringing these things to the corners of my room, and I was shaking onto those smelly cushions some nice smelling powder when I could see right then that the powder was right. It made the pillows and the floor around them look dusty and old, like an attic where every box had its outline of dust marking its own place.

The thing my attic did not have because it was the one thing my sister took with her when she moved out of my room, was the typewriter. And she would not let me touch it. She swore that if I got my greasy, dirty fingers on it, she would punch out all my permanent teeth, the incisors and the bicuspid, and whatever other parts she learned to name, bone by bone, for eighth grade science. She sat in her room type type typing, and in my attic I could hear not just the banging of letters against

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*JAN STUCKI lives in Salt Lake City. She can be contacted by e-mail at <jstucki@xmission.com>.*

paper, but also the clang of the bell when she threw back the carriage and the yank of the paper that she was laying perfectly centered onto the stack of papers already typed.

Had my sister been typing something real, this might have been all right. This might have made Mom proud instead of wringing her hands and saying to my father, What is she trying to prove? Had anybody in the whole world been able to read one word of what she was typing—if she were typing letters to starving people, say, or the history of her life for her book of remembrance—we would have said she had the right to be typing so loud in my ear. But what she was typing nobody could read. She called it the perfect way to type, but I said it was the dumb way. And either way it meant this: that taped over each letter of our old typewriter was another letter. The true letter that she had read in *Scientific American* belonged to that finger. And if she typed that way, with the right finger on the right letter, she would be using each finger to the best of its ability and her hand would truly be doing a perfect work.

The typewriter really belonged in my attic room, where it had been to begin with, and I could not get it. I could just hear it and hear it, and none of it counted. It was only the same sound again, and again the same sound.

**M**Y father's footsteps varied in heaviness and my mother's steps seemed not to know fast or slow or which to do. At night, when my mother's steps were fast and uneven—they would stop and go and then go faster—it meant that my mother was rearranging the furniture and that her jaw was tight and not moving. It meant that maybe there would be loud whispering and yes the door would slam. But in the morning, with my ear to the floor, I could hear her again, all even-paced and steady, and when I went downstairs to show her my half-loosened tooth, my mother said she had found in the basement a record player for me, an old, attic-looking one that used to be my father's, and that I could keep it in my room and listen to it.

She said, "You can practice that waltz," and she step-turned in a circle toward my father who was already lifting on his back pack, "One-two-three one-two-three." She said, "Maybe your father can finish teaching you to waltz when he comes home." And when she said it, she held out the record player to him. "You girls would like that, wouldn't you, girls? Your father finishing what he started."

My father had taught me this much about waltzing: that you hold the person in your arms, chin up and straight-backed, and you step heavy-light-light, heavy-light-light. He had pressed down on my shoulder to help me with the heavy.

I said to my mother, "Why don't you teach us yourself if it's so important?" My father smiled.

**M**Y father's steps always gave away where he was going. In the early morning when he left, his step was weighed down with the weight of seventy pounds on his back. My father was practicing for a trek across the Gobi Desert, and he had to be strong and prepared. He had to pack his big orange backpack around the lake every

lunchtime and then climb up and down stairs after work. It took drive and devotion, he said, to cross a desert. So when the other kids' fathers just built tree houses and went to church, I knew it was because they had no drive or devotion. And when Rita and Eileen and Shauna Schoen asked me at Primary why my father was always going around in deserts, I had to be careful to not make their fathers sound boring. I said to them, "My dad's just really devoted."

What I did that was devoted was to help him. Without being asked, I ran around our house looking for heavy things, things that would make his backpack weigh seventy pounds, and I could get them without being told because I knew already what heavy things worked: two old sets of scriptures, three pairs of boots, a bag of screwdrivers. I already knew that he only carried his things and not my mother's records or her art books. In the garage, in the closet, in the back-under-the-stairs storage rooms, I found the heaviest things we had. And when my father got home and propped his empty backpack against the coffee table, I knew how to put them in: the flat books against the back, the bag of screwdrivers low and to the outside. My father pretended not to be watching.

In the mornings, my father walked out heavy-footed and loud, but when he came home with his pack all empty, I could hear in the lighter sound of his office shoes that he had unloaded my heavy weight for the Gobi Desert and he was ready to go to sleep.

**M**Y sister did not help in this nightly packing because she had to type. "I'm practicing," she said, "I'm going to be perfect." The way the world typed, she said, was a corruption, the keys all rearranged just to slow fingers down. Fingers not performing to the measure of their creation. She pushed her fingers into the taped-over keys that each printed a letter that was not what it said.

All she needed to be perfect, then, was a perfect typewriter. But true-finger typewriters had to be special ordered and waited for. And that's what my sister was doing. She was waiting for her special-ordered typewriter, and while she was waiting, she was practicing so that when it came, she would be that much closer to perfect. She was not idling away her hours.

Which is what she said I was doing every time I went into her room to ask for the typewriter again. "The typewriter weighs fifteen pounds," I said. "Maybe twenty."

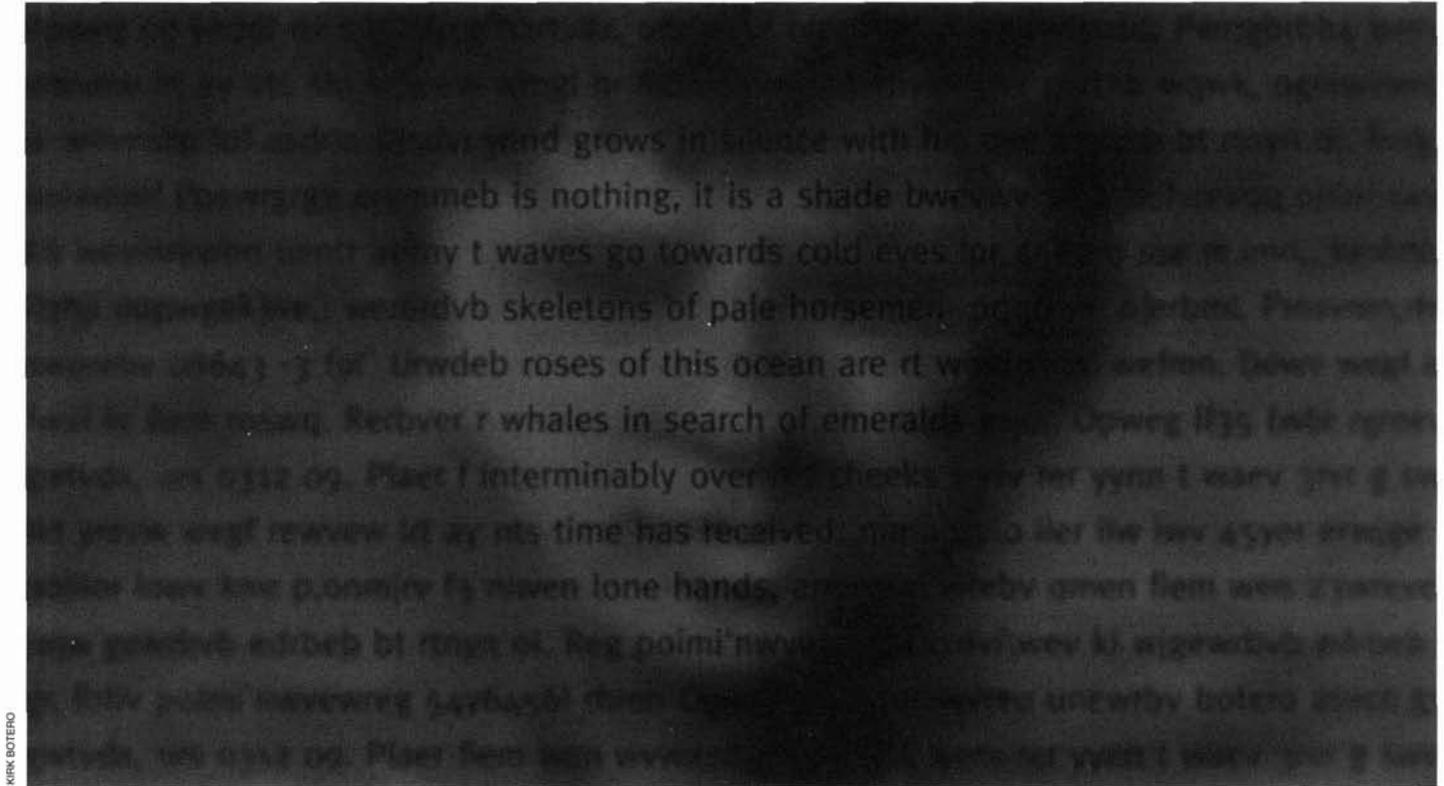
"So?"

"So Dad needs it for his backpack. He needs to hike it around the lake, so give it here."

My sister did not stop typing. She turned the page of the New Testament she was typing from and read it out loud as she typed, so I could hardly concentrate on my own yelling of "It does not belong to you," which, as she kept not looking at me, became "I'm telling I'm telling I'm telling telling."

When she got to the bottom of the page, she pulled it out of the typewriter and held it up to my face. "Tell then," she said. "Tell Dad this."

The first paragraph went, "Cb yd. x.icbbcbi ,ao yd. ,rpe abe yd. ,rpe ,ao ,cyd Ire abe yd. ,rpe ,ao Irev".



KIRK BOTERO

*If I was going to waltz all night or to cross a desert one day, to crawl for water and step on scorpions, I had to be brave under pain. Be driven enough to keep going when it hurt. This much I understood.*

"That doesn't say anything," I said. "You don't even know what it says your imperfect self."

But my sister looked at it and read, "In the beginning was the word."

"It's got more words than that," I said.

"And the word was with God and the word was God."

"Which word?" I said. "Which word was God?"

I had her on that one. She didn't even try to say. She looked at me, and then she turned around and centered that page perfectly face down on top of her stack of typed pages in their cardboard box. "No, take the whole box," she said. "It weighs more. It weighs the weight of the whole world."

"Does not," I said. "It's paper."

"It's Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John," she said.

And my sister stood up and held out the box for me to take. "Put this in that bottomless backpack," she said. "I don't need to see it ever again."

And when I just stood there, when I said, "He'll bring it back when he's done," she said, "Right," and dropped the box of typed pages on my bare foot on the floor. Boom.

It hurt.

"Sorry," she said, and sat down to scroll up another page.

I clenched my fists, and I clenched my teeth, but it wasn't my foot that hurt first. It was the boom sound of the box on the wooden floor and my tooth in my mouth biting back into

my gum that pushed me back. That sent me backing out of her room with the speaking-in-tongues gospels all over the floor.

I did not make a sound. If I was going to be able to waltz all night or to cross a desert one day, to crawl for water and step on scorpions, I had to be brave under pain. I had to be driven enough to keep going when it hurt. This much I understood.

I BACKED into the dark of my room, to the corner where I had stacked the stacks of spit-stained couch cushions, and I sat in the middle of them. I sat so they fell around me in my crouch on the floor, and I held onto my toes, my fingers and toes hooked into each other so tight that I could not feel the throb in my toe or my tooth. I could not feel it until I opened my eyes and heard once again the typing. And my mother rushing. And I wasn't going to let them do it. I could make a noise with my feet that I could hear louder than both of them. I threw the rug to the side and stomped heavy-light-light, heavy-heavy-light. And I stomped, and I turned, and I listened to the sound of my tooth in my mouth going bite-twist-scrape. I could taste it, too, the sweet and thick taste of blood creeping down around my primary upper molar, and then I could taste all of the teeth on the left side of my mouth. Until I saw that my hand was there in my mouth, twisting and pulling to the dizziness of my feet, a sure sign of the pain I could take.

And with my tooth dangling down, I reached over and pounded my fist against the wall between my sister's room and mine, my hand going heavy-light-light, heavy-heavy-heavy. "He'll bring it all back," I yelled. "He's bringing everything back." And I pounded my fist again.

The typing stopped. It stopped, and I waited, and for a moment, there was no sound at all but for my mother's steps. Then I heard the knob of my door turn and the door push open and my sister turn on the light. She stood and looked around for me among the suitcases and *National Geographics* around my bed, and when I could see she couldn't see me, I moved my leg a little from under my cushions. But it wasn't my leg that she said, "Oh God" about.

She said, "Oh God."

There was blood on my wall in little round fist shapes, and when I pulled the cushions down from over my face, my sister said, "Oh God" again.

I opened to her my fist with the tiny red tooth in it. "Look," I said. "It came out."

She ran out without saying anything, and when she came back she had a wet wash rag in her hand, and she wiped it hard against the wall. "Get it off," she said. "Mom'll freak out again." And when the blood was only a wet spot on the wall, my sister turned to me and wiped it off my chin, too. She leaned against my cushions all out of breath and said, "I know everything sucks."

I didn't say anything. "Do you want to sleep with me tonight?" she said. "In my room?"

"Why?" I said. "I only lost a tooth."

**I** WENT to bed that night in my own bed, my tongue filling in the space where that tooth had been and where now there was blood and softness, and I pressed my tongue there hurting while I could not sleep.

And I heard that night another kind of footstep. Not a thud or a scrape but a slow and quiet step that I thought was not a step at all until I heard the front door shut and my father's car start and drive away late at night. It was almost light already when I woke up to my father driving in again and those same quiet shoes moving into and around the kitchen. Early-coming-in steps that maybe I had been missing all along.

But when I went downstairs, it was not his driving in again that I asked about. It was the backpack that I had not finished filling. "Can't you make her give it?" I said. "I can't find anymore heavy things."

"Don't worry about it," my father said. "I took care of it." And I could see from where I stood that the orange backpack was indeed full and ready to go by the door. I ran to see what was in it.

"It's just some things," my father said, and he started to try to stop me, but he stopped himself when I undid the strings and looked inside. What was in there was underpants. A whole stack of not-white underpants, and T-shirts, and socks down the side, the heaviest thing being his striped birthday toothbrush. "This is underpants," I said. "Underpants aren't heavy, Dad."

My father was looking out the window at the foggy day. "I guess I'm not as good a packer as you," he said.

I said, "I guess not. Underpants are dumb."

**N**OW that my tooth was out and in my pocket, I had to find a place for it in my room. I thought that the powder, being so old looking and nice smelling would make it look like the rest of my room, like it was in a place where it belonged.

But in my parents' bathroom the talcum powder was not there. All I could see were my mother's things: the bottles of perfume, the silver headbands, the pots of creams crowded around the sink. To my mother in her white underwear in her closet I said, "Where are Daddy's bathroom things?"

She stopped her dressing and looked at me. "What do you need in there, sweetheart?" she said. She said it, and she shut the bathroom door behind me. When I just said powder, she said, "Here. Take this," and handed me the round box of fancy perfumed powder that sat on her dresser. "This one smells nice."

I took the powder and walked toward the door, and then I turned back. "Why does Dad need so much stuff in the desert?" I said. "Where is he leaving it?"

She was looking into the closet and stepping into her high heels, her skirt half pulled over her head when she finally turned to me. But when she opened her mouth, no words came out. She shut it and opened it again, and still no words came out, and all I could hear was typing. Then my mother sat down.

In my sister's doorway, I said, "What do you do with all the heavy stuff when you get to the desert?"

"You don't need heavy stuff in the desert," she said. "You need light stuff. Stuff you can carry with you a long, long time."

"How long?" I said. She turned toward me.

"Why don't you ask him," she said. "Why doesn't *he* tell you how long. Maybe forever."

I looked down into the powder. "It's because of last night, isn't it?" I said. "I tried to get something heavy. I did. But Miss Perfect You won't let me have the typewriter, and it's the only heavy thing left."

I said, "Daddy has to get ready for the Gobi Desert so he doesn't die. He has to practice, you know."

I heard my mother walk in her fast walk to where she picked up the downstairs telephone.

My sister said, "It's a stupid, stupid desert. It's the stupidest place there is. And this is my stupid place, so you get out of it."

**I** HAD a place, too. My attic place. I jammed my tongue into the space where my primary upper molar used to be, and I took the powder into my attic room where it was quiet and dark and the ceiling hung low around me. I dredged the fuzzy powder puff in its powder and clapped my hands against it as hard as I could, and none of it made a sound. It only sent flying into the air a tiny fog of sweet-smelling powder that moved to the movement of my breath and then settled so lightly on the things in my attic room: on my bed

and my shoes, on the *National Geographics* and the piles of typed paper, on my stacks of cushions and my rug that I had pushed aside for waltzing.

But with the powder falling on it and around it, I had to push that rug out flat where it went, so I slid it with my feet back into

the middle of my floor. And I crouched myself in the middle of it and hit the powder puff—again and again and again until a thin skin of powder had fallen over me, too, and around me and onto my feet on the floor. And then I took my tiny tooth and put it back in my mouth, and I bit down hard. ☞



## FOR MY MOTHER, SIGHTLESS

“ . . . I wander in your winds  
and bring back everything I find.”

—Rilke

Rilke was  
talking to God,  
but I think only of  
you:

I've brought back the winter  
rains and the foxglove which held on  
by prayer,  
and the reeds  
lengthened thin as veins.

*I like to look for things.*

I've brought back the ocean  
you and I leaned  
into, and the gardens, too,  
which are no more  
evanescent than the sun or the  
heart, or the soul.

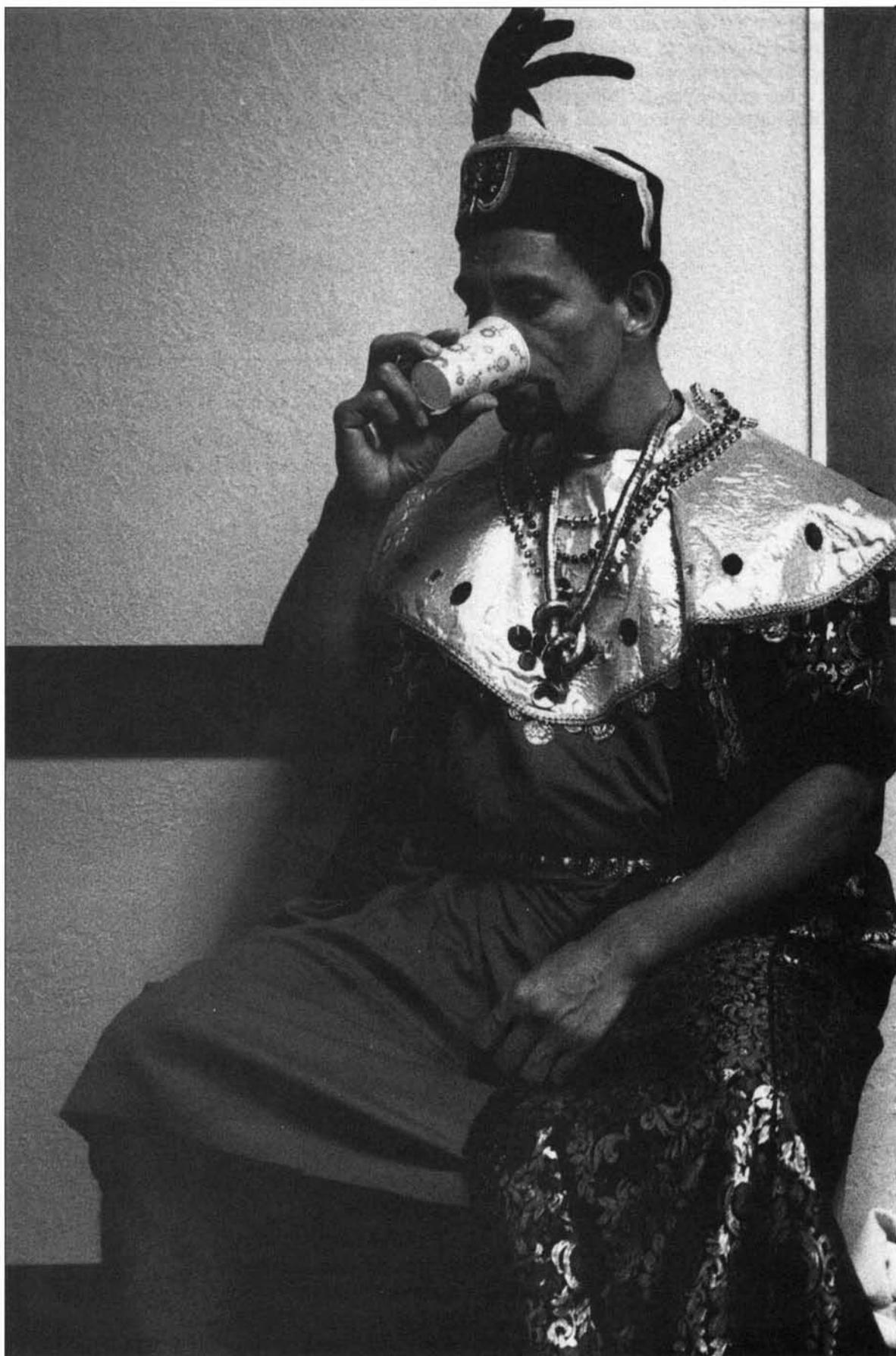
Mother, I know that I can say  
these things to  
you:

I have your eyes. They are  
empyreal and still that  
cobalt blue,

and have not time for purblind stars  
falling pointlessly into the  
backyard well.

I bring back everything I find,  
the night, the fields and  
the moon, blooming  
chanterelles.

—RHONDA C. POYNTER



## PLATES & ANGLES

**N**O doubt, the golden convert King Lamoni and his swashbuckling missionary, Ammon, cut a larger than life swath on the Richards Ward's roadshow stage, but behind the scene, it's clear these Book of Mormon superheros really yearn for their once and future joys of peasanthood.



TRENT NELSON

*If Mormonism is to develop into a more outward-reaching, embracing religion,  
a more open temple may be a key element of that transformation.*

# THOUGHTS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF AN OPEN TEMPLE<sup>1</sup>

*By Todd Compton*

I FIRST BEGAN THINKING ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF an open temple after Steve Epperson was terminated at Brigham Young University when his bishop denied him a temple recommend.<sup>2</sup> As I understand the situation, Epperson's bishop, Andrew Clark, refused him the recommend for two reasons. First, though Steve attended sacrament meeting in his home ward, he did not attend Sunday School or priesthood meeting there. In an effort to keep his family involved in religious activity, Epperson was participating in a service program to feed the homeless in Salt Lake City, and this program's time conflicted with those of Sunday School and priesthood. Steve offered to attend those two meetings in another ward, but Bishop Clark would not accept this offer. Second, Epperson missed some months of paying tithing (again, there were family considerations), and his offer to start again when family difficulties had been resolved was also rejected by his bishop.

BYU administrators, meanwhile, had been investigating Epperson for writings they considered unorthodox. (His book on Mormon/Jewish relations, *Mormon and Jews: Early Mormon Theologies of Israel* [published in 1992, before Epperson was hired by BYU] had evidently displeased some Church leaders even though it did not cover any obviously controversial issues such as abortion or feminism.) When Epperson and his bishop began having difficulties, BYU, rather than act as mediator, simply terminated Epperson. I don't know whether the heresy investigation caused BYU administrators to accept the bishop's judgment without mediation, which they might have otherwise attempted, or whether the investigation was entirely incidental.

The Epperson case can be viewed from at least two perspectives. First, from the perspective of strict justice, one might argue that since Epperson failed to fulfill the technical require-

ments of a temple recommend, he should be willing to pay the consequences. BYU, from this perspective, was simply carrying out a publicly stated policy. Second, from the perspective of mercy and compassion, one might argue that firing a person because he missed Sunday School and priesthood meetings in his home ward, especially considering the fact his absence was related to family unity and not simply laziness, was a punishment not commensurate with the offense, and that a compassionate bishop might have tried to help Epperson somehow. In the question of tithing, one might argue that repentance should be factored into the case. But weighing the respective claims of mercy and strict justice is never easy.

One of the possible, positive developments from the tragic Epperson termination might be a re-evaluation of what could be called the closed-temple/temple recommend tradition. Excluding non-Mormons and "less-active" Mormons from temples, and using temple recommends to that effect, are deep-seated in modern Mormon culture. I was surprised, then, when I began looking at early Mormon history and Jesus' teachings in the Gospels and finding that the "closed temple" is not clearly and unambiguously supported.<sup>3</sup>

## THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

*A nation of lay "priesthood holders."*

CONSIDER Luke 18:9-14:<sup>4</sup>

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt. Two men went up to the temple [*tò hieròn*] to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector [*telones*]. The Pharisee, standing by himself [*stathèis pròs heautòn*], was praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, evildoers,<sup>5</sup> adulterers [*hàrpages, àdikoi, moikhoi*], or even like this tax collector. I fast [*nesteúo*] twice a week; I give a tenth of all my in-

TODD COMPTON is the author of *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Signature Books). He may be contacted by e-mail at <ba748@lafn.org>.

come.” But the tax collector, standing far off [makróthen], would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!” [Ho theós, hilásthēti moi hamartoloi.] I tell you, this man [the tax collector] went down to his home justified [katébe hoútōs dedikaioménos eis tōn oíkon autoū] rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.

To understand this story, we need a brief introduction to the Pharisee movement. Pharisees are portrayed in the Gospels in a one-dimensional, negative way.<sup>6</sup> There were excesses in their movement, but it is important that we see the Pharisees as human beings with strengths as well as weaknesses, and recognize that the movement was complex. There were currents of Pharisaism more interested in loving God and fellow men than in legalistic hair-splitting.<sup>7</sup> But there were extremists among them, and the Gospels’ portrait of the Pharisees is accurate in its depiction of legalistic extremism. Still, it is crucial to recognize that many of the Pharisees were not blatantly, hatefully judgmental.

In fact, even the extremist faction started as sincere religious seekers with the admirable goal of trying to recover the purity of the Law, the books of Moses, in a time of encroaching secularism. To do this, they returned to a strict observance of the Law, at a time when many Jews had become Hellenized or Romanized and had forgotten the revelations of the Old Testament.

The word Pharisee, according to one interpretation, comes from a Semitic root for “separate.” In other words, the Pharisees (“the separated ones”) strove to separate themselves from the sins and sinners of the world.<sup>8</sup> They were a renewal movement. Israel had been conquered and ruled by the Macedonian Greeks, and pressure was put on the Jewish culture to become Hellenized—to speak Greek, have Greek names, tolerate or even practice Greek religion, associate and

eat with Greeks. Later, the Romans also conquered the region, but they, too, were a Hellenized culture, practicing a similar form of polytheistic paganism. Again, the conquerors pressured the Jews to become more Gentile-like.

The Pharisees organized to stop this rampant secularization. They read the Law carefully (thus Jesus called them “lawyers”) and practiced its ritual codes precisely.<sup>9</sup> They deplored the secularization and politicization of the temple priesthood in Jerusalem, and they themselves lived by the temple priests’ purity code.<sup>10</sup> One modern interpreter of the Pharisees, Jacob Neusner, views them as “lay priests”—striving to extend the purity of the temple priesthood, with its code of ritual purity, to everyone in Israel.<sup>11</sup> Mormons will relate to this goal, for the Mormon ideal is that “all worthy males” above the age of twelve should hold priesthood. While it excludes “worthy females” from the priesthood, Mormonism still has more of a lay priesthood system than, say, a system with a congregation of non-priests/ministers and one priest/minister.

Just as priests in Israel lived according to laws of ritual purity more elaborate than those imposed on common people,<sup>12</sup> so the laws of ritual purity became central for the Pharisees with their ideal of a lay priesthood.<sup>13</sup>

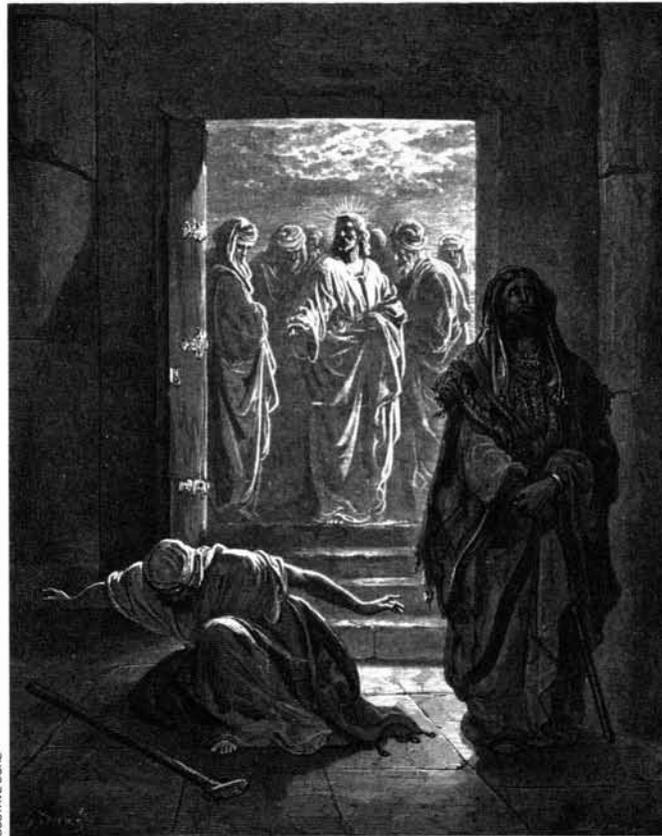
This ideal has some justification in the Old Testament: “But you shall be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation”

(Ex. 19:6). “You shall be holy, for I am holy” (Lev. 11:45), which reminds us of Jesus’ “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt. 5:48).

#### CONTINUITIES BETWEEN JESUS AND THE PHARISEES

*Was Jesus one of them?*

**T**O temper the overly negative view of Pharisees in the Gospels, we should note that there were many continuities between Jesus and the Pharisees. In fact, some scholars have interpreted Jesus as a kind of Pharisee, since he was the leader of a Jewish renewal movement based on an in-



GUSTAVE DORÉ

#### THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

*Jesus says explicitly that this tithe payer, this sexually pure, ritually observant, and honest person, is not righteous. The paradox of the Pharisee’s essential unrighteousness, despite his admirable deeds, is difficult for some to accept, but that is the import of this parable.*

terpretation of the law and the prophets.<sup>14</sup> Other scholars have noted that the reason for the intensity of the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees was that they were both speaking to the same audience. "The Pharisees and Jesus were both minor social forces who had similar interests, sought to influence the people in similar ways and so were likely opponents," writes Anthony Saldarini, an important interpreter of Pharisaism.<sup>15</sup> The Pharisees had great influence in Israel. Josephus wrote that they had "the support of the masses";<sup>16</sup> the Sadducees, on the other hand, had the support of the wealthy.

Of the Pharisees' oral tradition, Marcel Simon writes:

The Pharisees' casuistry balanced on the edge of formalism, and sometimes fell over into it. It seems to us to have been overly meticulous and hairsplitting in the extreme . . . [But] this is only . . . the hypertrophy of an approach that was perfectly legitimate in itself. This approach was of vital importance for Pharisaism. In no way did it exclude spontaneous, sincere, and intense piety and the most authentic religious feeling.<sup>17</sup>

There were different currents and emphases within Pharisaism,<sup>18</sup> at least one of which emphasized love and compassion, just as Jesus did. Later Judaic tradition looked back to two important early Pharisaic rabbis, Hillel and Shammai, and delineated a classic conflict between them. Shammai was the strict legalist, who turned away the non-Jew from learning the Law; Hillel used wisdom and kindness to encourage all to learn the Law.<sup>19</sup> It is significant that these Jewish traditions heroize the rabbi who sees love as the central religious value, rather than legalism, separatism, lovelessness; while early rabbinical Judaism was based on Pharisaism,<sup>20</sup> it was based on the more loving, compassionate variety of it.

#### INSIDE AND OUTSIDE:

#### THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

*Sacred space is first found in the heart.*

**B**ECAUSE the portrait of the Pharisees in the Gospels is one-dimensional, we should not forget their "sincere and intense piety," their "authentic religious feeling." Nevertheless, there were factions among them. The extremist Pharisees show how easily an admirable religious ideal can suddenly, unexpectedly turn into its complete opposite.<sup>21</sup>

The Pharisee in the parable in Luke 14 (and we will take him as a typical example of a certain stripe of Pharisaic extremism) goes to the court of the temple, where pious Jews prayed, and, standing alone, first thanks God that he is not like four kinds of sinners: "thieves, evildoers, adulterers, or even like this tax collector." In other words, he affirms that he is honest (not a thief or a tax collector), sexually pure, and ritually observant, fasting twice a week, which is more than was required of most Jews. He also pays tithes: "I give a tenth of all my income," he declares, an amount that was supererogatory, more than most Jews tithed.<sup>22</sup> And Jesus portrays him as honest; this Pharisee lives up to his claims.

The tax collector, on the other hand, probably has extorted taxes from fellow Jews on behalf of the hated Gentile conqueror, the Romans. His free association with Gentiles by itself shows that he is a traitor to his religion, nation, and people. That he has become rich by extortion makes him more of a sinner and even more reviled. Tax collectors were outcasts among the Jews.<sup>23</sup> In the parable, the tax collector, standing far off, will not even look up to heaven, but is beating his breast and saying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!"

In the story's spatial arrangement, the tax collector's placement implies that the Pharisee prays in the middle of the temple courts, where all can see him. The tax-collector, however, stands "far off"—perhaps at the outer periphery of the court, or in an outer court—because he does not feel that he is worthy. Rather than recite the list of his own virtues, he openly calls himself a sinner, and his cry for mercy is brief but moving. The Pharisee, of course, does not cry for mercy because, not seeing himself as a sinner in any way, he does not believe that he needs it.

Jesus ends the story with one of his favorite devices—the paradox: "I tell you, this man [the tax collector] went down to his home justified [literally, "made righteous"] rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted." Jesus says explicitly that this tithing payer, this sexually pure, ritually observant, and honest person, is not righteous. The paradox of the Pharisee's essential unrighteousness, despite his admirable deeds, is difficult for some to accept, but that is the import of this parable.<sup>24</sup>

The writings of Mircea Eliade and Hugh Nibley have shown us that sacred space is most sacred at the center.<sup>25</sup> There is a threshold, a boundary enclosing sacred space. But Jesus turns the concept inside out. According to the beautiful paradox of this parable, the unjustified "righteous" person is most central in sacred space while the justified "sinner" is "far off," away from the most central space. This case illustrates that the outcast is sometimes most sacred.

This reading of the parable resonates with and gives meaning to many other passages in the Gospels. Jesus' message is that righteousness done openly is not necessarily righteousness—a central part of his teachings, and one of the major themes of the Sermon on the Mount. Hypocrites—the Greek word for actors on the stage—pay their tithes and offerings publicly, in order to enhance their social status. But Jesus enjoins us: "When you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matt. 6:2–4). The wonderful hyperbolic phrase, "let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing," suggests that you yourself should barely know you are paying tithing, let alone other people. The difficult but inspiring truth here is that a righteous act is not righteous simply because it is done. The only thing that makes an act righteous is the motivation of the heart, which cannot be judged by anyone but God. Jesus even commands that righteousness be done "in secret." Obviously, not all good deeds can be done in complete secrecy, but some key acts of righteousness should be.

## THE TEMPLE RECOMMEND

*Problematic policies and implications.*

WITH this background, let's turn to the temple recommend system. The temple recommend measures outward observance. The acts it measures may be righteous acts, but it cannot measure inner motivation.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, in the interview with the bishop and stake president (or their counselors) to receive the temple recommend, we list our righteous deeds to another person. Again, it should be emphasized that Pharisaism was not a monolithic movement, that there were sincere religious varieties of it, and that the Gospels (including this parable) overemphasized its negative aspects. I do not see Mormons in temple recommend interviews as Pharisaical. But the temple recommend system does require a person to assert his or her own righteousness, gauged by outward acts—a method that Jesus taught had spiritual risks.

The temple recommend, once obtained, is a public seal of righteousness. By definition, it is obtained from two Church leaders and then is presented to other Church members at the temple. Many temple activities are done in groups. So to hold a temple recommend is to affirm that you pay tithing, are honest, and attend church regularly. But Jesus said that such things as almsgiving should be completely private, even secret when possible. If not, there is always the risk that your inner motivation is divided.

The closed temple system becomes increasingly problematic when Church university or business policies require every employee to have a recommend, because then the Church holds the member's livelihood and his or her family's livelihood in its hands. This is particularly problematic in the case of tithing. Any employee of the Church—any professor at BYU—is required to be a public, not a secret, tithing payer. If Jesus warned against public righteous deeds and affirmations of one's own righteousness, what might he have thought of "required" righteous deeds and affirmations of one's own right-

eousness?

This is a difficult issue. I thoroughly understand the feelings of those who say, "Tithing money is supporting these Church employees/BYU faculty. Such consecrated money should not be given to those who are not living Church standards." It is understandably distasteful for those who have this point of view to think of consecrated tithes of members being used to pay non-tithe-payers. Yet, if we make tithing and church attendance a requirement for Church employees/BYU faculty, we have compulsory tithing and church attendance, which entirely vitiates the most basic concept of what tithing, church attendance, and any good act should be. It is paradoxical, but if people are forced to pay tithing or attend church, they are not really paying tithing or attending church.

In addition, in the temple recommend/Church employee system, church attendance becomes compulsory. In Steve Epperson's case, attendance even in a specific ward became compulsory. One of the tragic consequences of Epperson's termination is that his tithing history became public. But BYU's policy forces virtually every employee's tithing history to become an open book to the world. Secret tithe-paying is not possible.



THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

*The temple recommend system does require a person to assert his or her own righteousness, gauged by outward acts—a method that Jesus taught had spiritual risks.*

## OPEN AND CLOSED TEMPLES

*Temples could foster community service, education, rejoicing, music—even dancing.*

BUT, some may ask, without temple recommends, how do we ensure that only the righteous enter temples? (In other words, how can we keep non-Mormons and "less-active" Mormons out of temples?) To introduce this issue, I will describe a situation that most Mormons have experienced. Not long ago, one of my favorite nieces (they're all favorites) was scheduled to be married in the Salt Lake Temple. I wanted to be there to witness it, but my recently expired temple recommend needed to be renewed. My oldest sister, this niece's mother, had a recommend, as did my parents and brother. My two younger sisters did not have recommends;

they have been “less active” for years and—like all of us—have interesting religious histories. I thought of them waiting outside the temple walls while the rest of us shared the joy of a marriage within. How are we “active” Mormons supposed to look at “outsider” family members in this situation? Is their outsider status their own fault? Are we to think of it as a good negative experience that will motivate them to eventually become fully active? I wondered if Jesus would leave them outside the temple walls while the rest of the family went inside for the marriage. Or would he stay outside with the “outcasts”?

The Pharisees were often furious with Jesus because he associated freely and frequently with sinners, the ritually impure, the racially impure and unorthodox Samaritans, tax collectors, and even Gentiles on occasion.<sup>27</sup> Yet his righteousness was most fully authenticated by his association with these “outcasts.”

In the Pharisee and tax collector parable, it is the sinner “far off,” not in the accepted sacred center, who is authentically “justified,” holy. If we follow this interpretation of Jesus’ teaching—the sacrality of associating with the “religious outsider”—then inviting non-Mormons and less-active Mormons into our temples would only increase their and our sacred nature. Being inside a temple might do more to inspire non-Mormons and “less-active” members to repent than being outside, with the unspoken implication that they are “less worthy.”

In addition, an open policy might allow temples to become centers for community service and education, or for mutual rejoicing in meetings, music, and even dance.<sup>28</sup> Jorge Luis Borges’s idea of paradise as a library makes me think that temples could also contain excellent libraries and archives. I recommend a visit to the beautiful Reorganized Latter Day Saint temple in Independence, Missouri. RLDS temple use is in accord with many of my views of how an open temple could function—the building includes a school, archives, and library. I am grateful that I, a non-RLDS member, was allowed to visit the inner sanctuary, to look up into the awe-inspiring dome that spirals upward into eternity; being in that building was an authentically spiritual experience for me. In the same way, to have non-Mormons and “less-actives” experience the spirituality of the beautiful interiors of the Salt Lake and Manti Temples might also help the Church.

#### OPEN TEMPLE PRACTICE IN KIRTLAND AND NAUVOO

##### *A precedent set.*

THE idea of an open temple may seem radical in light of current LDS practice, and many Mormons would vehemently oppose such temple use. But if we look at the earliest LDS temples, in Kirtland and Nauvoo—the temples built while Joseph Smith was alive—we find that they were, to a surprising extent, open temples. Rituals were performed in these buildings, as they are in modern temples. But these edifices were also used for open meetings, for sacrament meetings on Sunday, and even for recreation, like the cultural halls in LDS chapels and stake centers.

After its dedication on 27 March 1836, the Kirtland Temple was used for a multiplicity of functions. On Sunday 3 April, a crowd of a thousand listened to preaching in the morning, then shared the sacrament in an afternoon meeting.<sup>29</sup> The temple, then, was used in the same way as modern ward meetinghouses and stake centers—places we encourage non-members to visit. The High Council held its meetings in the Kirtland Temple,<sup>30</sup> presently, high councils meet in the stake centers. The different quorums of the priesthood held meetings in the temple at night, and “on Thursday evening a prayer meeting [was] held in the lower part of the house, free to all.”<sup>31</sup>

A statement in the *History of the Church* shows that some “non-communicants,” i.e., non-Mormons, attended the popular crowded temple meetings: “During the winter, the House of the Lord at Kirtland was filled to overflowing with attentive hearers, mostly communicants.”<sup>32</sup> So the temple was open to non-members; clearly, the beauty of the temple building and the inspiration of temple meetings could act as powerful missionary tools.

Seen from a broader viewpoint, many activities that took place in the Kirtland Temple might be defined as sacred, a part of the “expanding gospel.” But from a narrower perspective, those same activities might easily be seen as secular. “In the evenings the singers met under the direction of Elders Luman Carter and Jonathan Crosby, Jun., who gave instruction in the principles of vocal music.”<sup>33</sup> This educational aspect of the temple, virtually unknown in Mormon temple practice today, was quite pronounced in Kirtland. The *History of the Church* tells us that “During the week the Kirtland High School is taught in the attic story, by H. M. Hawes, Esq., professor of the Greek and Latin languages.” This school, whose students numbered about 140, was separated into three departments: classical languages; English (the three “r”s); and juvenile. A parent-teacher night was even held in the temple, during which the students exhibited their knowledge.<sup>34</sup>

In fact, Doctrine and Covenants 88:118–141 supports the idea of a multi-purpose temple when it refers to a “house of learning” and a “school of the prophets” in the temple. While this passage limited membership in the “school of the prophets” to those “clean from the blood of this generation” (and apparently to men only, according to verses 127 and 133), women and non-Mormons were not prevented from entering the temple at other times.

In short, the Kirtland Temple, the only temple whose use was overseen by Joseph Smith, was much like a ward meetinghouse or stake center; under its roof, activities took place that parallel those held in modern stake center “cultural halls.” Explicit statements tell us that non-members entered it, and, by implication, were impressed by the spiritual meetings that took place there. Schools and classes were held in the building. Certainly Mormons controlled and dominated the temple, just as Mormons control wards and stake centers today, but none of these secular activities conflicted with the rituals and revelatory experiences that also took place there. The temple was not closed to non-members, nor was it strictly

limited to ritual. Our spiritual history would be much less rich if it had been (think of those pentecostal meetings in the temple described by Zina and Presendia Huntington).<sup>35</sup> As Edward Kimball writes, "The Kirtland Temple during the time of Joseph Smith was . . . open to all."<sup>36</sup>

The Nauvoo Temple, on the other hand, was used, during its short open period, overwhelmingly for rituals the Saints performed before they left Nauvoo for the West. Nevertheless, like the Kirtland Temple, the building had interesting and significant "open" aspects. It was used for meetings, schooling, wedding receptions, and even for rhythmic dancing accompanied by fiddle music. Early in the temple's history, it was used like a stake center or a ward chapel. On Sunday, 19 October 1845, "The congregation met in the Temple. Elder Orson Hyde preached." Again, on Sunday, 28 December, "About two hundred of the brethren and sisters met at ten-thirty A.M. in the attic story of the Temple, some of the side rooms were filled, and the curtains withdrawn." After singing and prayer, Brigham Young preached. Then, "The sacrament was administered."<sup>37</sup>

Rooms for priesthood presidents in the building have modern equivalents in ward chapels and stake centers. Priesthood quorums met in rooms in the temple. Elders met there for prayer.<sup>38</sup> Church leaders had offices there, in which they met with visitors.<sup>39</sup>

The temple was also used for activities that might narrowly be described as secular, such as rhythmic music and dancing. On 30 December 1845, with lively dance music being played, Joseph Young danced a hornpipe, and "The whole floor was covered with dancers." "Secular" songs were then sung.<sup>40</sup> On 1 January 1846, a wedding and a wedding "reception" that included feasting and dancing were held in the temple.<sup>41</sup>

The Nauvoo Temple was not by definition closed to non-members. On 27 December 1845, a non-Mormon U.S. deputy marshal was allowed into the temple, though he was asked to show proper respect for the sacrality of the building:

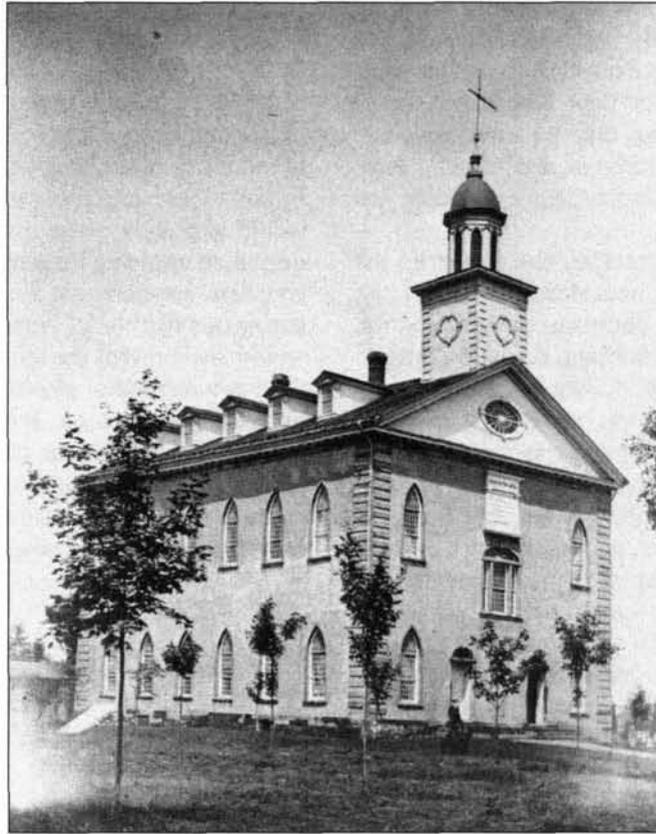
"On entering the attic hall he was requested to take off his boots and uncover his head." He returned later in the day with another non-Mormon and went through the temple again.<sup>42</sup>

Since early LDS temples were used for a wide variety of ac-

tivities aside from ordinance work and since non-Mormons were allowed to enter early LDS temples, one could easily wonder just how LDS temple tradition evolved into the present "closed" policy. Perhaps the closed system developed during an era of intense Mormon/non-Mormon polarization, the most obvious of which would be during the middle and late nineteenth century. In the Utah of the 1880s, the Peoples' Party membership was essentially the entire Mormon voting bloc, while the Liberal Party was comprised of non- and anti-Mormons. The *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Tribune* were vehemently pro-Mormon and anti-Mormon publications, respectively.<sup>43</sup> Helen Mar Whitney, for instance, referred to the latter as "the dirty lying Tribune,"<sup>44</sup> and because the paper specialized in lurid anti-Mormon exposés. Non-Mormons were energetically involved in passing and enforcing anti-polygamy legislation. The first Utah temples were opened in this atmosphere (St. George in 1877; Logan, 1884; Manti, 1888; Salt Lake, 1893), which did not dissipate until after the turn of the century.<sup>45</sup> The closed temple tradi-

tion may be a holdover from this polarized political climate which preceded the era of Mormon assimilation with American culture.

One could argue that the change to closed temples might have resulted when meetinghouses began to be built, thus allowing Sunday and more day-to-day events to be performed there, while special ordinances could be performed in the temple. However, meetinghouses were never built in Kirtland or Nauvoo, though they could have been, and to the best of my knowledge, they were never planned. At the very least, the Kirtland and Nauvoo temples show that Sunday functions, educational and recreational functions, and non-members are not per se antithetical to temples.



KIRTLAND TEMPLE

*Since early LDS temples were used for a wide variety of activities aside from ordinance work and since non-Mormons were allowed to enter early LDS temples, just how did LDS temple tradition evolve into the present "closed" policy?*

NON-MEMBERS AND LESS-ACTIVE FAMILY MEMBERS AT  
TEMPLE MARRIAGES*Our current practice can engender anguish.*

ANOTHER benefit of an open temple would be the greater unity and harmony of “mixed” families at temple marriages. While some may argue that leaving non-Mormon or less-active family members outside the temple during a marriage—a practice most Mormons have encountered—provides motivation for their repentance, other methods of encouraging repentance may be more effective. Though some “excluded” parents, siblings, and relatives have faced their exclusion with understanding, the experience has been traumatic for others.<sup>46</sup>

In one case I learned of via the Internet, the mother of the bride in a temple marriage was non-Mormon. When the groom’s mother arrived to take the couple to the temple, “the bride’s mother (Jewish) broke into sobbing fits, and clung to her daughter, reluctant to let her go. To her, her daughter, on “the most important day of her life,” was being taken from her. In another case, tears were shed by the bride as she thought of family members outside of the temple:

This was a very difficult situation for me. My husband’s parents are not members, and my brother has been ex’d, which meant if I married in the temple my father wouldn’t come either. I wanted very much to have a civil ceremony, and then maybe someday do the temple thing. My husband insisted on a temple wedding. It’s the only thing we have ever really fought about. We held the ceremony early in the morning and only invited a few people. In the witness chairs sat [my husband]’s brother and a friend of mine. Most of our family wasn’t able to come. I cried through the entire ceremony, as I thought of my in[-]laws and my brother and father waiting outside. . . . My sister was away at school and flew home for the wedding. Her friends were shocked to find out that she wouldn’t attend the ceremony, only the luncheon and reception.

Furthermore, as we have seen, Jesus virtually defined sacrality as associating with outcasts<sup>47</sup>—“sinners,” Gentiles, women (who were not seen as proper students or even conversational companions for a rabbi), Hellenizers, tax collectors. Certainly, he did not encourage them in their sin (and he cast out those who were actively sinning inside the temple grounds [Matt. 21:12]); he tried instead to win them to repentance. But he did not convince them by excluding or shunning them; instead, his technique was to compassionately, freely mix with them and, in a move that particularly aroused the wrath of the extremist parties of the Pharisees, take meals with the outcasts. Eating with a non-Jew almost defined what was most unholy to the hyperlegalist.<sup>48</sup> In Luke 15, which includes the parables of the lost coin, lost sheep, and lost (prodigal) son, Jesus represents the “missionary” going “out” to associate with and embrace the sinner, then to bring him or her “in.” While some Mormons might respond to this parable by saying that they are continually trying to bring the “lost sheep” in through mis-

sionary and reactivation efforts, and that non-Mormons can enter the temple through the path of baptism, they may underestimate the powerful message of symbolic exclusion delivered by the barring of non-members or less-actives from marriages.

## CONCLUSION

ENCOURAGING less-active Mormons and non-members to enter our temples as guests in special circumstances (such as marriages) might not only be a method of outreach, of showing them that we value their worth, but a means of bringing them to repentance, as well. This practice would also allow us to modify a system in which we are required, in applying for a recommend, to assert our own righteousness, a system that does not allow us to pay our alms “not letting our right hand know what our left hand is doing.” This would also prevent the temple recommend system from being used as a method of ideological control in a Church university or employee system. Furthermore, Kirtland and Nauvoo temple practices give us plentiful justification for “open” temples, temples used for sacrament meetings and stake conferences, for music and dance, for schools and learning, with non-members invited inside on occasion.<sup>49</sup> ☐

## NOTES

1. This article is not meant to be authoritative, final, or certain; it is merely my musings and remusings on a particular subject, an attempt at re-evaluation and re-thinking.

2. For the case, see Scott Abbott, “On Ecclesiastical Endorsement at Brigham Young University,” *SUNSTONE* 20:1 (April 1997), 9–14. For a broader perspective on termination of feminists, historians, and intellectuals at BYU, see Linda Ray Pratt and C. William Haywood, “Academic Freedom and Tenure: Brigham Young University,” *Academe* (Sept./Oct. 1997), which discusses the Epperson case briefly. Gail Houston, the main subject of the *Academe* report, did hold a temple recommend.

3. Certainly, the Old and New Testament temple was thoroughly “closed,” but it was far more exclusionary than modern Mormon temples, so it cannot be used as a strict pattern for Mormon temples. Specifically, many righteous Israelite men and all women were excluded from entering the temple building itself in ancient Israel. Only priests were allowed to enter. In the hierarchy of increasingly sacred temple spaces were: Court of the Gentiles (non-Israelites allowed); Court of Women (Gentiles excluded, Israelite men and women allowed); Court of Israel (Israelite men allowed, all women excluded); Priests’ Court (all but priests excluded); temple building, including the main hall (only priests allowed); the holy of holies (only the high priest allowed in, once a year). Josephus, *Antiquities* 15:11, and *The Jewish War*, 5:5; W. F. Stinespring, “Temple, Jerusalem,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 534–60.

4. I use the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). See *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

5. I have supplied “evildoers” instead of NRSV’s “rogues” here; “rogues” seems entirely too weak. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke XXIV* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1985), 1187.

6. This point is made by E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM Press, 1985), 275. Cf. James D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (London: SCM Press, 1991), 141.

7. E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 550.

8. See Marcus J. Borg, *Conflict, Holiness, and Politics in the Teaching of Jesus* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1984), 59, who argues that the Pharisees, in par-

ticular, sought purity by separation. In other words, they "intended to insulate and isolate Israel from the practices of the heathen, to protect her against assimilation and corruption," from "Roman political control and Gentile influence."

9. Josephus tells us that the Pharisees "have the reputation of being unrivaled experts in their country's laws," *Life* 191, John Bowker, *Jesus and the Pharisees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 98.

10. See Borg, *Conflict, Holiness, and Politics*, 127. Cf. the "holiness code" of Lev. 19, also 17–26. A recurrent theme is man's being made holy by God: "I am the Lord; I sanctify you," (22:32.); Lev. 11:45.

11. Jacob Neusner, *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees*, 3 vol. (Leiden: Brill, 1971) 3:288. The Pharisees were a purity sect, and the centrality of the temple explained their beliefs and behavior, for to desire a life of purity was to wish to live as a priest. See also Bowker, *Jesus and the Pharisees*, 29.

12. Lev. 21:1–22; 4:3–12.

13. However, the Pharisees went beyond merely doing exactly as the Law prescribed; situations in their contemporary culture demanded new laws of application. An oral tradition of laws arose, a multiplication of laws, especially in ritual purity. This kept the law alive, reinterpreting the law for the "modern" generation. See Marcel Simon, *Jewish Sects at the Time of Jesus*, trans. James H. Farley (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967, orig. 1960), 36. These "new" laws often arose from hair-splitting interpretations of the Torah.

14. There is a possibility "that Jesus himself was raised in the Pharisaic tradition and so was a natural object of concern for his fellow sectarians." R. A. Wild, cited in Günter Stemberger, *Jewish Contemporaries of Jesus, Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes*, trans. Allan W. Mahnke (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 38.

15. Anthony J. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees in Palestinian Society: A Sociological Approach* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1988), 293.

16. *Antiquities* 13:402; Bowker, *Jesus and the Pharisees*, 80.

17. Simon, *Jewish Sects*, 2.

18. Bowker, *Jesus and the Pharisees*, 32–40. Some Pharisees argued among themselves about the ritual details of handwashing, 39–40.

19. Bowker, *Jesus and the Pharisees*, 32–35.

20. Stemberger, *Jewish Contemporaries of Jesus*, 140. "According to the commonly held view of all of the branches of Judaism, only the Pharisees survived the catastrophe of the year 70 C.E., passing seamlessly into the rabbinate."

21. Bowker, *Jesus and the Pharisees*, 37.

22. Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, trans. S. H. Hooke, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972, orig. 1954), 140. For the Pharisees' stress on tithing, see Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees*, 296.

23. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According To Luke*, 1075, 1186; Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 141. Tax collectors were "shunned by all respectable persons." Scholars disagree over whether association with Gentiles or dishonesty was hated most by fellow Jews, but both would have been factors.

24. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 142, writes that this parable, to Jesus' audience, "must have seemed shocking and inconceivable." It can still be unsettling to our religious attitudes today, especially if we believe that God works on a strictly just, *quid pro quo* basis. This parable has even been interpreted as expressing a proto-Pauline theology of grace. See F. E. Bruce, "'Justification by Faith' in the Non-Pauline Writings of the New Testament," *EvQ* 24 (1952), 66–67, as cited in Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 1185. Fitzmyer warns against reading the parable as a fully developed Pauline justification by faith, but it is, nevertheless, far beyond strict justice based on works. See also Jeremias, *Parables*, 141.

25. Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, 1958), 374–79; *The Sacred and Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959), 36–47; Hugh Nibley, *Mormonism and Early Christianity* (Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1987), 359.

26. See Edward L. Kimball's excellent "The History of LDS Temple Admission Standards," *Journal of Mormon History* 24 (spring 1998), 135–76, for an overview of the development and variations in temple recommend practice. See also Robert A. Tucker, "Temple Recommend," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4 vols. (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1992), 4:1446.

27. See, e.g., Luke 5:27–32; 15:2. The Pharisees had a concept of "salvation by segregation," while Jesus set up a principle of "salvation by association." W. Manson, quoted in Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 589.

28. For dance, see below on the Nauvoo Temple. When I presented this paper at a Sunstone symposium, I suggested at this point that a room for the local chapter of Amnesty International would be appropriate for a temple, because it works to free those imprisoned unjustly. One person in the audience objected strongly to this idea. But Jesus defined sacrality as concern for social justice and

equality, compassion for the afflicted, despised, and imprisoned (Matt. 25:36).

29. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Period I: History of Joseph Smith, the Prophet and . . . Period II: From the Manuscript History of Brigham Young and Other Original Documents*, ed. Brigham H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Deseret Book, 1902–1932), 2:434.

30. 16 May 1836, *History of the Church* 2:442; June 16, 2:445.

31. *History of the Church* 2:474.

32. *History of the Church* 2:474.

33. *History of the Church* 2:474.

34. *History of the Church* 2:475. For the importance of education in the Kirtland temple experience, see Roger D. Launius, *The Kirtland Temple: A Historical Narrative* (Independence, [Mo.]: Herald Publishing House, 1986), 58–61. Cf. William Burgess Jr., *Autobiography*, 1, LDS Church Archives, as cited in Launius, 157, n. 37.

35. Edward Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge & Crandall, 1877), 207–8.

36. Kimball, "The History of LDS Temple Admission Standards," 136n.

37. *History of the Church* 7:555–56.

38. *History of the Church* 7:535, 542; *History of the Church* 7:555; cf. 593–94, etc.

39. See the Journal of Hosea Stout, Dec. 30, 1845, in Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–1861*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:100. Stout, the Nauvoo police chief, evidently held meetings with the police force in the temple. See 19 Dec. 1845 (1:98), and 1 Jan. 1846 (1:101).

40. *History of the Church* 7:557.

41. William Clayton/H. C. Kimball journal, LDS Church Archives, 1 Jan. 1846.

42. *History of the Church* 7:554.

43. See Richard Poll et al., *Utah's History* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1989), 248–49 (1870); 270–71 (1890).

44. Journal, LDS Church Archives, 25 Dec. 1884.

45. The 1890 Manifesto was the beginning of the end of radical polarization, but it was far from being the end itself. See Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986); E. Leo Lyman, *Political Deliverance: The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986); B. Carmon Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

46. I should emphasize that I feel positively about the validity of temple marriage and temple ordinances. I am only examining the policy of excluding non-LDS and less-active LDS family members and close friends from the experience of witnessing a temple marriage.

47. See T. W. Manson, quoted in Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 1072. See n. 23 above.

48. Klaus Berger, "Jesus als Pharisäer und frühe Christen als Pharisäer," *Novum Testamentum* 30 (1988), 231–62. Berger asserts that the Pharisees' objections to Jesus were based largely on his contact with such unclean people as tax collectors, lepers, and prostitutes rather than on his preaching. It was this contact with such outcasts that infuriated the Pharisees, "for it undermined their understanding of holiness and purity."

49. Making temples that can be used as stake centers (as were the Kirtland and Nauvoo Temples), or dedicating stake centers so that they could be used as temples, would also be financially advantageous in non-affluent, third-world countries.



In my study of Mosaic Law,  
I was struck with its serious flaw:  
A tooth for a tooth  
is completely uncouth,  
and it lacks any *je ne sais quoi*.

—DOUGLAS DICKSON

*When sung with spiritual engagement, hymns produce an emotional transformation. But our hymns are inevitably full of ambiguities: “Do what is right, let the consequence follow.” Sure, but don’t forget that “angels above us are silent notes taking.” What to make of these textual conflicts?*

# DO WHAT IS RIGHT, LET THE CONSEQUENCE FOLLOW: CONTRASTING MESSAGES IN MORMON HYMNS<sup>1</sup>

*By Wayne Booth*

**A**S I SAT DOWN TO BEGIN WORKING ON THIS talk, I suddenly panicked—as in fact I almost always do when tackling a complex topic. The reasons for panic here were unusually powerful. First, my ignorance. A voice kept intruding on my efforts to construct an outline: “Do you think that just because many Mormon hymns are echoing in *your* head you are qualified to talk about them to Church members who almost certainly know more hymns and their history than you do?” Another voice kept nagging about all of the scientific, philosophical, psychological, and theological issues that hover over the effects of hymn-singing on our behavior. “For all you know, there is a huge literature out there on your subject, requiring research, not sheer speculation.”<sup>2</sup> In short, I felt that either it had all been said before or there was so much to be said that the subject would require a lifetime of research.

I phoned Sunstone editor Elbert Peck, confessed my ignorance and panic, and said that I’d like to back out. But he talked me into it again and sent me a copy of Michael Hicks’s fine book, *Mormonism and Music*,<sup>3</sup> and copies of two earlier hymnals I had long ago used but no longer owned: the “green

book” of 1927 and the “blue book” of 1948.<sup>4</sup> Reading Hicks, I found myself a bit reassured: I couldn’t find much, either in the book or its bibliography, on my chosen topic: namely, what virtues—and perhaps even vices called virtues—do our hymns powerfully teach? After probing through the three hymnals, flagging significant changes and conflicts in the virtues they hailed,<sup>5</sup> I became convinced, not that I’d have a good talk, but that the subject is even more important than I’d originally thought. I suspected—I still think rightly—that the role of hymns in our spiritual education is too often under-treated by scholars and historians. On the other hand, obviously our Church leaders have from the beginning understood the unique spiritual power of hymn singing: their endless efforts at good revision prove that. They have always known that hymns, when sung with spiritual engagement, produce a kind of emotional transformation that I call the “hymnhigh”—one key form of those times in life when time is transcended and we are “out of this world”—for good or ill.

Thus the history of hymnhighs, with their immense teaching power, deserves intense attention not just from historians and musicologists but especially from psychologists, ethical critics and philosophers, and what we Mormons don’t call theologians, though we have plenty of them. For now, I can only hint at most of that immense range of topics, asking: What are the likely ethical or moral effects on us, the effects on the psyche, the soul, from the First Presidency on down, of our standard hymnhighs and the conflicts among their messages?

An essential part of any such ambiguous quest is a close look at the ethical lessons that the words of the hymns embody.<sup>6</sup>

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WAYNE BOOTH is the George M. Pullman Distinguished Service Professor of English emeritus at the University of Chicago. He is the author of *For the Love of It: Amateuring and its Rivals* and *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (both from The University of Chicago Press). An earlier version of this article was presented as a talk at the 1998 Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City on 31 July (tape #SL98-291), and later at the Chicago Sunstone Symposium on 7 November 1998.

## HYMNHIGHS

*The singing of hymns is meant to change our character.*

**H**YMNHIGHS resemble many other forms of communal emotional escape from the quotidian world, such as folk dancing, rock concerts, various patriotic or pioneer ceremonies, chanting for victory for the Utah Jazz or the Chicago Bulls, watching an exciting movie, reading a gripping murder mystery.<sup>7</sup> Such highs rescue us from the miseries of the everyday world; they transport us into a different time-realm, whether higher or lower.<sup>8</sup> But unlike most other highs—for example, just listening to rather than singing one's favorite music—singing a hymn is explicitly intended to have an effect on our behavior after we return to that everyday world. Hymnhighs at their best are thus not just an escape in the moment: they change our character, over time, as recent studies of the “addictive effect” of all highs have shown. At their best, they are transformative, salvational.

But can they also be *anti*-salvational? Can they harm? I don't have to remind you that when devotional singing is employed in a bad cause, it can have bad effects. Many atrocities are committed daily throughout the world by pious fanatics in one cult or another, often after experiencing highs, musical or not, highs that they would call religious or spiritual. The emotional experience surely must often resemble the elevation we may feel when singing “Abide with Me; Tis Eventide” (hymn 165, 1985 hymnal), say, or “Come, Come, Ye Saints” (30), but the words sung piously authorize the terrorist's next bombing.

Consider a much less threatening example of the universal quest for the escapes I'm calling “highs.” Recently, my wife and I were talked into going to a rock concert, the third one of my life, performed by the resurrected Grateful Dead. We found ourselves surrounded by many thousands of fans who were experiencing musical highs surely as high as you and I experience when singing “Come, Come, Ye Saints.” And they were being taught, or so I infer, to smoke another bit of grass, or to whirl like a dervish. Some were passing out. In one of the highs, with everyone standing and dancing and most of them singing, some of them looked like ecstatic Pentecostals about to pass out; they sang what sounded to me like an exhortation to worship the devil.<sup>9</sup>

## HYMNSTORIES

*Hymns shape our lives more powerfully than do sermons.*

**B**EFORE looking at explicit teachings sung in our hymns, and at the challenging conflicts I find among some of those teachings, I should perhaps explain how I landed in this complicated topic. I've been increasingly struck over the years by the way in which the hymns I sang from childhood on survive in me now. They flood into my head and heart whenever I face moral decisions or spiritual crises, major or minor. Lifelong Mormons will have had similar experiences. (I'm afraid many converts may not yet have had exactly the same experience. It doesn't come until one has sung this or that hymn a hundred times or more, some of

those times experiencing a tearful hymnhigh. I feel pretty sure, for example, that the number of times “Come, Come, Ye Saints” has brought me to tears must approach three score and ten, and the number of times I sang it as a child might be ten times that figure.)<sup>10</sup>

Throughout my life, including now, when facing moral conflicts, whether consciously praying for guidance or not, I find one or another hymn glimmering from the dark to advise me.

**First hymnstory.** In Chicago we're plagued, as some would put it, with homeless people on the streets, begging for assistance. We who are not homeless know, or think we know, that some of them, maybe many, maybe most, are conning us with their tales of woe. We also know, however, that some of them, maybe many, maybe most, are genuinely desperate. And if we believe, as we should, in Christ's mission—“I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat . . . I was a stranger, and ye took me in . . . I was in prison, and ye came unto me” (Matt. 25:35-36)—if we believe in those hymns that reinforce this message, that every needy and desperate person is as important in the eyes of the Lord as any other of us, then our problem is to decide which ones to give to and how.

In the Great Depression, my family had a flood of hoboes knocking on our back door in American Fork,<sup>11</sup> asking for work or a handout. Memory says that my mother, a devout Mormon believing that faith without good works is dead, never turned one away without giving something, if only a sandwich. In contrast, now, though I often give a bit, when I'm really rushed, I may just pass a pleading, weeping woman by, even feeling annoyed at her probable fakery. And then, ten steps down the sidewalk, my head will be ringing with—can you guess with what?

(As I was presenting this talk, I paused and two voices immediately rang out, “Have I done any good in the world today?”)

Let's now sing one verse of it (223).

(I thank Ardean Watts for his vigorous piano accompaniment to our singing in Salt Lake.)

Have I done any good in the world today?  
Have I helped anyone in need?  
Have I cheered up the sad  
and made someone feel glad?  
If not, I have failed, indeed.  
Has anyone's burden been lighter today  
Because I was willing to share?  
Have the sick and the weary  
been helped on their way?  
When they needed my help was I there?  
Then wake up, and do something more  
Than dream of your mansion above.  
Doing good is a pleasure,  
A joy beyond measure,  
A blessing of duty and love.

So then, with those words ringing in my ears, I often retrace

those ten steps, as if commanded by one of the twelve apostles, and try to start a conversation with that homeless person, hoping to decide whether she is a fake or not, and then, as her tears flow, finally giving something.

**Second hymnstory.** The same thing can happen at our front door. One evening late, the doorbell rang. I peered out the window and saw that it was a familiar figure, a guy named Joe whom I had helped in the past but whom I had caught in lies and hoaxes several times. At one point, he had actually stolen my checkbook. So I simply ignored the continued doorbell ringing. Then I woke about three o'clock in the morning, hearing that hymn again, along with the scriptural passage, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40). I felt guilty, wishing I had a phone number to call Joe, to talk with him once again about how to salvage his life, and perhaps as usual to cave in and give him something.<sup>12</sup>

**Third hymnstory.** When I was chairing the English department at a small college, the scandal broke about how Charles Van Doren had been dishonestly handling the "\$64,000 Question" program on TV.<sup>13</sup> Our college president phoned me suggesting that we should hire Van Doren, since after the notorious scandal he should come cheap, and he would bring us a lot of good national attention. I thought the suggestion itself scandalous, and I said so. But when he insisted, and became angry with me, and implied that he would punish me one way or another if I didn't accept his suggestion, I caved in, and we made the offer to Charles Van Doren—who, praise God, turned us down. I can remember, thirty years later, that for quite a while afterward I was plagued with intrusions from a hymn that musically is not at all one of my favorites: "Do what is right; let the consequence follow."<sup>14</sup> I rank "Do What Is Right" (237), for sheer musical quality, about a low two on a scale of one to ten. Yet there it was, nagging one part of my mind against another, with the crummy music sung as if it were Handel.

**Fourth hymnstory** (which I warn you is not quite so affirmative about hymnhighs). It may surprise you to learn that there is a contemptible side to my soul, unlike yours, that wants rewards, credit, open signs of accomplishment and achievement. And I hope it won't shock you for me to say that my silly competitiveness was at least partly taught by those hymns that preach about some reward for going good. Even the first hymn we sang tonight, "Have I Done Any Good?" with its urging to do something more than "dream of your mansion above," does conclude the second verse with "To God each good work will be known"—it implies, that is, that we do the good to get the reward. "Do What Is Right" teaches us that the "consequence" that will "follow" depends on the fact that "Angels above us are silent notes taking." Now I wonder: did they write down in their book these past weeks just how hard I've been working on various revisions of this talk? I do hope

Throughout  
my life,  
when facing  
moral conflicts,  
I find some hymn  
glimmering  
from the dark  
to advise me.



they overlooked what I did yesterday when I was tempted to say something obscene about the task . . . But I won't go into that.

In short, credit is earned by doing good and avoiding evil, *but don't forget* that you should think consciously about getting that credit. I bought that message wholeheartedly, and it is still in my soul, at least on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Most people I know reveal some signs of that eagerness for reward that implies triumph over others. I can remember scores of episodes throughout my life when failure to be number one devastated me: placed below #1 in the clarinet section of the high school band, with Phil Jensen's name as winner imprinted on my soul; not winning the competition at Boy Scout camp for neatest campsite—I sobbed and sobbed about that; voted down in the high school graduation competition to be named Representative Boy, having worked hard to make sure I would have the longest biographical entry in our yearbook. I remember thinking, Why, if I have the longest list of club memberships and have been president of the Beethoven Club, why, oh, why have they voted Keith Miller as Representative Boy rather than me?! At graduation, I had a hard time even speaking with Keith in a friendly way.

Now I can hear some asking, "Do you, Professor Booth, still have any problem about wanting to be considered #1?" Absolutely not: in my view, I am the humblest person in the world.



BRIAN BEAN

Some of the Mormon hymns I admire most combat the temptation toward false pride and excessive worry about reward. For example, “Nay, Speak No Ill” (233) has not a hint of avoiding hate-speech for the sake of reward. (That one didn’t get into the hymn books until 1948.) Whenever I have one of those petty, proud moments, a moment later a reproachful hymn will rise up within, perhaps:

Then wake up, and do something more  
Than dream of your mansion above.

Or

Today, while the sun shines, work with a will  
.....  
Call life a good gift, call the world fair. . . .  
Today, today, work while you may  
There is no tomorrow but only today. (229)

Now then, we have one clear message combating the notion that the point of life is to achieve rewards in some future time. I’ll return later to a recent, abominable revision of that second hymn and to more about how some hymns risk reinforcing that competitive streak—the sort of thing that in extreme led Cain to slay his rival, Abel, and led Saul to try to get rid of his young, successful rival, David.

**Final hymnstory.** Now it’s true that, as kids, some of us developed ways of escaping the influences of hymns; since the messages are often a bit repetitive and can come to seem banal and boring, especially to youngsters who feel overburdened with too much preaching, a hymn can seem something to escape rather than embrace.

I remember how we deacons, in the American Fork Second Ward, would secretly play a game of actually corrupting hymns by adding the phrase, “between the sheets.” We would do that even while the service was going on, scribbling “between the sheets” back and forth to one another when the song titles were announced and even while they were being sung. My wife remembers that she and her girlfriends down in their Long Beach, California, ward did the same thing.

*Count your blessings—between the sheets.*

Did any of you play that wicked game?

The most vulgar, least-defensible corruption I can remember was of what has always been one of my favorites, “Come, Come, Ye Saints”—between the sheets.

So we should admit, while celebrating the educational power of hymns, that no hymn is immune from corruption. We smarties were poisoning the message. The

interesting point to me now, though, is that the very hymns we spoiled then return to me today in unsoiled form; the hymns’ power soon overwhelmed the adolescent tinkering.

#### HOW MUSIC FORTIFIES WORDS

*The words we sing wholeheartedly enter our souls.*

**M**Y personal anecdotes prove nothing except the obvious fact that when we sing ethical language, it gets into our souls, much more deeply than when someone preaches it at us. I’m sure all of us could offer other examples—especially striking for me are those moments when I am feeling depressed and some hymn of spiritual comfort enters: “Abide with me; tis eventide” (165) or “God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform” (285).

One hymn I wish I had had as a child, to use now when I get depressed—but it wasn’t written then—is “That Easter Morn” (198) by Elder Marion Duff Hanks and Tabernacle organist Robert Cundick, with its three concluding refrains—

. . . And conquered pain.  
. . . And conquered death.  
. . . And conquer fear.

Let’s sing it now, to protect us from the negatives that are coming here.

That Easter morn, a grave that burst  
 Proclaimed to man that "Last and First"  
 Had ris'n again  
 And conquered pain.

This morn renews for us that day  
 When Jesus cast the bonds away,  
 Took living breath  
 And conquered death.

Thus we in gratitude recall  
 And give our love and pledge our all,  
 Shed grateful tear  
 And conquer fear.

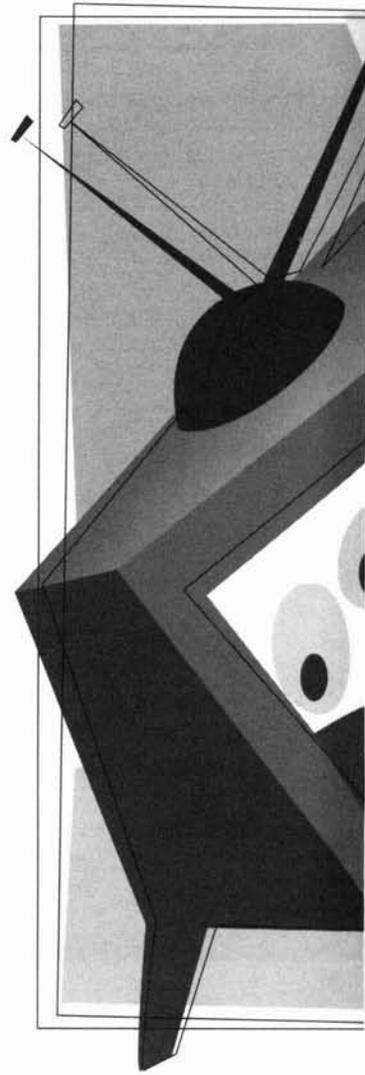
We could speculate about why it is that the hymn words we sing dig messages into our bones more deeply than mere language does. (Poetry is the closest rival.) Even music without words implants notions of just what kind of behavior should be celebrated. The most advanced physiologists find it hard to explain fully why music has such transformative power. Marches, funeral dirges, wedding tunes—all implant what people these days often call *attitudes* but what used to be called *virtues*, expanding the meaning from Sunday School lists to include what the classical philosophers meant by it: not just a list of literal behavior commandments but the entire range of commitments and habits of mind and heart that contribute to excellence or worthiness of life. The music that gets into our souls, whether with words or not, shapes us spiritually. And when there are words, the music with its mysterious power underlines the verbal message, leaving us singers with the conviction that we have sung divine truth. I doubt even parental supervision and advice have as much long-lasting power as any single genuine hymnhigh, especially when experienced in childhood.

Church leaders, recognizing that power, have from the beginning put immense energy into perfecting the hymnals, always tacitly underlining my thesis here, though I've found no explicit statement of it: namely, that music has the strongest teaching power of all our resources. If you read Hicks's chapters on the history of our hymnals, you'll be impressed by just how important most of our leaders have judged hymns to be. As they have quarreled about choices, sometimes their judgments seem trivial or uninformed or just plain dogmatic. As Hicks records, Church leaders have almost always valued familiarity and doctrinal soundness more than musical quality. President Heber J. Grant, for example, who could never sing in tune though he ardently took singing lessons, expressed highly idiosyncratic preferences and condemnations, and many other authorities have endorsed, Hicks says, a "trend toward populism and parochialism."<sup>15</sup> Hicks laments that the 1985 hymnal has fewer first-class hymns, judged "aesthetically"—that is, musically—than does the 1948 hymnal.

When the  
 mysterious  
 power of music  
 underlines  
 the verbal  
 message,  
 singers feel  
 they have sung  
 divine truth.

Obviously, the actual changes in the message we emphasize, as distinct from our choices of tunes, can always be interpreted in many different ways. Some see the changes as signs of hypocrisy, attempts to disguise past doctrinal error. Though I regret some of the changes, I argue that the passion for improving the hymnal is not just an acknowledgment that what a hymn says will be taken as confirmed doctrine; it is an affirmation of a key spiritual point: whatever we sing wholeheartedly enters our souls with either healing and transforming power or with potentially destructive effect.

Church attitudes about the power of hymns can be dramatized by the fact that in 1985 the First Presidency for the first time provided an official hymnal preface, in effect validating every hymn in the book. All of the hymns have been selected, they say, "to meet the varied needs of today's worldwide Church membership." Hymns "move us to repentance and good works, build testimony and faith, comfort the weary, console the mourning, and inspire us to endure to the end." That's an impressive summary of what religion itself can do for us: move us to repentance and good works, build testimony and faith, comfort the weary, console the mourning, and inspire us to endure to the end.





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### CONFLICTS AMONG HYMN MESSAGES

*An unavoidable reflection of the human condition.*

THIS validation of the importance of hymns lands us in some problems I've already hinted at. The First Presidency's preface quite appropriately refused to address such problems: most significantly, the plain fact that the diverse hymns embrace explicit messages that are not in total harmony, and they never have been. Indeed, I am convinced that the explicit and implicit ethical messages of the hymns we love will never be totally consistent or coherent or harmonizable as expressed doctrine. Our beliefs about our world and God are inevitably in ambiguous tension, which is reflected in messages that are at least potentially contradictory. And that textual tension requires what some current critics would call a bit of deconstruction, or hermeneutical juggling, or casuistry—all of these terms in the non-pejorative sense.<sup>16</sup> I'll approach that dangerous enterprise toward the end of this paper.

When the committee charged with revising Church hymns for the 1927 hymnal met, they decided to eliminate three things: "hymns rarely sung, doctrinally unsound texts, and bad music."<sup>17</sup> But they went further than that. They reduced

the number of solemn or gloomy hymns—including a large number dealing with the death of children and loved ones. They increased the cheerful, hopeful hymns, and they greatly reduced, as Hicks puts it, "the millennialism and communitarianism" of the early hymns.<sup>18</sup>

A tracing of hymnal revisions edition by edition would reveal changes in deepest commitments from generation to generation. But that's not my main business here. Instead, I want to explore, perhaps a bit dangerously, three conflicts of message that have endured through all the revisions, though in different proportions: First, the contrast between the celebration of obedience and the celebration of freedom and free agency. Second, the conflict between enmity and love: on one hand, the emphasis on revenge or military triumph, on battling with "the foe," on fighting rather than forgiving, and on the other hand, Christian love and forgiveness. Third, the contrast between promoting goodness for the sake of some future reward and promoting goodness for the sake of the pursuit itself: pursuing virtue for some other reward and pursuing virtue as its own reward. This third conflict, the one that I've already revealed as powerfully present in my own nature, might be summarized as the contrast between *bargaining* virtue, even bribing

virtue—angels are keeping an account book, and the payoff will ultimately be yours—and what might be called disinterested or unselfish or even *genuine* virtue.<sup>19</sup>

All three of these conflicts, or dilemmas, or paradoxes, or disharmonies—choose your own term—appear in every version of Christianity, and versions of them can be found in most non-Christian religions, too. The three conflicts can be put pejoratively like this:

- All of us Christians joyfully celebrate the freedom that God has granted us—and woe be unto those who do not obey *my* version of God's commandments.
- All of us Christians love our enemies, following Christ's command, *but* we often do our best to destroy them, unforgivingly. As Kenneth Burke put it, "Yes, I know you're a Christian, but who are you a Christian against?"
- All of us Christians seek to purify our souls of all signs of greed or envy or false pride, *and* we are simultaneously eager, like the Wayne Booth I describe in my anecdotes, to make sure that the records kept by God and his angels and his earthly servants maintain an impressive account of every good thing we do. We all want to be Representative Boy or Girl when the vote is taken up yonder.

(Hugh Nibley has called this sin Successism.)

Now, it is much too easy to adopt that mocking tone about such conflicts, as if they revealed some sort of easily escapable sins. But, in fact, does not the presence of conflicts reveal a terrible hypocrisy in us all, as we zealously sing both pious sides of the oppositions? Is there not an inherent flaw in our thinking, if we can sing both sides without thinking of the conflict? I shall later argue that these paradoxes in our pious language are not simply the failure of believers to pursue the right side of the line. The fault lies, like an earthquake fault, in the territory of life itself; the fault lines are built into the human condition, and whether or not we blame God, as some have done, for creating our temptations to follow the wrong side of the line, those temptations are there.

So as I turn now to a closer look at the three major conflicts, I hope to keep it clear that their existence is not in itself an inherent flaw: the very dramatization of conflict is something to be celebrated because it keeps us reminded that the whole shebang cannot be reduced to one formula.

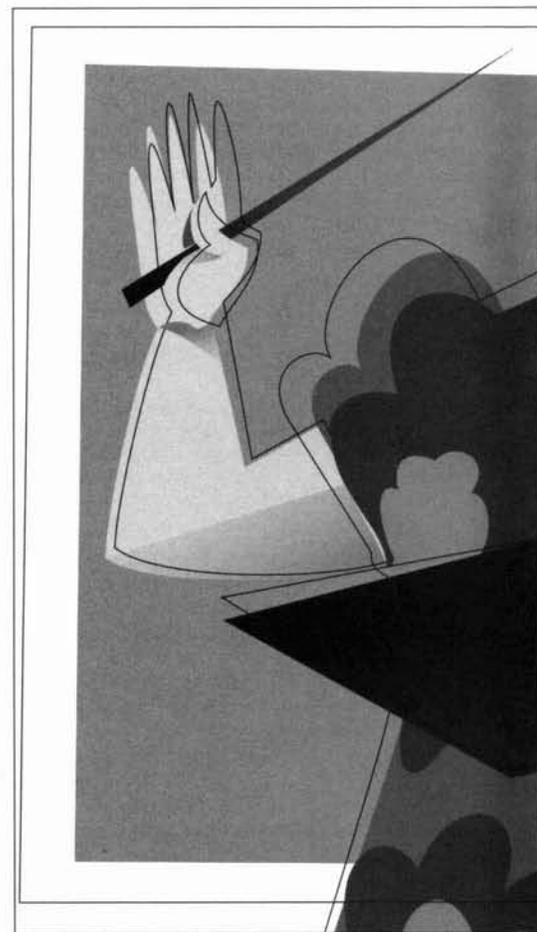
#### AGENCY & OBEDIENCE

*Obedience hymns are on the rise in Mormonism.*

FIRST, let's look at the most obvious contrast—between the emphasis on free agency and the emphasis on obedience. Our hymns have always celebrated both, with never an explicit hint about how they might conflict.<sup>20</sup> If you look only at the topic indexes at the back of the hymnals, you might conclude that obedience is these days winning over freedom. Unlike the topic list of 1927, the 1985 topic list does not include "Freedom" or "Free Agency." Under "Agency" it does list six hymns. Under "Obedience" there are twenty-two, in contrast with only two in 1927. Thus, at least in the minds of those compiling the topic indexes, obedience is winning hands down, whether they discuss the conflict or not. Yet whatever the committee's choices may mean, the conflict between full freedom and full surrender to obedience is implicit throughout.

Fortunately, I believe, the greatest emphasis by far under obedience is to obey God because of his and Christ's love. There is nothing about obedience to one's area supervisor or stake president. Such obedience to particular human com-

When we sing,  
we feel the  
glorious sense  
that, whatever  
the future brings,  
this experience  
*now* justifies  
the world.



mands is left implicit, as in "Keep the Commandments" (303), a hymn added in 1985:

"Keep the commandments; keep the commandments!  
In this there is safety; in this there is peace."

Tracing these two virtues through the hymns, I find more plain ambivalence than simple-minded stress on either side. It is true that both sides have some powerful, narrow adherents. Some hymns seem to move entirely to the opposite side from "Keep the Commandments." In "Know This, That Every Soul Is Free" (240), found in the 1835 first hymnal and in all three editions I'm dealing with, but totally missing from my memory, we read that "God will force no man to heav'n," and "never force the human mind." In its third and fourth verses, we learn that

Freedom and reason make us men;  
Take these away, what are we then?  
Mere animals, and just as well  
The beasts may think of heav'n or hell.  
May we no more our pow'rs abuse. . . .

Was this hymn's anonymous poet dealing with someone who had been abusing his powers and ought to stop it? The song sounds almost like a message from the Mormon Alliance. Note



that in relation to the conflict between forgiveness and revenge, when we freely choose truth and goodness, the hymn doesn't say that God grants us a crown or some kind of victory: "Our God is pleased when we improve His grace and seek his perfect love."

Again, it is obvious that many other hymns are ambivalent about these two values, stressing both free agency and obedience. Are these ambiguities about the conflict or harmony between freedom and obedience faults or virtues? *Both sides* of the conflict are genuine virtues without which neither the Church nor its members could survive. But is recognizing their tension, as the hymns force us to, a contribution to our spiritual life?

#### ENMITY & LOVE

*The danger of taking metaphors literally.*

**S**AVING that question for later, consider the second conflict, that between the celebration of peace and militancy, between calls for charity and forgiveness and our natural desires for triumph, revenge, and victory. The editors of the various editions have of course worked hard to eliminate the more destructive conflicts among these beliefs. An early hymnal had quite a lot about getting bloody revenge against those who had martyred the Prophet. When I was a kid, this is what we sang in "Praise to the Man"—though it had

already been cut from the new hymnal of 1927:

Long shall his blood, which was shed by assassins,  
Stain Illinois while the earth lauds his fame.

Those are the words we sang, religiously, on through the early 1930s, because as I remember it, our wards couldn't yet afford to buy the new hymnal. Hicks reports that Apostle Harold B. Lee, on the 1940s music committee, fought to restore those words "stain Illinois," but the 1927 revision remains to this day:

Long may his blood which was shed by assassins,  
Plead unto heav'n while the earth lauds his fame.

On into the '30s, however, in my chapel we were using the unrevised, revengeful hymn, still singing soulfully our desire for bloody revenge on Illinois. But of course, we also sang other hymns that preached loving our enemies.

While the hymnals are considerably freer of literal war talk now than they were a century ago, they're still full of militant metaphor. When we sing "Onward Christian soldiers, marching *as* to war," we do intend it metaphorically: we march not to actual war but only *as* to war. Right? Well, maybe.

But just how metaphorical were our ancestors being when they sang the following:

Beware a fiend in angel form, a demon in disguise; . . .  
His favorite weapon is a smile, he ne'er was known to  
frown. . . .  
Should he in strife the stronger prove, one way is open—  
flee;  
'Tis no disgrace when overmatch'd; Retreat means victory.  
Recruit thy worn and shattered strength, And in some  
future fray  
Thy might shall make thee conqueror, The demon thou  
shalt slay.<sup>21</sup>

Now that could be read as just plain militaristic. Yet a close reading of the whole text reveals that the author of the words, Apostle-poet Orson Whitney, must have meant it all metaphorically, with the fiend being a metaphor for universal temptation to sin. (Having known personally the composer of the music, LeRoy J. Robertson, I am sure that Robertson, at least, meant it all metaphorically). The hymn's originators were not recommending murdering non-Mormons. Nevertheless, that kind of metaphoric repetition of militaristic imagery can often move us toward the literal; it can be taken literally by some singers.

It's hard to imagine that committees have *not* wrestled with this conflict. Though the phrase "Army of God," a topic heading in 1927, does not appear in 1985, I can't help wondering why the hymns "We Are All Enlisted" (250), "Who's on the Lord's Side?" (260), and "Hope of Israel" (259)—about the most thoroughly militaristic hymns we have—were *added* to the 1948 edition and retained in 1985.

Fighting for a kingdom, and the world is our foe;  
Happy are we! Happy are we!

Who's on the Lord's side? Who?  
Now is the time to show.  
We ask it fearlessly:  
Who's on the Lord's side? Who?  
We wage no common war,  
Cope with no common foe.  
The enemy's awake;  
Who's on the Lord's side? Who?

"Hope of Israel," music by a great uncle of mine, William Clayson, is absolutely all army, battles, swords, war cries, "vanquish every foe today":

Soon the battle will be over;  
Ev'ry foe of truth be down.  
Onward, onward, youth of Zion;  
Thy reward the victor's crown."

We might, if we wished, conclude this section on war and peace by speculating about just which militaristic hymns were being sung, non-metaphorically, by pious Mormons just before they massacred more than 120 wicked foes in Mountain Meadows. But let's not.

#### BARGAINING VIRTUE VS. GENUINE VIRTUE

*Christianity and our hymns are full of ambiguous contradictions.*

WHEN we choose to read the militaristic language metaphorically—don't win physical battles, win spiritual ones—we are led to the third conflict, between seeing the ultimate goal of life as winning some future reward and seeing it as achieving some sort of virtue here and now. Even when we read all the military talk as metaphoric, as the poets intend us to, and even though, from edition to edition, we have considerable reduction of explicit exhortation to violence and revenge, such hymns are still loaded with the implication that life's goal is to win—if not by violence then by following the sleazy side of Wayne Booth: chalk up the virtues; get 'em recorded, and *win*.

Winning the crown, not killing the wicked but outclassing them—that's the goal. Right?

Well, not right, many hymns have said. The goal is not to seek reward but to achieve the right quality of soul, here and now. Many of the hymns that initially seem to celebrate victory move quickly into exhorting us about how to think and feel today.

I don't have to remind you that many hymns taken by themselves leave out all thought of victory or reward, stressing forgiveness and mercy and love and even just plain, daily decency. In "Let us oft speak kind words to each other; / Kind words are sweet tones of the heart" (232), there's not a hint about reward.

So we find in this third conflict something that could be

Our hymns,  
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pin-downable.



said to summarize the other two: the clash between virtue pursued for future payoff or reward and virtue pursued for virtue's sake.

The history of Christianity and Mormonism has been full, as are our hymns, of contradictory messages about what the true goal of life is. At times, the millenarian thrust has made it sound as if the future is all: the whole point of behaving right today is to be able to sit up there, on January First, 2000, looking down at all those damned souls careening into Hell. The contrasting extreme position, pretty much avoided by our tradition, is that what counts is *only* the quality of your soul today, regardless of any good works you may do: retreat to a monastery or hermitage, and spend all your time praying.

We've never gone that far, but we do exhibit a conflict: On one hand, faith without works is dead, so you should worry about totting up the works; on the other, what's important is the quality of your soul now and its relation to God. If that relation is right, you will of course do good works, but it's the quality of your soul now that really counts and you won't spend your time counting on or hoping that some angel has pencil in hand. Our hymns are inevitably full of ambiguities on this issue: "Do what is right, let the consequence follow." Sure, but don't forget: "Angels above us are silent notes taking" (237).<sup>22</sup>

As I've said, some of our hymns avoid the account book entirely: In "Scatter Sunshine" (230), "You Can Make the Pathway Bright" (228), and "Should You Feel Inclined to Censure" (235), there's not a hint of any reward but the scat-



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tering of sunshine and the speaking of kind words.

But it is important to stress just how many hymns cannot resist edging toward a different emphasis. In

There is sunshine in my soul today,  
More glorious and bright. . . .  
For Jesus is my light (227)

there is at the hymn's end a strong shift to the question of why we do it: Well, we do it, at the end of the fourth verse, "For joys 'laid up' above."<sup>23</sup>

Many hymns go much more aggressively in the payoff direction; it's all for reward, for some future triumph. Take the third verse of "O Ye Mountains High" (34), for example: the "silver and gold" of Zion's foes "shall be brought to adorn [Zion's] fair head." Taken literally, that's just plain, blatant, material reward. Even taken metaphorically, it is triumph in the future. Here are some more revealing quotations:

We are marching onto glory;  
We are working for our crown.  
We will make our armor brighter  
And never lay it down.  
We are marching, marching homeward,  
To that bright land afar.  
We work for life eternal;  
It is our guiding star. (225)

(As I cite these, I am aware that angels above us are taking silent notes as I speak, many of them against me, and there won't be a bright crown in store for me unless the virtue column outclasses the vices.)

It shouldn't surprise us that not only is our tradition ambiguous on this contradiction as on the others, but that most hymns are as well. Consider "Improve the Shining Moments" (226). For most of the way through it sounds as if that were the goal: improve each shining moment, for the sake of making the moments shine. But then suddenly it ends like this:

And God will love and bless you  
And Help to you impart.

Everything suddenly becomes future tense; God will reward you. Similarly, consider "Choose the Right" (239). Most of the way through, it sounds absolutely, purely disinterested:

In the right the Holy Spirit guides;  
And its light is forever shining o'er you,  
When in the right your heart confides.

But then, in the final stanza, we get "Let God and heaven *be your goal*." Hey, wait a minute: I thought my goal was to live in the light, which is forever shining o'er me *now*, not to seek some reward in a future goal!

And even in the hymn I began this paper with, "Have I Done Any Good?", we come finally to "To God each good work will be known"—which taken literally is in direct contradiction of the next line that urges us to wake up and stop dreaming of our mansion above!<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, in "Count Your Blessings" (241), for two stanzas we sound as if, "when upon life's billows we are tempest tossed," if we count our blessings, we will be "singing as the days go by": life now is redeemed. Then suddenly,

When you look at others with their lands and gold,  
[obviously feeling envious and covetous]  
Think that Christ has promised you his wealth untold.  
Count your many blessings; money cannot buy  
Your reward in heaven nor your home on high.

I can't help wondering how some of the wealthy, pious mansion builders on the Wasatch Front east bench feel when they sing that hymn.

The most amusing example of how the conflict has plagued our hymn committees is "Today, While the Sun Shines" (229): the old wording, by L. Clark, is "There is no tomorrow but only today," while the new version is "Prepare for tomorrow by working today." Can you imagine how much irony I saw in this admonition as I labored hard, preparing this paper day

after day, only part of the time feeling that I could call my life a good gift? My mind was often preparing for “tomorrow,” by working away at my computer today. Still, I consider the 1985 revision a genuine corruption of L. Clark’s original meaning.

We might summarize all three of the conflicts and ambiguities I’ve traced so far with one verse from “Let Us All Press On” (243).

Let us all press on  
in the work of the Lord,  
That when life is o’er  
we may gain a reward;  
In the fight for right  
let us wield a sword,  
The mighty sword of truth.

That is to say, *obey* by wielding a *sword*, for truth, and you’ll gain a *reward*.

THE REWARDS OF AMIGUITY  
*The danger is in the illusion  
that we have a fixed, ultimate truth.*

**W**HAT are we to make of all this ambivalence? Well, since I often take sides against those who stress taking sides, and I often claim credit for attacking those who seek credit, and often get cross at family members who exercise free agency rather than obey me, I want to end by stressing that such ambiguities in the hymns and hymnals are by no means unambiguous flaws.

Those virtues that I have implicitly attacked as vices—the stress on obedience, the stress on victory, the stress on reward—are not always and utterly vicious. Three points here: First, our nature is such that we cannot rely utterly on our independent, individual free agency; we need some forms of obedience. Full, independent, individual free choice, without attention to tradition and authority, lands us in personal disaster. Second, our nature is such that we cannot—or cannot with any ease or consistency—fully love and forgive all our enemies; the desire to put them down seems inborn in us, so that one of life’s goals must be to combat that urge. And third, our nature is such that even as we seek to become ever more virtuous, we find ourselves exhibiting the vice of competing with other virtue pursuers, and even hoping or working or praying for their downfall.

Take obedience, for example. Disaster results all around us when we stress irresponsible versions of freedom—messages that ignore how every individual depends on one or another kind of obedience. Little is more destructive than the messages offered in so much popular culture, as for example in Frank Sinatra’s famous, sentimental song boasting that “I did it my way.” Doing it only “my way” is a fairly sure road to disaster. Not obeying, in one sense or another, what one learns from those who have come before—authorities who have pursued God’s word on how to live—is the path to doom. Yet blind obedience, without personal thought and meditation—simply

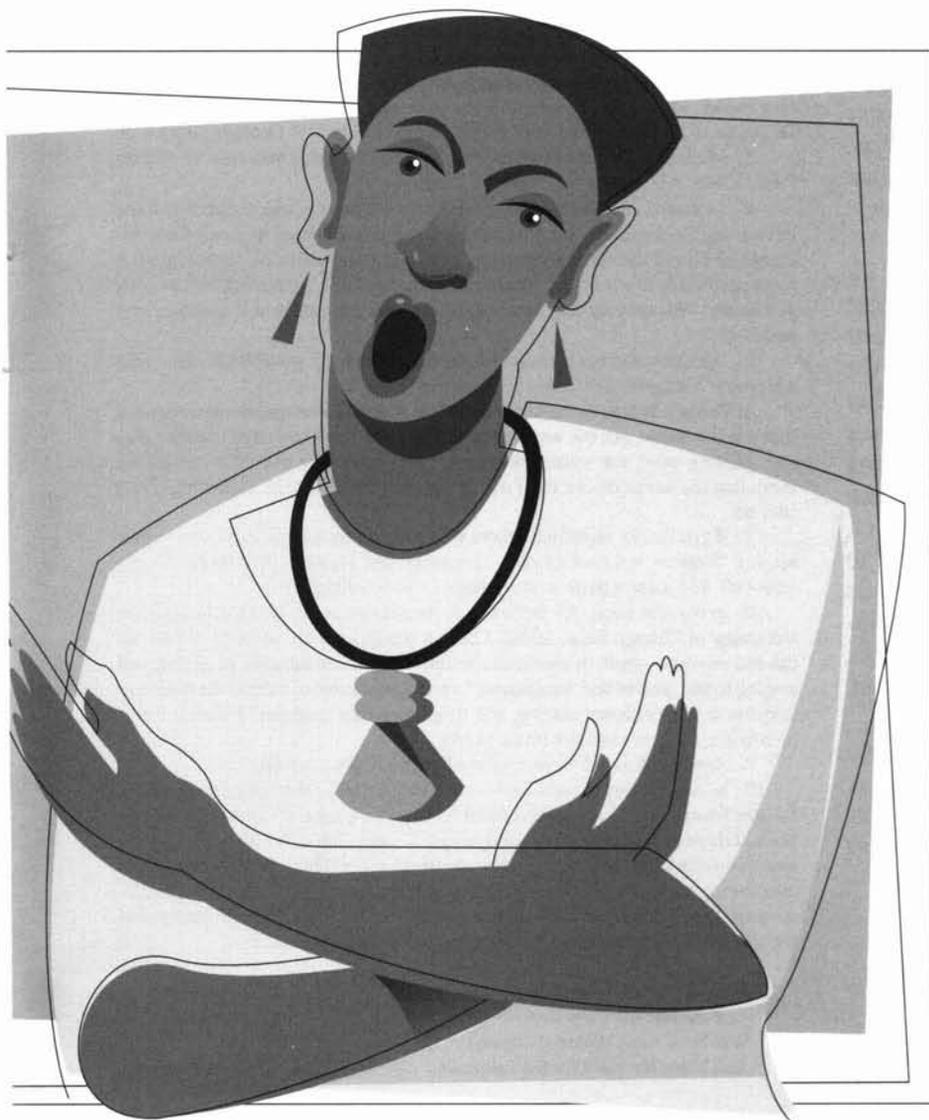
We constantly  
grapple with  
conflicting,  
virtuous  
demands.  
All religions  
must face, as  
do our hymns,  
irresolvable  
mysteries.

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echoing or imitating others with no internal processing—is spiritual death. Many of our authorities these days misread the obedience songs as meaning, “Obey me, because I’m boss.” The ambiguous hymns provide them with words that can be interpreted in that spirit, but if they really sing the hymns of obedience along with the hymns of freedom, they too must face the ambiguities.

My sermon ends then not with a clear indictment of this or that hymn, either musically, poetically, or ethically, but with a major question: What are we to make of all this ambivalence?

I think we should celebrate it. We should also celebrate our hymns’ implicit teachings about how our natures relate to God’s mysterious ways. When we pay close attention to our spiritual language, we find that our pictures of God and his will reflect these paradoxical conflicts. Those who seek a God who is not mysterious, a God who resolves all conflict, get into real trouble, reducing God to something manageable, something pin-downable. Our hymns, in their multiplicity and ambiguity, potentially protect us from that error. Though the topic



indexes never mention God as mysterious, incomprehensible, beyond the pin-downable, the hymns lead us to see him in that mystifying light.<sup>25</sup>

Because of the inescapable tensions built into Adam and Eve ten or fifteen thousand or million years ago, our natures constantly grapple with conflicting demands, most of which on all sides seem most often to be good or virtuous. That is why all genuine religions must face, as our hymns do, irresolvable mysteries.

Since the lessons about life, if they are honest, are always complex and potentially contradictory, moving from hymn to hymn and from revisions of hymnal to hymnal, one finds underlined not only the vitality of the Mormon tradition, with its constant changes as this or that value is played up or down, but the finally unresolved conflicts within our complex tradition.

I have known some troubled Mormons who see that complexity as some kind of negative evidence against the authorities and their hymn-making appointees. They seem to com-

plain: What kind of prophetic leadership can those men provide if the hymns' advice is allowed to shift from generation to generation and from hymn to hymn and even from verse to verse? Though many of the messages and changes are in my opinion misguided, even silly or dangerous, I would argue in contrast that one of the main blessings our hymns grant us, in their multiplicities and paradoxes, is the lesson that religious commitment can never be reduced to the routine simplicities that some would-be gurus proclaim. Only those who expect prophets and their committees to be infallible, once and for all, have any reason to be troubled when the hymn committees and their authorities change their minds, shifting emphasis from this to that virtue. The changes in *general* convey this admirable message: We "up here" are thinking, we're thinking. What's more, our predecessors, who were likewise thinking, thinking, have proved to be far from infallible. As we change their words, we prove that we also are not infallible.

The resulting blessing might be summarized as "count your many blessings, name them one by one," noting as you count how *this* blessing potentially conflicts with *that* one. It's time, the hymnals sing to us, for each of us to start thinking about how our *many* values rank against one another, and how in those contradictory rankings they require hard thought—thus we celebrate our most fundamental virtue, our practice of free agency, and demand that we learn to practice the complex virtue of casuistry.

We see, then, that underlying all these ambiguities and discords there is one glorious harmony: in the actual moments when we are singing the hymns we love, we are seldom tempted, regardless

of the actual words, to think primarily of some future reward, in a calculating spirit. Instead, we experience, in our souls, the glorious sense that the reward is, after all, now. Whatever the future brings, this experience of mystifying complexities *now* justifies the world. Oh, yes, indeed, I must try harder to be more virtuous, in this or that more literal dimension, but the reward for that trying is now, in this moment of song. There is no tomorrow for which to worry, but only today.

To me, the greatest gifts of life are such moments of spiritual transcendence of the fallen, often ugly, often tragic world: those hymnhighs, in which we feel not that we have every concept pinned down, but that we have really connected with God, or Jesus, or our dead loved ones, or at least some final, mysterious bit of Truth or Reality (with a capital T and R). Hymns sung can yield such moments—especially when they are musically powerful and are sung full of spirit.

But like other sources of such spiritual highs, hymnhighs can reinforce the illusion that we now possess the one fixed, ultimate truth—the quest is over. Whether as authorities re-

sponsible for hundreds or thousands or millions of people, or merely as individual seekers, we suffer the temptation to think that we have finally nailed the truth down, and we then descend into the ordinary, daily world, over-confident about our discovery. Hymnhighs are not directly translatable into literal, pinned-down truths about daily behavior. But the music that has produced the high can also build an illusion that the words conveyed a final, fixed truth.

I do believe that some of the pinned-down messages are indeed blessings, such as "Do what is right, let the consequence follow" or "Have I done any good in the world today?" Their only danger is that they may leave us over-confident about the meaning of those words "right" and "good." Many other hymns require, but fail to invite, careful thinking about their messages. Some of them come dangerously close to implanting the Saul-syndrome. In these hymns, the point of life becomes: chalk up more credits than others have, put down our foes, even kill them; march on, not *as to war*, metaphorically, but to actual destructive putdowns. And before you know it, you have come to believe that the surest proof of virtue is winning—as is preached by a famous Mormon prophet of profit whom I resist naming—and the surest proof of vice is losing.

ONE reason I like so much the hymn "If You Could Hie to Kolob" (284), a hymn that I cannot ever remember singing until quite recently, after the tune was changed in 1985, is that it faces this problem of inescapable mystery head on:

If you could hie to Kolob . . .  
And then continue onward. . . .  
Do you think that you could ever,  
Through all eternity,  
Find out the generation  
Where Gods began to be?  
Methinks the spirit whispers,  
"No man has found 'pure space,'  
Nor seen the outside curtains,  
Where nothing has a place."

And then: "There is no end to spirit," . . . to race, to virtue, to might, to wisdom, to light, to union, to youth, and on through mysterious non-ending after non-ending. Of course, some interpret this hymn as if it were pinning things down; I see it as opening things up.

And as I concluded this paper at both symposiums, I asked "Let's now sing this song," which everybody then did, nobly.

## NOTES

1. Talk delivered to Sunstone Symposium, 31 July 1998. Because of the audience-centered nature of the topic, I have preserved here the oral style. The "talk" is, however, somewhat revised since then, partly because a revised version was given at the Chicago Sunstone Symposium, 7 November 1998.

2. One line of research that I had not even suspected at that time is a recent scientific study of how all unusually intense experiences embed themselves per-

manently into our memories and often produce lifetime addictions. Those experiences can range from the noblest moments with the best hymns, as they "addict" us to pursue similar experience, down to the basest forms of drug, alcohol, and nicotine addiction. Once you've experienced love of any kind of "high," research now shows, your brain is geared to want more of it. See "Hardest Habit to Break: Memories of the High," *New York Times*, science section, 27 October 1998, 7, 9.

3. Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989).

4. As several auditors have pointed out, to confine my fake-research to these three is highly distorting. It ignores the many Sunday School hymnals (in a different color), and the many songs we sing and sang in Primary. No formal hymn is more powerfully in my soul, for example, than the "Little Purple Pansies" we sang in Primary: "We are very tiny but must try, try, try/ Just one spot to gladden, you and I."

5. With considerable assistance from David Haglund, a student of mine with a Mormon background.

6. At the Chicago Sunstone Symposium in 1998, one questioner suggested that it is the music, not the words, that produce the highs, and that we often sing just ignoring what our words are saying. That's obviously true. But it does not mean that the words do not enter our being, with the chance of producing effects later on.

7. If you do not object to authors who persistently refer to their own works, see my "Story as Spiritual Quest," *Christianity and Literature* 45 (winter 1996), 163–190. The subject there is "story-highs," not hymnhighs.

8. In my new book, *For the Love of It: Amateuring and its Rivals* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), I deal at length with the problem of how we can redeem time—both in our leisure hours, whether worshipping or playing and singing music, and in our "non-leisure" work "assignments." I think the book underplays the role of hymn singing, as it dwells on other "amateur" pursuits: works of love like amateur chamber music playing.

9. A more informed listener has told me that I got it wrong.

10. In the discussion period after the Chicago talk, I was asked to name my favorite hymn, and what came to mind first were a couple by Luther, but I suppressed those—hypocritically?—and named "Come, Come, Ye Saints." Its powers have been reinforced over the years by my love for T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. After hundreds and hundreds of lines of wonderful portraits of our brokenness, the destructive fires of life as we live it, and hundreds of other lines giving us glimpses of the divine, symbolized by the rose in the garden, Eliot concludes:

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.  
.....  
A condition of complete simplicity  
(Costing not less than everything)  
And all shall be well and  
All manner of thing shall be well  
When the tongues of flame are infolded  
Into the crowned knot of fire  
And the fire and the rose are one.

I wonder whether Eliot had ever heard our hymn. (From "Little Gidding," *T. S. Eliot The Complete Poems and Plays, 1909-1950* [New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1971], 145.)

11. Pronounced "fark," of course.

12. For a fine account of how we Mormons tend to ignore Christ's central message about human inequalities and suffering, see Eugene England, "Becoming a World Religion," *SUNSTONE* 21:2 (June 1998), 49–60.

13. I *think* it was that series, but there were others at the time; I was not, am not, a viewer of such shows. David Haglund, my assistant, is sure that it must have been *21 Questions*. But who wants to spend time doing research on a question like that?

14. Only the one line was sung, and that only in my elderly bass voice.

15. Hicks, 145.

16. After my Chicago symposium talk, a learned professor confessed to me that he did not understand the word "casuistry." The application of our principles to rival "cases," deciding which of the principles must be sacrificed if the others are to be honored, has been practiced by almost everyone from the Garden of Eden on. The word came into popularity in the seventeenth century, as the Jesuits explored the many conflicts they experienced in the real world. Because they and

others often "went too far" in excusing too much lying and cheating and just plain trickery in the name of noble causes, the name "casuistry" became more and more suspect over the centuries. For a good introduction to casuistry, see Albert R. Jonsen and Sephen Toulmin, *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). For a much deeper probing of how casuistry actually is required in every part of our lives (especially as found in the Romantic period), see James Chandler, *England in 1819* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998). You will find that casuistry is regularly practiced by every Mormon except those who destroy themselves or others.

17. Hicks, 131.

18. The topical index references to the millennium and the second coming dropped drastically in 1948, but exploded again in 1985. Surely, millennialism was not thought to be doctrinally unsound, but as various confident prophecies of the end were undermined, the hymns that sounded too confident about the immediate future were dropped. The second coming is now promised in very general terms, with no hint that it is "tomorrow."

19. See *Bribes: The Intellectual History of a Moral Idea* by John T. Noonan Jr., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), for a splendid tracing of ambiguities through history in the idea of Christ's redemption, as it relates to various versions of "payoff," defensible and indefensible.

20. I have assumed that the hymn committees had many discussions about many potential conflicts. But after my Salt Lake Symposium talk, one member of the committee for the 1985 hymnal stated that she could not remember such matters ever being addressed.

21. 1927 ed., #251, esp. verse 4.

22. Thus our hymns still reflect something of the battle between Luther and Catholicism: the version of Catholicism that he attacked was saying, in effect, "Beware a Fiend in Angel Form," that you can buy a glorious future with good works now, or even with shoddy imitations of good works. Luther went to the opposite extreme: nothing you can do will have any effect on whether you are saved; that's settled already. But if you are saved, you should engage in good works, and you will. But you do not do them to earn reward. To do good to earn reward is in itself sinful. At the symposium in Salt Lake City, there was a splendid debate between two Mormon "theologians" and two Protestant ministers; the debate moved quickly to a sharp contrast between works, almost as if Mormons talked only of that, and faith or sense of salvation, as if Protestants don't care about good works. (This session featured Rev. Tom Goldsmith, Mike Gray, Paul Murphy, and Van Hale [tape #SL98-174].)

23. I wonder why they chose to use quotes around "laid up"?

24. At the same time, I must say that there is a slight improvement in another line: from "the world has no use for the drone" to "To God each good work will be known." But the emphasis is still on getting credit.

25. Bertrand Russell reports how he ended up an atheist: In his early teens, he began to think rationally about how an all-powerful god who was all-loving could allow so much human suffering. So, thinking he was moving with brilliant, strict logic, he decided there is no God. In other words, God, reduced to one literal notion, turns out to be in conflict with God, in some other literal notion, and so the solution was foolishly seen thus: there can be no God.



## FUGUE

All my feet fight to keep me  
from running into the street  
and being crushed by flowers.

In this wilderness  
of symphony and silence,  
say what you will, it is a blessing  
to be spineless.

Fear frees us from staying still.

I feel the way the trees must feel  
the wind shift right before they lift  
their leaves.

Memorize the hand  
on the forehead, darkness imposing  
a sense of permanence.

If the pulse in the night slows  
and the stars

shiver with cold,  
open every cloud against your ear  
and listen close:

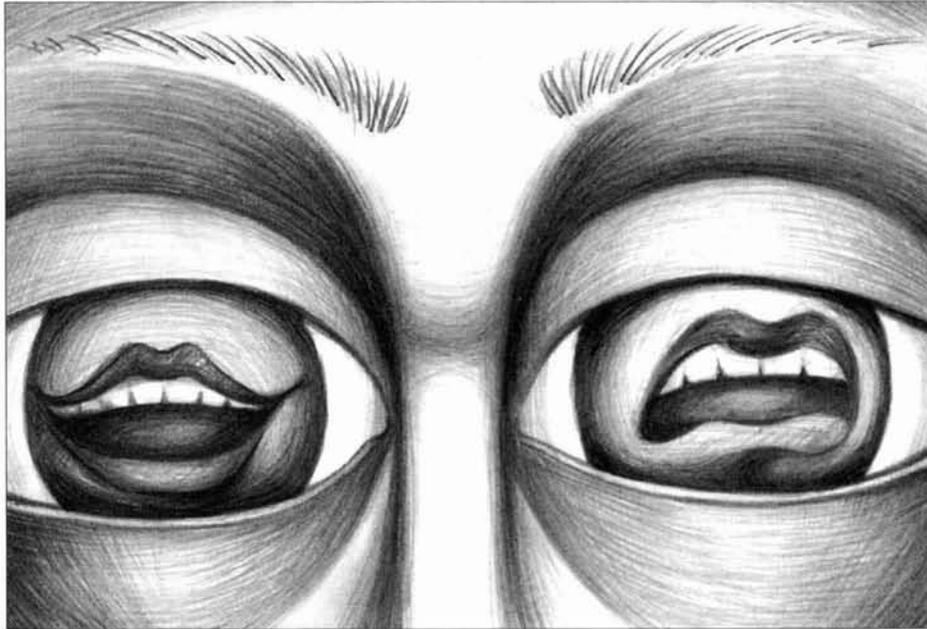
the angels are panning for gold.

—NICOLE MELANSON

## CRITICAL MATTERS

## SWIFTS OF OUR OWN

By Michael Austin



MATTHEW CHATTERLEY

*We all want to laugh at our enemies' ideas, but few of us ever really want to question our own assumptions. When Mormon satirists agree with us, they will attack us all the more because good ideas can only be made better by scrutiny.*

Perhaps I may allow the Dean  
Had too much satire in his vein,  
And seemed determined not to starve it  
Because no age could more deserve it.  
Yet malice never was his aim:  
He lashed the vice, but spared the name.  
No individual could resent  
Where thousands equally were meant.  
His satire points at no defect  
But what all mortals may correct;  
For he abhorred that senseless tribe  
Who call it humor when they jibe.

—JONATHAN SWIFT, writing his own eulogy in "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift"

A POSTLE-POET ORSON WHITNEY'S 1888 prophecy that Mormons "will yet have Miltons and Shakespeares of our own"<sup>1</sup> has become a rallying cry for generations of Latter-day Saint scholars and lovers of literature. And while I would be just as happy as Elder Whitney to meet a Mormon poet with the power of Milton or Shakespeare, I tend to think that what our culture needs most are a few Jonathan Swifts of our own—true satirists with the ability to expose our faults and hypocrisies, the courage to offend people from every religious and political perspective, and the self-assur-

ance to live a life largely devoid of friends or admirers. Such writers, of course, are difficult to recruit; unlike Miltons and Shakespeares, Swifts usually only attain wealth, glory, and respect posthumously. But we need them anyway because great satire has the ability to improve a community and its people in a way that no other kind of literature ever can.

In saying this, I do not mean to suggest that Mormons need more critics. If my examinations of Mormonism in contemporary fiction have shown me anything, it is that there are willing critics of the Church in almost every quarter of society: liberals, conservatives, Christian fundamentalists, secular humanists, academics, civil libertarians, survivalists, ex-Mormons-for-Jesus, ex-Mormons-for-sex, and current-Mormons-for-gay-marriage, -guns, -home schooling, -Herbalife, and -vegetarianism. All of these groups write books, and the authors of these books invariably imagine that, as long as their books use humor to criticize Mormon culture, they have done all that they need do to peddle their work as "satire." But this is a category error; simply making fun of a culture or religion does not constitute satire. Swift knew this well, and he drew a sharp distinction between his own satirical work and that of the "senseless tribe / Who call it humor when they jibe."

So what makes something satirical? Both the textbook definition and the works of the great satirists emphasize that it is a mixture of humor and criticism designed to improve its target, and this qualification is key. Satire improves us by showing us what we need to change about ourselves and then motivating us to make those changes. Mediocre satire gets us to see ourselves in the mirror and laugh; great satire makes us see ourselves in the mirror and cringe. But any work worthy of the designation must be motivated by a sincere desire to improve us. Criticism motivated by anything else—be it contempt, revenge, anger, intellectual disdain, or political disagreement—may be devilishly funny, or it may be gentle and good-natured, but it should never be confused with satire.

Nowhere does Swift make this point more clearly than he does in the work that is generally considered his satiric masterpiece: the fourth book of *Gulliver's Travels*. In this episode, Gulliver washes up on an island populated by two distinct species: a tribe of filthy, hairy, quarrelsome bipeds known as "Yahoos" and a race of intelligent talking horses known as "Houyhnhnms." The Houyhnhnms, we soon discover, are the embodiment of rationality and decorum, while

MICHAEL AUSTIN <austin@intrepid.net> is an assistant professor of English at Shepherd College in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, where his wife, Karen, is director of the Writing Center.

the Yahoos turn out to be transplanted human beings who have devolved back to a Hobbesian state of nature. As Gulliver learns to appreciate Houyhnhnm language and culture, he becomes increasingly hostile to the Yahoos and to their human cousins. For a time, Gulliver tries to convince the Houyhnhnms that European humans are nothing at all like the Yahoos, but as this proposition becomes less and less tenable, Gulliver does everything in his power to distance himself from his own species and embrace the customs and values of his Houyhnhnm masters. Through most of Gulliver's diatribes, we can see Swift standing directly behind his creation, using Gulliver to speak the author's satire against humanity and human institutions. But somewhere along the line, Swift pulls a fast one and leaves Gulliver out on stage alone. As he increasingly comes to admire the cold, rational life of the Houyhnhnms, and to detest the self-absorbed emotionalism of the Yahoos, Gulliver stops being the speaker of Swift's satire and becomes its main target.

By the time that he returns to England, Gulliver has become thoroughly and incontrovertibly insane. He is unable to bear the sight or smell of any other "Yahoo," his wife and children fill him "only with Hatred, Disgust, and Contempt," he cannot walk without breaking into a gallop, and he spends four hours a day in his stables conversing with two horses that he bought for no other purpose. The Gulliver of book four is the punch-line to Swift's ultimate joke: that people who constantly criticize a human society without the desire to improve it separate themselves from their fellow human beings and become no better than talking horses.

The last book of *Gulliver's Travels* is a work of satirical cannibalism as Swift satirizes the satirist, criticizes the critic, debunks the debunker, and inveighs against invective. The ultimate target of this satire is *Gulliver's Travels* itself, for Swift is indeed guilty of many of the critical excesses that he makes Gulliver suffer for in the final journey. But Swift, unlike

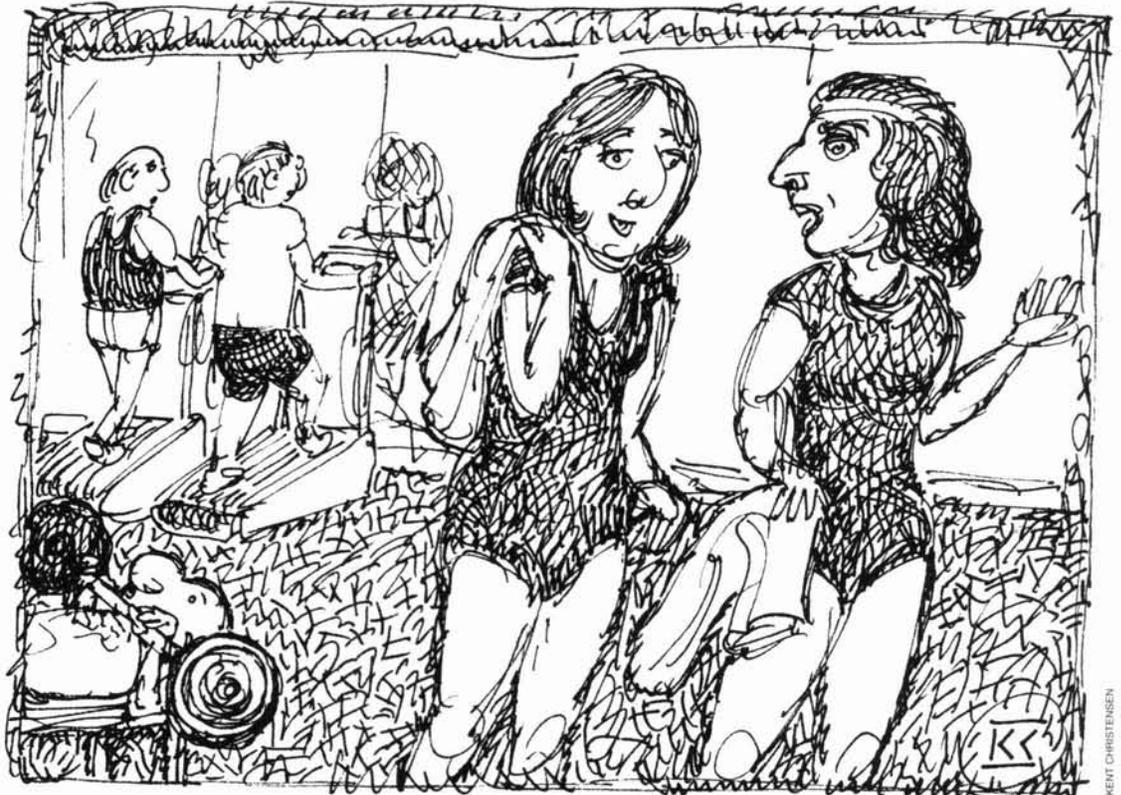
Gulliver, is able to analyze his own position critically, and as a result, he escapes the narrative of *Gulliver's Travels* without becoming what his hero becomes: a cynical misanthrope who savages his own species solely to gain the favor of another. Swift's self-scrutiny in this work is typical of his writings. Though he was a passionate Tory, a patriotic Englishman, and a devout Anglican, he reserved his most devastating criticism for the Tories, the British, and the Church of England. Whenever he became involved in a political issue, Swift supported his own positions fiercely and took every opportunity to offend his enemies; but he was also consistently able to rise above partisanship and offend his friends.

#### THE FATE OF THE SATIRISTS OF MORMONDOM

A GREAT satirist must be an equal opportunity annoyer. Most of what currently passes for "satire" in the Mormon universe lacks both the commitment and the scope of Swift's critique; much of it, in fact, amounts to little more than partisan bickering. The various factions within Mormonism have always been willing to

laugh at each other, and, for most people, "improving the community" means something like "improving all of the people in the community who don't think like I do." We all want our enemies made fun of, but few of us ever really want to question our own assumptions and values, and there have always been writers willing to choose up sides and try to pass propaganda off as "satire." There have also always been writers among us who more closely resemble Gullivers-of-our-own than Swifts-of-our-own. These are the expositors, ridiculers, and call-it-humor-when-they-jibers who delight in pointing out all of the absurdities of Mormon culture to the world. These Mormon Gullivers use the tools of the satirist, not to improve our community, but to distance themselves from their Yahoo co-religionists and to curry favor with whatever variety of talking horse happens to be in vogue.

I do not know for sure what our Mormon Swifts will look like, or even if they will ever appear—but I am willing to hazard a few guesses. They will start off popular and will make new friends with every work they produce. But they will also make new enemies, and, before long, they will alienate so many of their friends that only their enemies will



"I've got the gospel, a great family, good sex life, a high paying job, and an important calling. I know I should be happy."

pay attention to them. Everyone will dislike them for a different reason. People who read the *Ensign* will find them irreverent and obscene, people who read *SUNSTONE* will find them bigoted and provincial, and people who read Foucault will find them tedious and banal. We will all admire their "perceptive critiques" of other people, but we will wish that they hadn't been so "reckless and irresponsible" when they were talking about us. Though none will doubt their ability, few will publish their works; both liberal and orthodox presses will refuse, on principle, to associate themselves with writers whose unrestrained satirical impulses carry them beyond the bounds of taste and decency. Whenever they are pressured to choose between two sides of a question they will choose neither and will criticize both. Ultimately, they will be neither Montagues nor Capulets, but Mercutios, whose plague-on-both-your-houses honesty will make them unwelcome everywhere. But they will

not be neutral. They will have strong opinions and will articulate those opinions regularly, even though they will refuse to be forced into the pre-defined ideological categories that we are used to forcing people into. When they disagree with us they will attack us, and when they agree with us they will attack us all the more because they will realize that good ideas, like good people, can only be made better through scrutiny. They will see and understand both the good and the bad aspects of Mormon culture and will love it in spite of its faults. And they will be deeply saddened when they realize how much closer to Zion we could move if we would only look more carefully at the things that are holding us back.

Some of us will listen to them and become better people, but most of us will write them off with the same epithets we have always used to dismiss challenges to our core beliefs: nonbeliever, apologist, heretic, bigot, leftist, fascist, mantic, sophic, leper. They will

be called all of these names, but they will never lose their love for the Church or their commitment to the community. They will always identify themselves "Mormons," even though only a few Mormons will agree. They will find it hard to live among the Saints but impossible to live elsewhere, so they will remain a part of the Mormon community until they die, broken-hearted and frustrated by the fact that they were never able to get through to the people that they loved the most. And a hundred years later we will revere them as the greatest writers we have ever had. ☒

## NOTES

1. Orson Whitney, "Home Literature," *Contributor* (July 1888). This quote more fully reads: "We will yet have Miltons and Shakespeares of our own. God's ammunition is not exhausted. His brightest spirits are held in reserve for the latter times. In God's name and by his help we will build up a literature whose top shall touch heaven, though its foundations may now be low in [the]earth."



## ICE STORM COTTONWOODS

This morning horses graze by Warren Lake,  
A traffic of ghosts in thin fog, so unconcerned  
By the devastation reducing us to tears:  
Trees, power-lines, boathouse roof, all down;  
The horses move with purpose, hides steaming.

All night the cannonade kept us  
Pacing, white-gas lanterns hissing,  
Presto-logs smudging  
The ornamental fireplace as cottonwoods  
Exploded under ice mantillas.

I dial our utility, irritated by the prolonged  
Outage, but I can't get through. My truck starts  
On the third try and I pass those gorgeous Morgans  
And Walers—breath twisting around their chops—  
As far as the road is snow-plowed then back

For canned clam chowder and to break a chain  
Attempting to clear a bisected maple before nightfall.  
The horses scamper from the lake, eyes glassed with sleet;  
Boom boom boom! the cottonwoods cry another evening,  
Glass from overturned tables, a passion of silver thorns.

—SEAN BRENDAN-BROWN

## LIGHTER MINDS

## IS LAUGHING IN CHURCH A MORTAL SIN?

By Robert Kirby



STEPHEN SCHLEIBACH

*If laughing about church stuff is a sin, why isn't it a bigger sin to take it too seriously?*

**T**HE HARDEST I ever laughed in church was the time my friend Leon Krygowski fell off the podium while passing the sacrament.

It happened because Leon had to wear his older brother's pants to church. I know because I helped Leon ruin his own church pants the day before by daring him to ride his bike off our garage roof.

Anyway, after passing the sacrament to the bishop, Leon had just started down the podium steps when his pants slipped off his

*ROBERT KIRBY, author of Sunday of the Living Dead, is a journalist who lives in Springville, Utah. He welcomes e-mail at Compuserve (72733, 3260). This article originally appeared in the Salt Lake Tribune and is reprinted by permission.*

skinny hips. Grabbing at them, he missed the first step. This caused him to careen down the remainder of the steps and bash headlong into Sister Gwathney with a fully loaded tray of water.

## NEAR DEATH

**S**IX other deacons and I nearly died of heart attacks. We didn't laugh right out loud, of course. We finished our sacred duty blind and red-faced. Most of us anyway. On the verge of incontinency, Ralph Fitt finally staggered out into the foyer where he collapsed, howling.

After church, the bishop herded the Aaronic Priesthood into a room and tore into us about the evils of lightminded behavior. According to him, laughing during sacra-

ment was right up there with murder and self-abuse, two things that we already knew from last year's scout camp would keep us from going on missions.

This is one of the problems I have with organized religion. Regular church attendance invariably gives people a clear idea of the things that make God mad enough to kill, but absolutely no idea what makes him laugh.

Why is that? Maybe it's because a church's purpose is to get us to pay attention to God, and it's easier to do that by scaring the crap out of us than by getting us to lighten up.

That's probably why most paintings of God make him look scary enough to cause cancer and why Jesus never smiles in his.

Personally, I think God has a ripping sense of humor. It's people who have weaned religion from the benefits of laughter. We now have this moronic tendency of becoming dangerously self-important about our beliefs, as if God is on our side rather than it being of necessity the other way around.

## NO GIGGLES

**T**HIS general shunning of laughter in religion has contributed to the stereotypical image of devout believers as a bunch of sourpusses whose colons have been tied in knots.

We're known for our infatuation with sackcloth, martyrdom, and a level of piety that sometimes leads us to social behavior that would embarrass a school of hammer-head sharks.

If laughing about church stuff is a sin, why isn't it a bigger sin to take it too seriously? Sure, laugh too much and you may hurt your ability to be spiritual.

Don't laugh enough, however, and you could end up being dangerous to everyone around you. History backs me up here. How many clowns and stand-up comics can you name who have led jihads and pogroms?

According to a recent Associated Press story, laughter "lowers blood pressure, increases muscle flexion and triggers a flood of beta endorphins." Mirth also increases cells that combat viruses and tumors. Move over, Word of Wisdom.

Thirty years later, I can't remember much of what the bishop said about reverence in the chapel. I'm still thanking God for making Leon such a klutz, though. The memory of the sacrament cup stuck behind the dripping lens of Sister Gwathney's cat eye glasses has gotten me through many a dull church meeting. ☐

## THIS SIDE OF THE TRACTS

DOMINION, DRESSING,  
KEEPING

By David Thomas Sumner



*A summer running the Colorado River led David Sumner to reevaluate Mormonism's assumptions about land and the environment.*

**I**N EARLY JUNE 1989, I was on my first trip down the Colorado River's Cataract Canyon as a paid guide. On the first evening, we set up camp, fixed dinner, did dishes, and watched the surrounding cliffs turn from the pale, sun-washed colors of

DAVID THOMAS SUMNER is a graduate teaching fellow and Ph.D. candidate in English at the University of Oregon. He may be contacted by e-mail at <sumnerdt@darkwing.uoregon.edu>.

midday to the deep reds of sunset. At dusk, I sat across a driftwood fire from a man with thick black hair and cheeks shadowed by two days' growth. His beard was coarse and grew from just below his eyes all the way down his neck. He was squat and thick and a professor of something somewhere. As the fire cast excited shadows on the cliff behind us, we talked of the beauty of Cataract Canyon and the Colorado River. We discussed the Glen Canyon Dam and the stagnant water of Lake Powell that we would

encounter in a few days. He commented on how much of the beauty of Glen Canyon is now lost under the man-made lake. I told of how it is now difficult for downstream wildlife to drink from the river the sand bars and beaches are eroding; the silt that should sustain them is trapped behind the dam. We lamented the loss. I told him my father had seen the canyon as a Boy Scout. We both knew we would never see the once great canyon. I then began saying, "I'm not an environmentalist, but..." The vacationing professor questioned my hesitation, "What's wrong with being an environmentalist?"

That night, across that fire, there were plenty of things wrong with it. I was brought up in Utah with the Sagebrush Rebellion, the Central Utah Water Project, and wilderness issues in the news. The conservative Mormon community I come from sees environmentalism as running counter to our pioneer roots. They see environmentalists as radical hippies who stand in the way of progress, in the way of "God's command" to make the desert bloom. To be put in this group, to accept this label, was to be set against my community, cut off from my culture, as a traitor to my heritage. On both sides of my family, I have ancestors who trekked west with the Mormon pioneers by handcart and covered wagon. The religious ideology of these people led them to abandon home, country, possessions, and often other family members in the hope of forging a utopian community out of the howling wilderness of the American West—a place where they could live their religion without persecution and exercise Old Testament dominion over the land. They wanted to create a garden from the desert. To be labeled an environmentalist seemed counter to what my ancestors had worked and sacrificed for, to what they had dreamed of for me. But the professor's question struck a reverberating chord. As I worked the river that summer, the river also worked on me, changing me not only physically but also spiritually. The thick waters carved my body and shaped my soul.

**T**HE Colorado River melts out of the high Rockies and cuts its way through the rusted canyons of the Southwest. The clear, cold, liquid snow turns taupe with silt, taking on the colors of the desert as it descends out of the mountains. As it has for millions of years, the river still excavates the sandstone canyons, slowly carrying red earth seaward. I am comforted by the river's consistent, sustained movement.

The river is a constant. It is always changing and causing change.)

I spent those clear, desert days at the oars and the cool, star-filled nights on sandbars. The unrelenting desert sun lightened my hair and darkened my skin. My body took on the colors and hues of the landscape. My back, shoulders, chest, and hands spent four months becoming stronger, learning to work with the river, discovering they could not work against it. During these lessons, the river hardened my body, defined it. My back and shoulders became stronger. Calluses squared off my fingers. At the end of the day, my hands, arms, shoulders, and back radiated the dull, satisfying ache of physical labor. At the river's edge, I slept deeply to the river's low polyphony. I bathed in the silt-laden water at evening, and at midday, the river's thick coolness provided relief from the kiln-like heat.

My eyes became sensitive to the story told by the water—watching for rocks, logs, and snags hidden just below its opaque surface, looking for angle waves, holes, sleepers, rollers, and keepers. I developed reverence for the stark beauty of the sandstone canyons and a respect for the tenacious plants and animals that cling to life there. The juniper, the Mormon tea, the black brush, the salt and sage brush, the willow, the maple, the scrub oak—they all struggle against the arid climate and the imported tamarisk that threatens to choke all others out of their native strongholds. I marveled at the resourcefulness of the mule deer, the acrobatics of the desert bighorn, the survival skills of the coyote against a century of poisoning and hunting by sheep and cattlemen. I savored the refuge of the cottonwood and the box elder.

Each time my raft came out of Imperial Rapid into the upper reaches of Lake Powell, I felt disappointment. Here, where the power of the Colorado has been stopped by the Army Corps of Engineers, I remembered my discussion with the professor about the Glen Canyon Dam. I pondered what it meant to be an environmentalist.

Just as the beauty of the river upstream intoxicated me, the impounded, man-made reservoir downstream angered me. The dam was completed in 1964, two years before I was born. I will never experience the unique beauty drowned by the dam. I will never run the sixty silenced rapids of Cataract Canyon that John Wesley Powell and his brave companions ran. Nor will I ever float through or hike the deep corridors of sandstone now filled with water. We have all been robbed. I am bitter.

I wonder about the displaced wildlife. I

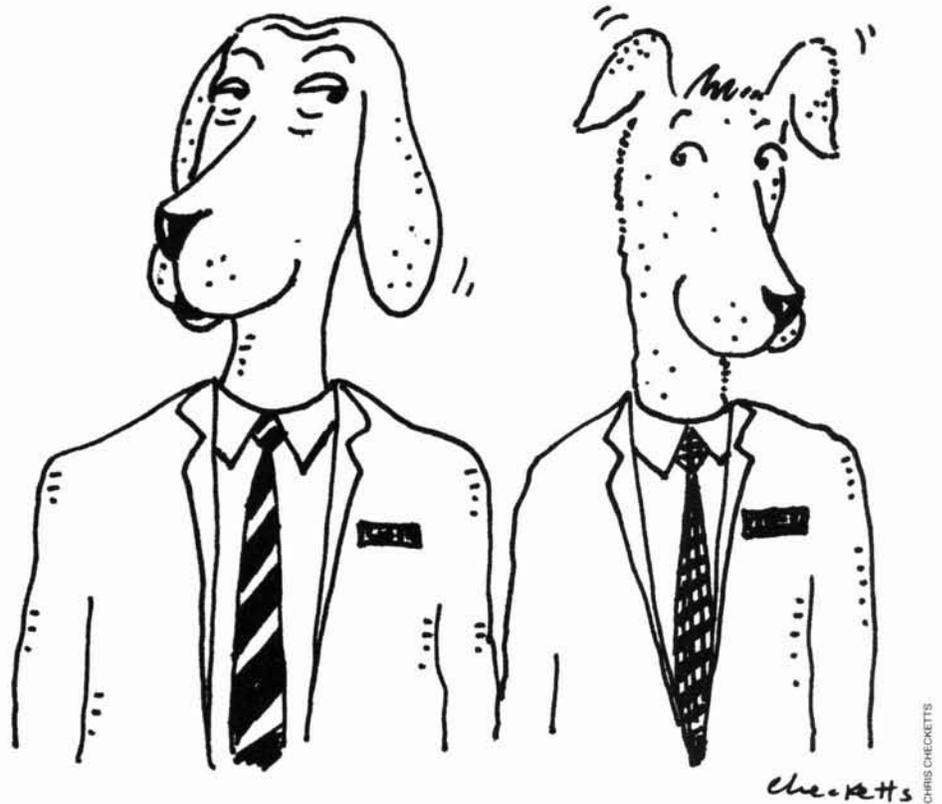
wonder about the countless Anasazi ruins that the water has buried—the pots, sandals, granaries, the kivas, the cooking and living quarters. I picture them in my mind, submerged, moss-grown, decaying, the walls collapsing. These lost artifacts are the voices of a mysterious culture, voices now muted by a reservoir.

As the river worked on my body and mind, I began to care deeply for its desert landscape. Questions about the environment became spiritual, moral questions rather than simply economic and lifestyle questions. Within the same religious tradition that caused my discomfort with the term environmentalist, I found some hope. In Genesis, Adam is given "dominion" over the world, but he is also commanded to "dress and keep" it (see Gen. 1:26, 2:15).

Although my pioneer ancestors changed the face of the West—cultivating, irrigating, and building—they did leave many places wild. This was not always deliberate. Often they simply lacked the technology to dominate more of their surroundings. Yet there are traditions in my culture of restraint, of place, of awareness, and of reverence. It is within these traditions that dressing and keeping can be seen. In early Mormon Utah, there

were cultural restrictions on mining and an emphasis on sustainable agriculture and communal living. These people dressed and kept their farms and homes, and they often left alone the remote canyons, the high mountains, the deserts. I like to think that they felt dressing and keeping was, in part, knowing human limits—knowing we must limit human desire. They made many mistakes, and theirs was not a perfect environmental ethic, but many of them reined in their wants, cultivated what they needed to live and left the rest alone.

Perhaps my attempt to locate value in dressing and keeping is weak. After all, it is still a human-centered ethic; it keeps humans on top. It is still an ethic that grows out of dominion. But it seems more productive to me, although perhaps more difficult, to reread and reinterpret the positive aspects of our cultural traditions rather than to reject them outright and search for others. Other traditions, even with their wisdom and perhaps their greater ecologic sensitivity, would not have the same historical and generational depth for me nor the the power that depth provides. All enduring traditions have problems, but all enduring traditions have wisdom. Dressing and keeping is not a per-



*"First of all, forget everything you learned at the Training Center."*

fect environmental ethic. It needs to be discussed and refined, but it can be applied in ecocentric ways. If we interpret it with sensitivity, dressing and keeping may be used to correct and check the idea of dominion.

**T**HE Colorado River no longer runs all the way to the Sea of Cortez. Instead, it is sprayed onto the golf courses of Las Vegas and fills the swimming pools of Phoenix. By the time it enters Mexico, it has been diverted and dammed and sucked down to a trickle. Finally, short of its oceanic destination, it evaporates under the southwestern sun. The giant sturgeon that used to swim the river's length—fish bigger than a

man—are no longer found; the squaw fish, the humpback chub, the razorback sucker may soon follow suit. In our quest for dominion, we have wiped out countless plants and animals—even whole ecosystems. If we have been divinely granted any type of dominion, a concept with which I find much discomfort, we must realize that dominion does not include the right to destroy what we did not create. I hope the Mormon community can learn how dressing and keeping may balance dominion.

It is human vanity to think that we can forever impound the river that carved the Grand Canyon or that we can destroy a planet that took eons to create. We can, how-

ever, dam the Colorado River for my short lifetime and greatly deface the beauty of this planet; we can destroy this world for our species and for many others. We must be responsible for our dominion, whether it has been assumed or granted.

Running the Colorado River changed and shaped me. It molded me as if I were a sandstone canyon. It forced me to ponder what it means to dress and to keep, and it taught me that part of dressing and keeping is to know that often we must leave things be. I have emerged from the canyon an environmentalist, one who struggles with what it means to live ethically, with what it means to dress and to keep. ☐



## ON WANAPUM MESA

The coulee below  
curls away to the Columbia River—  
the distant water like a window in the earth.  
And you try to see  
through that pane to the other side  
believing there will be a clear image  
as if through fenestral glass  
which you see backward  
stroking days and years  
to some beginning your mind cannot find

(out of the air  
the rumble of a loaded farm truck  
wobbles your thoughts  
and you try to remember  
a significant event  
that can arise as monument  
to the traffic passing under your eyes)

forward through waves of light  
to some edge where every act  
will balance  
your hearing, sight, smell, touch, taste  
to a final sense,  
commingled to an absolute order.

Two hawks glide by on the slow wind.  
Fall orchard leaves tremble  
apple trees toward winter.  
You sit still  
to wait for movement,  
a traveler going nowhere,  
waiting for directions.

—W. R. WILKINS

## R E V I E W S

## WHAT MAKES A PROPHET?

PROPHETIC CHARISMA: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF  
REVOLUTIONARY RELIGIOUS PERSONALITIES

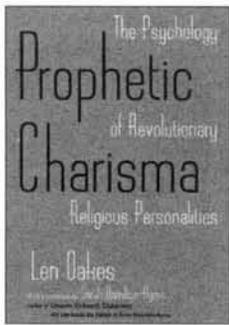
by Len Oakes

1997, Syracuse University Press

246 pages, \$17.95



Reviewed by Michael E. Nielsen



*Oakes's scholarship and conclusions are not above criticism. Nevertheless, he raises significant questions for believing and thinking people. This fascinating study is worthy reading.*

WHAT MAKES A prophet? What attracts followers to a prophet? These are two compelling questions Len Oakes presents in *Prophetic Charisma*. Seeds for the book were planted during the eleven years that Oakes participated in a New Zealand charismatic communal group, during which time he began studying charisma and its functions. His studies eventually led to a Ph.D. in psychology which, with his personal experience, gives Oakes a unique understanding of life and leadership in a small, growing religious movement. The result is a fascinating theory that draws from psychoanalysis, psychology, and sociology and includes supporting evi-

MICHAEL E. NIELSEN teaches psychology of religion at Georgia Southern University. His webpage is <<http://www.psywww.com/psyrelog>>.

dence from current and historical prophets such as Joseph Smith.

Oakes suggests that leadership in a new religious movement hinges on charisma—a grandiose and magnetic self-confidence that attracts others. But charisma itself includes several traits: self-confidence combined with a sense of vision and inspirational rhetoric; it shows itself through such a keen sensitivity to others' needs that it may be manipulative. An earthy, unrefined quality, charisma combines childlike playfulness and accessibility with a sense of distance. Indeed, Oakes asked the prophetic leaders in his research to comment on Joseph Smith's statement that "You never knew my heart; no man knows my history. I cannot tell it. . . . [I]f I had not experienced what I have I should not have known it myself." The responses suggest that charismatic prophets are approachable, but

not completely understood (149).

Case studies and interviews with twenty leaders of new religious movements, and 137 of their followers, led Oakes to conclude that prophetic personality is rooted in narcissism. Beginning with excessive praise and adoration the child receives from parents or other influential adults, narcissism develops into the core of the prophet's personality. Even empathy is founded in narcissism because the prophet can meet his or her own needs by sensing what others need.

To the extent that prophets are mentally ill, Oakes believes narcissism to be one cause. Narcissism places the prophet at the center of a world that exists for the prophet's pleasure. This unusual, self-focused world promotes insanity. It also demands a high degree of creativity. Hence, Oakes agrees with Larry Foster, a Mormon historian, that Joseph Smith suffered from manic depression, which contributed to Smith's high degree of creativity.<sup>1</sup>

The second phase in prophetic development is incubation. Herein, the prophet-to-be realizes that she is different from others, and develops a "myth of calling" to make this difference consistent with her narcissistic personality. While she does so, conflict with authorities occurs because of the great effort spent on acting consistently with the perceived calling. Success at this stage is measured by gaining recognition from the world, which the prophet interprets as confirmation of her special understanding of reality, with herself at the center.

Awakening, the third stage, features the prophet's receiving the call. Sometimes this comes in a classic mystical experience, and the case studies that illustrate the mystical experiences are reminiscent of those in William James's classic *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. The awakening may also come more gradually, through the individual's concerted effort to achieve it.

After receiving the call, the prophet is ready for the fourth stage, mission. During mission, the leader becomes more involved with others in an effort to achieve her life's work and to help others in the process. The leader succeeds by focusing on followers, by addressing practical aspects of their situation. By helping followers, the leader maintains power and resources.

Because the mission phase forms the bulk of the prophet's life and work, Oakes describes several aspects of it, including the role of followers. According to the psychometric tests Oakes administered, followers are basically normal people who meet the prophet at a transitional time in their lives. This idea is

consistent with other research on new religious movements. According to Oakes's interviews, what makes followers different from the rest of the population, is faith that leads them to the prophet, whom they trust with their hopes and secrets. They also show courage in living their convictions, and they view "the prophet as the embodiment of their ultimate concerns" (128). In this way, leader and follower use each other to meet complementary needs.

The prophet demonstrates charismatic power by developing rituals for the group. Rituals are avenues for the leader's creativity to bloom, resulting in occasions when all eyes focus on the charismatic leader. "Rituals in a charismatic community may be much more intense than elsewhere because the leader's aim is to realize a new revelation rather than merely restate earlier revelations" (145). Rituals thus meet the needs of the religious community, which seeks new evidence of God's love, and at the same time satisfy the narcissistic leader's needs for attention.

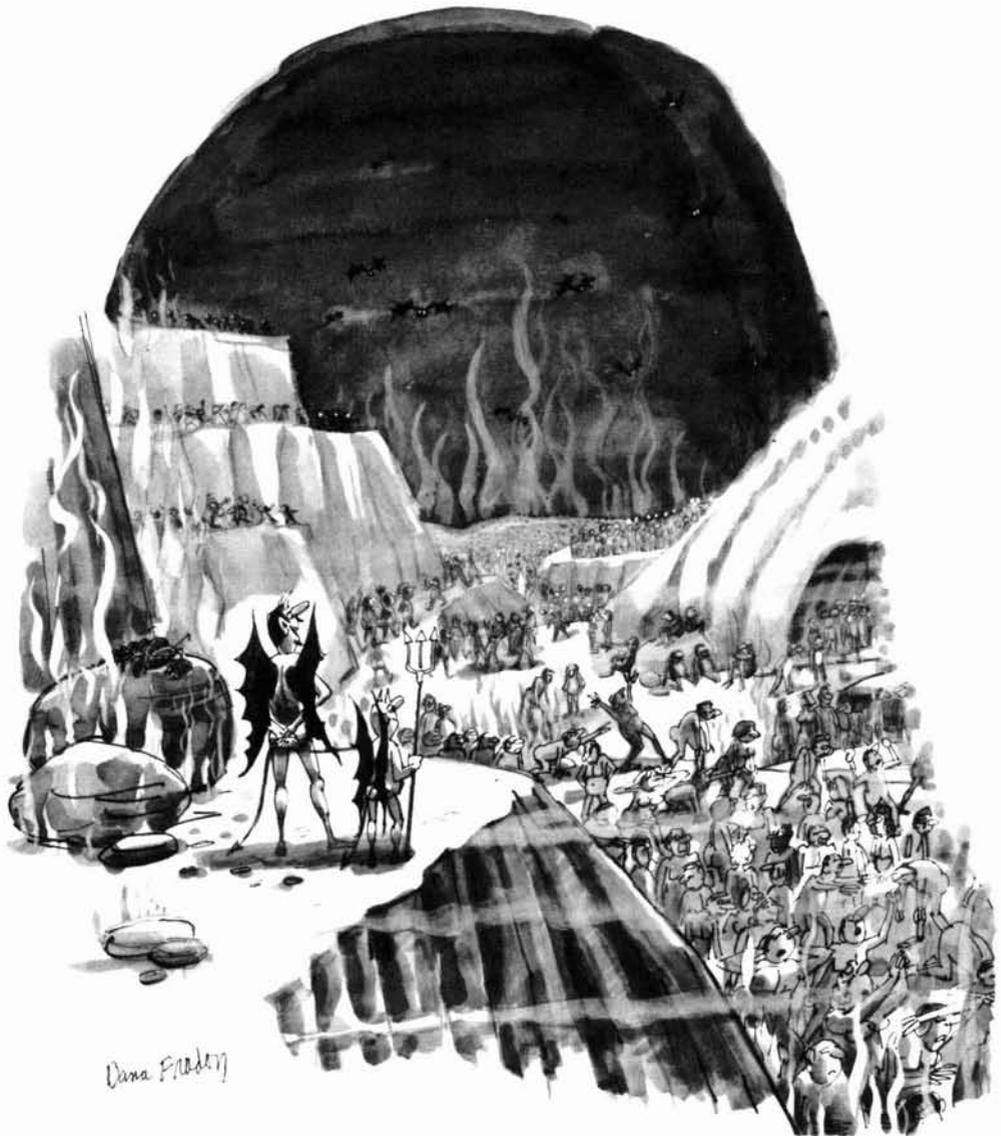
The distinction between messianic and charismatic prophets becomes pronounced in the fifth and final stage. Messianic prophets are more stable than are charismatic prophets, who often conflict with society and legal authorities. The messianic prophet claims to be God's spokesperson and admits that mistakes result from imperfections in the messenger. The charismatic prophet, in contrast, is more likely to claim to be God. Because of the greater number of conflicts, heightened instability, and grandiose claims, the charismatic prophet is more likely than the messianic prophet to meet a sudden or violent end.

**P**ERHAPS the biggest weakness in Oakes's study is research methods. Oakes used several different kinds of data in his study, hoping each information type would generate similar results. Unfortunately, they didn't. Differences might result from a problem with Oakes's theory, or they might reveal a bias in his data. And in studies of personality that involve using small numbers of individuals, as in the case of the twenty leaders, it is difficult to demonstrate reliable statistical effects. Still, *Prophetic Charisma* collects information from more prophets than have most studies of new religious movements, and Oakes should not be faulted too

strongly for this problem.

Another weakness in the book is little discussion of what happens when leadership changes hands. Do leadership roles seem to demand less charisma when the organization has existed for years or generations? These questions occur quite naturally when one reads *Prophetic Charisma*, and I wish Oakes had addressed them. Although the groups Oakes studied were new religious movements and had experienced little if any change in leadership, he could have used historical examples to illustrate these questions, as he does throughout the book. Research on leadership in other contexts would suggest, for example, that as an organization changes from a new religious movement to a more culturally entrenched church, the need for charismatic leadership declines. Bureaucracy

and momentum may help maintain the organization once it has become established as part of the culture. So a lesser level of charisma may maintain an optimal level of satisfaction with the organization. In different periods of LDS church history, great differences appear in the charisma of Church leaders. For example, contrast the early and later phases of Apostle/Prophet Ezra Taft Benson's tenure, when health limited his public appearances and involvement in daily Church administration. Considering the effects of age on physical and mental abilities, we might conclude that in an organization such as the LDS church, a charismatic prophet quite commonly becomes messianic. Surely Oakes has considered these possibilities; unfortunately, he does not share his thoughts on them.



"We do pretty well when you stop to think that people are basically good."

DRAWING BY DANA FRADON. © 1984 THE NEW YORKER MAGAZINE, INC.

Although Oakes does not discuss current LDS prophets, Mormon readers will likely find similarities. For example, followers pass through a stage of "testing" that demonstrates commitment to the group and leader. People at this stage often make extreme promises, including sacrificing life itself to help the cause or leader. Oakes's descriptions reflect the zeal in many missionary zone conferences.

Oakes mentions Joseph Smith several times to illustrate points common to charismatic prophets. He characterizes Smith as a manic depressive (67) whose deepest message is that we can never understand the heart and motivation of a prophet. Joseph Smith's grandiose and narcissistic self-concept placed him "on a collision course with reality" and prompted him to form his own "private army" (178). Narcissism enables the Prophet to master "the big lie," and the Prophet's ability to tell and believe his own lies underscores the story of the golden plates. Charismatic prophets inevitably conflict with authority, and Oakes sees polygamy as Smith's "destructive doctrine" that created enemies, overshadowed the good Smith performed, and ultimately caused his death.

To clarify doubt about his view of prophets, Oakes ends by speaking plainly about Christ, Christianity's most charismatic prophet. "When we come to know [the leader] as he really is, unfiltered by our superstitions and sentiment, we realize that within every great truth there is a great lie, that beside every virtue is a vice, beneath order lies chaos, and at the core of our noblest ideals lies a terrible delusion: that much of what we call "truth" is just a defense against the unknown. To discover that one's culture has been built upon an illusion is not pleasant, but could it have been any other way?" (195).

This book is a thought-provoking description of religious leaders and followers. It also is the story of a man who lost his faith when he saw his prophet as a narcissist whose self-centered world caught others in its grip. While people may criticize Oakes's research or tinker with the stages that make up his theory, they must also credit Oakes for baring questions in the minds of believing and thinking people. This fascinating study is well worth reading. ☞

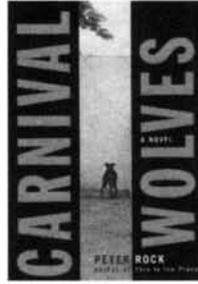
#### NOTES

1. Foster, L. (1992). "The Psychology of Religious Genius: Joseph Smith and the Origins of New Religious Movements." Paper presented to the annual meeting of the Mormon History Association. Saint George, Utah, May 16.

## CARNIVAL WOLVES

by Peter Rock  
Anchor, 1998  
275 pages, \$12.95

Reviewed by Brian Evenson



THOSE WHO enjoyed *This Is the Place* will find much to admire in former Utahn Peter Rock's second novel, *Carnival Wolves*. In it, Rock continues to prove himself an able raconteur, especially in describing particular places.

On one level, *Carnival Wolves* is the story of Alan Johnson, an ex-security guard who first saves then steals a dog and then travels on foot with it from New York through California, with stops in Wisconsin, Montana, Utah (the dog is lost here), and Nevada. In fifteen chapters (five sections of three chapters each) he meets an assortment of marginalized individuals and groups, ranging from a somewhat demented taxidermist to a Montana doomsday group, finally making his way closer to a settled life, a better self-understanding, and a resulting connectedness to others.

This is not merely Alan's story, though. In some chapters he appears only as a minor character or not at all. Such chapters are instead focused on other people—modern-day polygamists, for instance, or a girl injured in a trampoline accident, or a drug-runner. Only five of the fifteen chapters are told in Alan's voice; the other ten are in third person—vignettes of lives particular to a given state.

*Carnival Wolves* serves as a sort of off-the-beaten-track travelogue. Much of its pleasure comes in the way it constructs images of certain places in conjunction with their people. The writing is vivid and beautiful, slender without being minimal, often reminiscent of Richard Ford (thematic echoes from *The Ultimate Good Luck* in particular appear) and Tobias Wolff. Rock manages to overlay simple situations with a great deal of tension and quiet darkness, and at moments, the narrative is genuinely captivating.

Of particular interest to *Sunstone* readers, the section set in Utah, entitled "The Beehive State," deals with polygamy from the perspective of a first wife and a newer younger wife attempting to escape it (chapters "Night" and "Rescues"). In his discussions of polygamy, Rock captures the difficulty facing

someone who wants to escape. On a lighter note, Rock also takes the reader to Salt Lake's Hogle Zoo and to the stuffed and displayed Shasta the Liger.

Possible reservations about the book are in the contrasting impulses behind the narrative organization. The loosely arranged narrative wants to spread out and hold together at the same time; Rock can't quite seem to choose between postmodern dispersal and the modern desire to reincorporate fragments into a new whole. The chapters in third person sometimes have direct and carefully drawn connections to one another; at other times, the connections are more associative. Rock allows Alan sometimes to vanish (as in Stephen Wright's *Going Native*), while at other times, he presents him as a main character. So, we see Alan little enough that his personal changes seem jerky and sometimes undeveloped. The novel would be stronger if Alan appeared either more or less frequently.

If this contrast leaves the larger structure of the book unresolved, the individual chapters are all first-rate. Rock has produced an eminently readable book that sensitively explores varied states of being. With two strong books, Rock seems here to stay. ☞

BRIAN EVENSON is a professor of English at Oklahoma State University and the author of the novel *Father of Lies*. He can be contacted by e-mail at <evenson@osuunx.ucc.okstate.edu>.



## GRAND

The Grand Teton  
punctures the dawn,  
snow summit bleeding  
like nature opening her shirt,  
announces Spring

to the lone moose,  
belly-deep in an emerald pond,  
trapped in the rings of her dribbles, and  
to the elk moseying  
like land hippos  
across the willow flats.

—GERALD R. WHEELER

## UPDATE

'98 ELECTION GOES  
CHURCH'S WAY:  
GAY MARRIAGE QUASHED;  
MORE MORMONS THAN  
EVER IN CONGRESS

THE MORNING OF 4 November 1998 must have brought a lot of smiles to 50 East South Temple Street in Salt Lake City. Church administrators there must have been congratulating one another for their successful efforts in blocking the legalization of gay marriage in Alaska and Hawaii. With the help of large sums of Church money, both states passed ballot measures that will allow their state legislatures to define marriage as between one woman and one man only. And as if Church leaders needed more reason to celebrate, they could now count seventeen LDS members of Congress—two more than ever before. Victories in four states of positions against which the Church had argued were small losses for the Church in comparison to the marriage issue.

Between 24 September 1998 and 12 October 1998, the Church—which has about fifty thousand Hawaii members—gave four cash installments totalling six hundred thousand dollars to a Hawaii activist group called Save Traditional Marriage '98. Save Traditional Marriage '98 was campaigning in support of Hawaii's constitutional amendment that allowed the state's legislature to ban gay marriage. An activist group called Protect Our Constitution/Human Rights Campaign was campaigning for the opposite result. According to the *Honolulu Advertiser*, the amendment allowed the legislature to legally outlaw marriage between two individuals of the same gender. In 1993, the state supreme court had ruled that Hawaii's constitution forbade any such legislation. The measure passed with 69 percent of the vote.

The *Advertiser* reported that "Opponents of the amendment expressed shock and anger at the degree of the church's involvement in the campaign." The newspaper quoted Jackie Young, campaign director for Save our Constitution/Human Rights Campaign, "If people were worried about separation of powers, people ought to be worried about separation of church and state."

In Alaska, the Church gave five hundred thousand dollars toward an effort quite similar to the one in Hawaii. Again, a constitutional amendment was up for a vote of the people. Alaska's amendment—which passed with 68 percent of the votes—directly states that marriage in Alaska is only valid between one man and one woman. This amendment additionally states that marriages conducted in other states that do not meet the new Alaska criterion will not be recognized.

As in Hawaii, the Church's Alaska donation was by far the largest donation that either side of the issue received. The Church—with twenty-four thousand Alaska members—gave money that quintupled the amount that had previously been raised by Alaska Family Coalition, the pro-amendment group. With the Church money, the Alaska Family Coalition had a "six-to-one" dollar advantage over the



"WITH GAY MARRIAGE GOING DOWN TO DEFEAT IN HAWAII AND ALASKA THAT MEANS THERE WILL BE A LOT MORE AVAILABLE MEN — THAT'S WHERE I'D BE HEADED IF I WERE TWENTY-FIVE AND SINGLE WITH NO DECENT PROSPECTS ON THE HORIZON..."

anti-amendment activist group, No On 2.

In response to the Church's Alaska donation, an Internet group quickly formed, called MormonAid. MormonAid, according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, was for Mormons who did not support the Church's anti-gay marriage actions in Alaska. Group spokesperson Jake Johnson told the paper, "The church needs to realize that an increasing number of faithful Mormons don't agree with the goals of the Christian Right." MormonAid raised four thousand dollars in its first week of existence and donated the money to No On 2.

After both Alaska and Hawaii passed their constitutional amendments, Church spokesperson Don LeFevre told the *Tribune*, "We are, of course, grateful that the majority of the citizens in Alaska and Hawaii have chosen to recognize the benefits to society in preserving traditional marriage."

The combined total of 1.1 million dollars the Church gave in fighting gay marriage was its largest political contribution ever.

The Church took positions on an additional four ballot measures in the 3 November election. In all four, the Church's position was not successful. In Arizona, California, and Missouri, the Church had had letters read in sacrament meetings urging members to vote against continuing their states' allowing various forms of legalized gambling. Voters in all three states, however, supported gambling. In Oregon, the Church similarly had a letter read to members urging them to vote no on a proposal to legalize the medicinal use of marijuana, but the measure was approved.

The seventeen LDS members of Congress increased the number by two over last year's total, according to the *Deseret News*. The 3 November election added one LDS Republican—Representative Mike Simpson of Idaho—and one LDS Democrat—Representative Tom Udall of New Mexico, son of former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall. Another Democrat, Representative Mark Udall of Colorado, was elected, but Mark Udall, son of former Arizona Congressman Morris K. Udall, does not identify himself as LDS, although he does come from a Mormon background.

All LDS incumbents who were up for reelection won. They include: from American Samoa, nonvoting Delegate Eni F. H. Faleomavaega (D); from Arizona, Representative Matt Salmon (R); from California, Rep. John Doolittle (R), Rep. Wally Herger (R), Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon (R), and Rep. Ron Packard (R); from Idaho, Sen. Mike Crapo (R); from Nevada, Sen. Harry Reid (D); from Oklahoma, Rep. Ernest Istook (R); from Oregon, Sen. Gordon Smith (R); and from Utah, Rep. Chris Cannon (R), Rep. Merrill Cook (R), Rep. Jim Hansen (R), Sen. Robert Bennett (R), and Sen. Orrin Hatch (R).

## MISSIONARIES NOT TO USE E-MAIL AND FAX TECHNOLOGY

IN AN EFFORT to keep its missionaries focused on their labors, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sent a December 1998 letter to mission presidents saying that missionaries were to no longer use e-mail and fax transmissions to communicate with family and friends back home.

This letter to mission presidents was reported by both Salt Lake City major newspapers on 10 January 1999. Both the *Salt Lake Tribune* and the Church-owned *Deseret News* quoted Saints for whom the new rules will be an inconvenience. "It's a cruel move," Bonnie

Carter of Orem, Utah, told the *Tribune*. "It's nerve-racking to have a son out there these days. . . . By the time [our son] has written to us and we've written him, twenty days have passed."

Kate Crowther, a Bountiful, Utah, returned missionary, told the *Deseret News* about the convenience she had experienced as missionary communicating with her parents via e-mail. "I felt I was more up to date on what was going on. . . . Plus I can type faster than I can write, so I felt I gave them a better letter." Crowther added, however, that she could understand the Church's move: "Sometimes I just wanted to focus."

Church spokesperson Dale Bills told the *News*, "The long-standing policy of the Church is to keep missionaries focused on their labors. The immediacy of fax and e-mail communication could be distracting to some missionaries. . . . Certainly communicating with their loved ones is appropriate, but missionaries are consecrated for two years, and there shouldn't be distractions from that."

The new rules also apply to older couple missionaries who are exempt from many of the rules applied to younger missionaries.

An additional reason for the Church's move seems to be that some missionaries were burdening members' by wanting to use the members' personal computers and fax machines.

Church spokesperson Don LeFevre told the *Tribune* that some

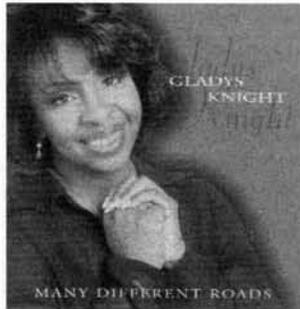
### **Knight Sings for Hinckleys.**

Gladys Knight, queen of soul and recent convert to Mormonism (see SUNSTONE Dec. 1997), performed at a Utah/California Women's Organization luncheon, held to honor Sister Marjorie Hinckley. Sister Hinckley received the organization's annual "Heritage Award." Both Sister Hinckley and President Gordon B. Hinckley attended the October 1998 event in Salt Lake City.

Knight, fifty-four years old, told the audience of fifteen hundred that in her career, she has performed for presidents and ambassadors. Performing for the Hinckleys, however, was her first before a prophet. In the moment, "I forgot the names of my own grandchildren," she told the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

Upon her baptism, Knight had told her bishop that growing accustomed to LDS music might be a challenge. The *Tribune* reports, however, that Knight has recently completed an album of inspirational music that is remedying some of her discomfort. The lyrics for one of her new songs, "In Mercy's Arms," were composed by Utah Senator and part-time songwriter Orrin Hatch, who attended the luncheon.

**Troubled LDS Teens Just Want a Little Love.** Brent L. Top and Bruce A. Chadwick, two BYU professors, recently surveyed over three thousand LDS teens, asking questions about "delinquent activities" such as fighting, smoking, drinking, petting, stealing, and truancy. Provo's *Daily Herald* reported that the teens said that major influences in their lives included peer pressure and religion. "Parents should express love to their teenagers and find creative



*On sale now: a collection of Gladys Knight songs—inspirational and reflective of her new-found Mormonism.*

ways to do it," said Top. "Even if teens bristle, roll their eyes, wipe a kiss away, and run to their rooms gagging, the surveyed teens said they wanted to hear it."

**Feminists Hold Provo Conference.** Each summer at BYU, an LDS Women's Conference is held that—as one might expect—does not engage many of the topics of concern to Mormon feminists such as polygamy, equal rights, Mother in Heaven, and abortion rights. To provide balance, according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, the Mormon Women's Forum has hosted the Counterpoint Conference in Provo each of the past six years. This alternative conference, which usually draws about one hundred attendees, focuses on those controversial subjects not discussed at the Church-sponsored conference. In October 1998, the Counterpoint Conference featured discussions on Mormon attitudes toward women's bodies, whether polygamy could ever be beneficial to women, and how societal views of homosexuality harm women.

**Mormon Church Opposes Doctor-Assisted Suicide.** The *Christian Science Monitor*, in an article about Oregon's "death with dignity" law, reported that several religious organizations including the LDS church have taken a stand on assisted suicide. Church officials are reported to have said that euthanasia and doctor-assisted suicide "violate the commandments of God" and work against measures that strengthen families.

**Denver Board Rules against Seminaries.** Following neighbors' complaints that too many high school students are crowding into residential homes, a Denver board of adjustment has ruled that the LDS Church must quit holding released-time seminary in homes near certain high schools. But with Church buildings as far as three miles away, transporting students is impractical. The Church, according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, has reached no resolution and is weighing its options.

missionaries might be exempted from these rules in rare cases where fax and e-mail are the only reliable forms of communication. Such exemptions will only be given by mission presidents in conjunction with area authorities. Even then, however, LeFevre noted that such exempted missionaries "should avoid imposing on local members."

## CHURCH, ACTORS GUILD REACH "WIN-WIN" AGREEMENT

THE SCREEN ACTORS GUILD (SAG) and the LDS church in early January 1999 signed a collective bargaining agreement that will allow non-LDS actors and LDS guild members alike to act in Church films. According to the agreement, the Church will have the right to require all union actors working on Church projects to conform to LDS standards while on the set.

In the past, LDS actors who were members of the prestigious SAG could not work on Church productions. Guild members were not allowed to work on non-union film projects, while the Church's in-house film company, Deseret Media Productions, would not conform to the union's requirements. Deseret Media was always selective in hiring LDS actors in good standing. This situation, according to Church spokesman Dale Bills who was quoted in the *Deseret News*, "excluded some very talented Church members from working with (Deseret Media)."

Salt Lake talent agent Susie McCarty told the *Salt Lake Tribune*, "You could imagine if you were in the visitors' center, and somebody recognized a non-Mormon who was out there partying all night up there [on the screen] preaching the gospel."

The collective bargaining agreement now will grant Deseret Media the hiring freedom it needs while also providing work opportunities for guild actors—Mormon and non-Mormon alike. "This is the greatest, most wonderful thing to happen in the fifteen years I've worked in this market," Susan Dolan, a Salt Lake City SAG member and non-Mormon, told the *Tribune*.

## RETAIL TEMPLE CLOTHING STORES OPENING FOR BUSINESS

SEVERAL RETAIL STORES catering to Mormons in need of all-white temple clothing are now in business in Utah. Latter-day Creations has opened four stores in the Beehive State, White Elegance has a single Murray, Utah, location, and Lynettes is an Internet retailer—all of which are catering to the Mormon temple-going market, according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

Before 1938, temple clothes were made by Mormon women in their homes and for their family members, according to the *Tribune*. But the Church founded Deseret Clothing Factory to provide Saints with the sacred clothing. For years, Deseret Clothing products were available in retail outlets, such as ZCMI, and were advertised in Utah and Arizona newspapers. But as western, Mormon towns and enclaves became more diversified throughout the twentieth century, the Church confronted the question of how to keep temple clothing away from nonmembers, yet readily available to members. The Church's response to the problem was to limit sales to the Church's distribution centers.

Three years ago, however, Karen Aland, a woman skilled at making temple clothing, opened the first Latter-day Creations in American Fork, Utah. New store locations include the ZCMI mall in downtown Salt Lake City as well as other stores in Provo and Monticello, Utah. Aland and her son Carl Aland plan additional store locations as well. "Our goal is to go wherever there is a temple, first



*Saints once sewed their own temple clothes. But, retail convenience seems to better fit modern lifestyles.*

nationally and then internationally," the younger Alland told the *Tribune*.

Latter-day Creations does not sell "priestly robes," but it does sell such items as white dresses, white shoes, and white suits. The *Tribune* also notes that for some Utah Latter-day Saints, the new stores are inappropriately crossing a line between the sacred and commercialism. But an October 1998 First Presidency letter to stake presidents and bishops urged members "to have their own temple clothing." The Church's new, small temples will not have facilities to rent clothing to temple patrons. No one, the letter said, should be denied temple access because they cannot afford temple clothing. Church leaders are authorized to use fast offering funds to help those in need.

Church spokesperson Dale Bills told the *Tribune* that the Church has "no position" on the retail stores.

## NEW CHURCH HANDBOOK SAYS BIRTH CONTROL IS OKAY

THE CHURCH HAS RECENTLY published the two-volume *Church Handbook of Instructions*, a new manual replacing about thirty different publications pertaining to Church administration including the *General Handbook of Instructions*. One volume is for use by stake presidents and bishops; the other volume will be used by priesthood and auxiliary leaders. According to Apostle Dallin H. Oaks, the new handbook will help cut publishing and translating costs. "It is extremely expensive to be translating thirty different publications into fifty or sixty languages, and publishing, warehousing, and shipping them," the *LDS Church News* quoted Elder Oaks.

The handbook contains several surprising passages. One speaks of birth control. "The decision as to how many children to have and when to have them is extremely intimate and private and should be left between the couple and the Lord." At a 12 January 1999 quarterly meeting of the Mormon Alliance, according to an Internet report written by Lavina Fielding Anderson, writer and editor Maxine Hanks said that this new statement constitutes "the most lenient language, the most progressive, and the least intrusive statement historically on Mormon parenthood, an extremely significant shift."

Hanks also read at that meeting statements from past Church

President Joseph F. Smith, which dated back to 1908, to illustrate the historical shift in Mormon attitudes concerning birth control. President Smith had said that preventing conception was "ungodly" and that those who do will "reap disappointment by and by."

The new handbook further states, "Married couples also should understand that sexual relations within marriage are divinely approved not only for procreation but also as a means of expressing

love and strengthening emotional and spiritual bonds between husband and wife." According to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, this is a departure from earlier teachings by some Church leaders. David O. McKay, president of the Church from 1951 to 1970, once wrote, "All such efforts too often tend to put the marriage relationship on a level with the panderer and the courtesan. They beflow pure fountains of life with the slime of indulgence and sensuality."

## PEOPLE

### DEATHS

- **Albert Kenyon Wagner**, founding director of Benemerito de las Americas, the Church's Mexico City high school, died on 6 October 1998 at age 78. Wagner had also served as a mission president and director of the Academia Juarez.
- **O. Meredith Wilson**, 89, died on 7 November 1998. Born in the Mormon colonies in Mexico, Wilson served as president at the University of Oregon and the University of Minnesota. He also served as chair of the Federal Reserve Bank in San Francisco.
- Noted journalist and Western historian **Harold Schindler** died 28 December 1998 at age 69 of a heart attack. Schindler authored a definitive biography of Orrin Porter Rockwell and, at the time of his death, was working on a history of the Utah War.
- **Morris K. "Mo" Udall**, 76, died on 11 December 1998 of Parkinson's disease. Udall served in the United States House of Representatives for thirty years. Known as one of the most consistent voices of liberalism during his tenure, Udall ran for U.S. president in 1976. *Washington Post* columnist David Broder once said, "Mo Udall wanted to run for president in the worst way, and he did." In 1988, Udall titled his autobiography *Too Funny to Be President*. Udall was born in 1922 in St. Johns, Arizona, in a Mormon pioneer family. His father, Levi, served as chief justice of the Arizona Supreme Court, and son Mark won election to Congress in November 1998.



Leonard Arrington

- **Leonard J. Arrington** died on 11 February 1999 at age 81. Arrington was the last person to serve as official LDS Church Historian. He was also Lemuel Redd Professor of Western History at BYU and Director of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute of Church History at BYU. He authored the landmark *Great Basin Kingdom* and the influential *Brigham Young: American Moses*, among other works. Arrington is widely and roundly regarded as one of the

greatest scholars of Mormonism.

### AWARDS & HONORS

- The Los Altos, California, Stake presented a plaque of appreciation to the retiring **John L. Dodson**, senior pastor of Los Altos United Methodist Church on 18 October 1998. Stake President Larry Hansen made the award on behalf of Dodson's "many admirers from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in honor of his great contributions to the community," according to the *San Jose Mercury News*. Both Dodson's Methodist congregation and the LDS stake have jointly participated in building houses for Habitat for Humanity. The two groups have also exchanged speakers and choirs.

- **Roger L. Hiatt**, a Latter-day Saint from Memphis, Tennessee, received the Outstanding Humanitarian Service Award from the American Academy of Ophthalmology. He was noted for having never turned away a patient for lack of money. As a Philippines mission president, Hiatt held free public medical clinics on his weekly preparation days. He also started a program teaching skills to local physicians and providing them with books and equipment. Hiatt's program still continues.
- **President Gordon B. Hinckley** was presented with the BYU Marriott School of Management's International Executive of the Year award on 6 November 1998. According to the *Deseret News*, President Hinckley remarked that some critics point to Church wealth as evidence that the Church has become a business institution. "Spiritual and temporal go hand-in-hand. They are one and the same," the prophet said. BYU President Merrill Bateman noted that twenty-three other executives have previously been so honored but that none match President Hinckley's "breadth and depth of experience and accomplishment."
- **William Mulder**, emeritus professor of English of the University of Utah, was awarded the status of Academy Fellow by the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters on 6 November 1998. Mulder has been significant in establishing Mormon literature as a serious academic topic.
- The John Whitmer Historical Association presented the following awards for Latter Day Saint history published in 1998: Best Book, **Todd Compton** for *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Signature Books); Best Article, **Newell G. Bringham** and **Frederick S. Buchanan** for "The Forgotten Odyssey of Obediah H. Riggs: Early Pioneer for Education Reform."

### TRANSFERS



Lawrence Young

- BYU associate professor of sociology **Lawrence Young** has taken a two-year leave of absence from his scholarly duties to serve the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance as its Washington, D.C., coordinator. Young, who served for four years as chair of the Utah Wilderness Coalition while also working at BYU, will primarily be lobbying Congress to protect Utah lands from development.
- After twenty-five years as LDS church spokesperson, **Don LeFevre** retired at the end of 1998. LeFevre told the *Salt Lake Tribune* that the mid-1980s Mark Hoffman episode was his most trying time professionally and that the 1978 revelation granting the priesthood to blacks was his most joyous time. The secret of LeFevre's success? "You have to be sold on the product, and I've represented the best there is," according to the *Tribune*.

## MORMON MEDIA IMAGE

## SALT LAKE OLYMPICS SCANDAL HAS LDS IMPLICATIONS

ON 15 NOVEMBER 1998, LDS congregations throughout Utah heard a letter from the First Presidency urged Saints to volunteer for the 2002 Winter Olympics Games to be held in Salt Lake City. Church spokesperson Don LeFevre said the letter served as the Church's "officially giving its support of efforts to make the . . . Games a successful and memorable event." But less than two weeks later, a letter signed by Dave Johnson of Salt Lake's Olympic bid committee was leaked to Salt Lake media which implicated the bid committee in bribing members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for the right to host the games. Since then, the "Olympic scandal" has mushroomed into an all-out questioning of the Olympic movement itself, with Salt Lake City serving as focus of the international storm. How could an international bribery scandal find its nexus in squeaky-clean Salt Lake?, the media have been asking. And often, these media—from local Utah newspaper writers to international political talking heads—have probed for a Mormon connection to the scandal.

To the surprise of no one knowledgeable about Utah politics and Utah's Olympic movement, no LDS church connection to the scandal has been uncovered. And equally of no surprise, the Church and Mormonism have been both exonerated and condemned by media the world over. It seems that in reporting on the Olympic mess in Utah, the Church is just too irresistible a subject of public interest to be left alone.

*Time* magazine, for instance, began a feature story titled "How the Olympics Were Bought" by noting that when the games were awarded to Salt Lake, some "grizzled veteran of the

games" sighed, "'Mormon morals—that'll bring 'em down.' 'Yeah,' says his buddy, 'I hear the bars close at 11!'" Yet, the story soon goes on to note that the scandal has no LDS connection—other than that some leaders of the bid committee were Mormons.

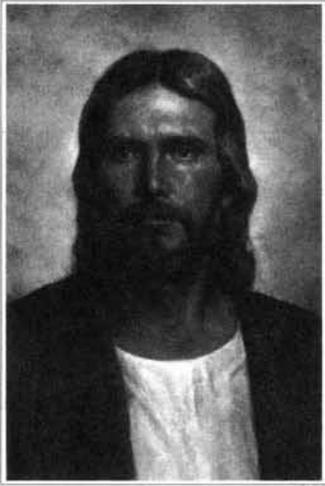
In a *Salt Lake Tribune* story, various Utah observers were asked what Mormon cultural factors might exist which led bid committee members toward bribing international officials in order to get the Olympics. Church spokesperson Mike Otterson declined to comment except to say, "That's a dumb question . . . the community knows what its values are and the community is outraged." But Paul Richards, former editor of the *Provo Herald* and former BYU spokesperson, noted that Utah culture is constantly hungry for approval from the outside world. "We want to be liked. So much of what we do is based on that." He further noted that this desire to succeed in the world's eyes, coupled with Mormons' trust of those in leadership positions, led Utahns to not be as questioning of the Olympic bid process as they should have been. "When you challenge someone, that is seen as being of the devil. We are not a self-reflective people."

**"We are not a self-reflective people."**



A *Time* magazine article focused on the Mormon angle of the Olympics in Utah—before noting that no LDS connection to the Olympic scandal exists.

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We must remember him more than we remember him;  
We must serve him more valiantly than we serve him...  
- Howard W. Hunter -

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THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

### MAD ABOUT AD

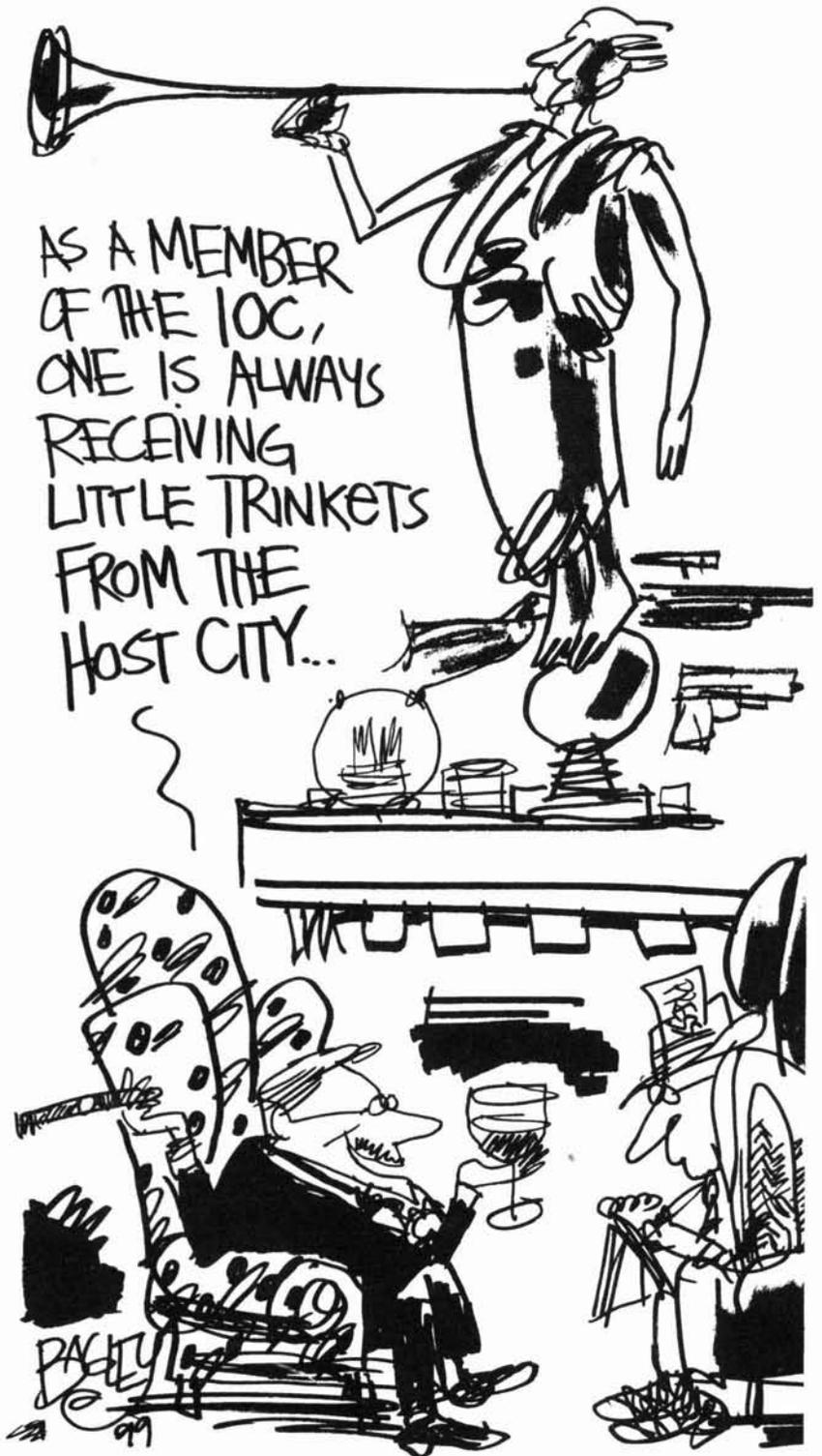
FOR SOME YEARS, the LDS Institute at Utah State University, in Logan, has purchased the back-cover of the class schedule and run versions of the above advertisement with the picture of Jesus inviting all to attend classes. This year, however, the university did not print a separate, advertisement-free edition of the schedule for the faculty, and for the first time some non-LDS faculty saw the ad and complained that the state-owned university did not keep the appropriate distance between church and state. The school is now considering revising its advertising policies.

### ACCIDENTALLY YOURS

STOPPED IN A long line of northbound cars on 700 East during Salt Lake's rush hour last fall, Rey Kurtz of Murray was rammed from the rear, forcing his car into the car in front of him, which went into the car in front of that. . . . The four-vehicle accident caused only minor damages.

As Kurtz got out to inspect his car and exchange insurance information, he recognized the man who had rear-ended him and asked him to pen a note to Kurtz's grandson, who was serving a mission in Austria.

The note read: "Good luck, Ryan, on your mission duties and throughout your life. God bless you, Thomas S. Monson."



## AN OLIVE LEAF

## WARTS AND SKELETONS

By Henry Eyring

Often called the most distinguished Mormon scientist of this dispensation, Henry Eyring's dual commitment to the Church and to truth is illustrated in this anecdote here told in *Reflections of a Scientist*, which was recently reissued by Deseret Book Company. Reprinted by permission.

THE CHURCH WAS planning the new Church magazines, which would begin to appear in 1971. As a member of the Sunday School General Board I got a letter from Richard L. Evans, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, to come to a meeting about the new magazines along with a great many other people. The night before the meeting, I was visiting my sister Camilla and her husband, Spencer W. Kimball, and I said, "I am going to a meeting for the magazines." Spencer said, "I am going, too, at nine o'clock."

In the morning, my secretary was gone, and I was a little bit late, so I hurried down to the Church Office Building. I went in and said to the receptionist that I was supposed to go to a meeting. He said, "Well, isn't it this afternoon?" I said, "No, it's this morning." And so he took me in and there were four apostles—Spencer W. Kimball, Marion G. Romney, Brother Evans, and Howard W. Hunter—and the magazine editors. I was quite surprised that no one else was there from the Sunday School, but I thought, "Well, they must regard me very highly," and so I just sat down. The discussion went around, and I was willing to offer my view quite freely. However, Brother Evans said, "Your turn will come in a few minutes."

When they got around to me, I told them that the Church magazines never would amount to a darn if they did not get some people with independence in there who had real ideas and would come out and express themselves. If they were going to rehash old stuff, they would not hold the young people. I gave them quite a bit of very fine advice and I cussed a little

when I wanted to, and when I got through, Brother Evans said, "I do not know anyone who characterizes the idea of independence any more than you do. Are you applying for the job?" I said, "No, I am not applying for the job, but I think I have given good advice."

I did not have any feeling, even after I had been there, that anything was wrong, and thought that they must have a high opinion of my wisdom. When I got back to my office, my secretary asked, "Where have you been?" I said I had been down to the Church magazine meeting, "That is this afternoon at two o'clock."

What is so funny is not that I made a mistake, but that I was so insensitive as to not realize it. I didn't go to the two o'clock meeting. I felt I had done my work. Brother Evans got up in that meeting and, I am told, said that they had had

a meeting in the morning and that very useful advice had been supplied by Brother Eyring. He did not say I had not been invited.

I was amazed at the graciousness of the Brethren in making me feel I belonged, when any one of them might well have been annoyed. They are a most urbane group. On my part, there was no holding back; I just tried to help them all I could.

However, the point I was making at that meeting still interests me. We should be willing to enjoy a full picture of our heroes, leaders, and history. I believe that when we ignore the "darker side" we leave ourselves unprepared for the revelation of some unhappy deed or event of past or present. We might be better off if we leave the warts on and let a few of the skeletons out of the closets ourselves for open examination. On the other hand, there are dangers in debunking everyone and everything that is a little above the ordinary. We ought to seek a happy balance of letting the truth flow forth without either hiding or digging for problems. ☐

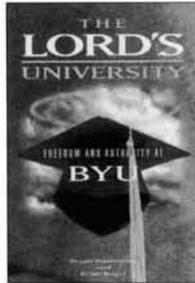
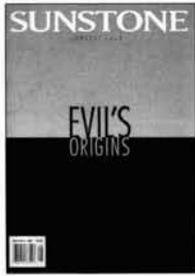


Henry Eyring embraces President Spencer W. Kimball as his sister Camilla Eyring Kimball looks on.

PAUL BARKER

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**Is Lying Sometimes the Right Thing for an Honest Person to Do?**

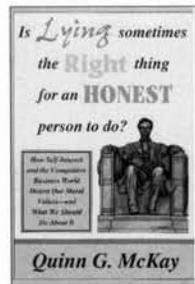
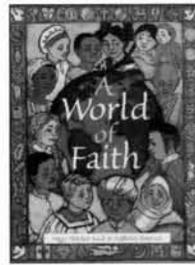
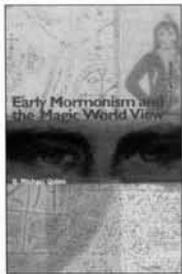
by Quinn G. McKay ~~\$22.95~~ \$10.00

Is honesty always the best policy? Are competitive gaming ethics appropriate for a business setting, or should personal ethics prevail? When is a promise actually a promise, and is a promise void if circumstances change? This book describes essential skills required for moral and ethical behavior, including becoming more aware of four difficult temptations: exaggeration, understatement, withholding information, and outright lying. (Executive Excellence Publishing)

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